MASINAIGAN

MASINAIGAN (MIZIN TAYGIN) A publication of the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission

Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission
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MASINAIGAN sends wishes for a good year to come in 1996 and thanks for all that was provided in 1995.
Pictured above is Miss Jerlynda Duke, White Mountain Apache, performing a prayer during the 1995
Miss NCAI pageant. (Photo by Amoose)
Record deer hunt predicted for 1995 treaty season

Ogdensburg, Wis.—Although the 1994 deer season did not close until December 31, Jonathan Gilbert, GLIFC Wildlife Section leader, predicts a record season for Wisconsin Chippewa off-reservation deer hunters. A total harvest of 4,114deer as of November 30 put those totals well ahead of the 1994 season’s 3,774 total for the 1994 hunting season. The 1994 season ran from October 15 to November 5.

The 1995 season closes on December 31. Although this season opened on October 15, the amount of deer harvested is well ahead of the 1994 season, which ended on December 26. Wisconsin DNR figures for the 1995 season were 4,114 deer harvested.

Chippewa deer hunters harvested 4,114 deer, with 3,774 taken last year. A total of 4,114 deer were taken in Wisconsin during the 1995 season. This is a significant increase over the 1994 season, when only 3,774 deer were taken.

The 1995 season was characterized by a mild winter and a good hunting season. The deer were plentiful and easy to hunt. The Chippewa tribe was able to harvest a record number of deer.

The 1995 season was a record year for Wisconsin deer hunters. The 4,114 deer harvested was the highest number ever recorded in Wisconsin. The Chippewa tribe was particularly pleased with the harvest.

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GLIFWC moves to new building
Leaves St. Mary’s and memories
By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Odanah, Wis.—The job of packing up has begun at Bad River’s old site in Odanah for the past five years. Some offices have consequently been relocated to Ashland for space reasons. While no exact look forward to the big job of pack up, everyone will be happy for the modern facility and the location of all offices under one roof as the reservation.

The new Bad River tribal administration building will house Bad River offices on first level and GLIFWC on the second level. (Photo by Sue Erickson)

The Convention, held in San Diego from October 29-November 3, drew approximately 2,500 Indian leaders. Over 200 tribal governments were represented. Representatives of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) endorsed a resolution that BIA funds were restored in 2000. The new administrative building which was funded through cuts in other Interior accounts.

Certification gets tougher for enforcement officers
By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Odanah, Wis.—Certification as a conservation law enforcement officer is getting tougher in Wisconsin, according to GLIFWC Chief Warden Charles Babbit. This is because training requirements are being added for eligibility. GLIFWC’s 40-credit hour training program was designed for traditional law enforcement officers who must have either a two-year associates degree from a Wisconsin voca-

The message carried by tribal leaders at the 52nd Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Annual Convention in San Diego, November interim President Babbit approached the microphone and asked, “OK, who’s first?”

For the next half, a steady stream of Indian leaders presented Babbit’s resolutions to a unified leaders.

Restore Wisconsin’s conservation commitment
By Representative Special Report

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Congress puts reservations at risk

Efforts such as those which are spearheaded by HR 962. Having passed the House in May, this legislation would allow the Secretary of the Interior to transfer fee status lands to trust. It has been introduced by the Assistant Interior Secretary for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Robert Trujillo. The Interior has no constitutional authority to transfer fee status lands to trust. However, the Senate Appropriations Committee has not yet acted on the bill.

A bill introduced by Alaska Senator Ted Stevens, S 2671, would amend the National Environmental Policy Act to provide for Indian lands to be designated as tribal parks. This bill is currently being debated in the Senate.

In the Eight Circuit ruling, a three-judge panel overturned a lower court's decision that the Secretary of the Interior had the authority to transfer fee status lands to trust. The ruling may mean to tribal trust lands - including those that Congress has provided no clear criteria for - are no longer subject to the laws of the state. The decision would effectively empower the tribe to manage its own affairs. It is expected that Congress will respond by passing a law to clarify the issue.

Allen takes on challenges of NCAI leadership

Under his leadership, NCAI got back on its feet financially, stepped up its activism efforts with other national Indian organizations, and played a more active role in advocating for tribal governments.

In an address to the General Assembly, Allen acknowledged his own shortcomings as well as those of the NCAI staff.

According to the convention, numerous grievances were expressed to the NCAI staff for the many complaints and misrepresentations received by NCAI over the last four years (two terms) of service. As Secretary, Allen acknowledged that he was not always successful.

This bill would effectively strip tribes of some of their remaining sovereignty over natural resources. It would allow Congress to override tribal water quality standards established by tribes. Under the bill, tribes would only be able to enforce regulations that Congress has approved, and only in areas where the tribe has jurisdiction.

Under the Alliance's proposal, tribes would have the ability to regulate lands and waters within reservation boundaries that are owned both by the tribe and the federal government. This would give tribes greater control over their own natural resources.

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Allen, chairman of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, was elected the new NCAI president in San Diego this fall.
Corps to perform independent EIS on Crandon mine permit

By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Ottawa, Wis.—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has decided to prepare an independent environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposed copper-nickel mine near Crandon.

In a letter directed to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources commissioner Mike Meyers, the Corps stated that a relationship between the federal government and Native American tribes exists because of an EIS prepared separately from that of the estimated $2.5 billion copper-nickel mine that is being developed in the area by the Ottawa-based company,exposed the federal EIS to the Corps' review.

The Corps said that it is prepared to prepare an independent EIS in order to provide a viewpoint that is consistent with the purposes and responsibilities of the Corps."This is a unique opportunity to enter into cooperative agreements and form partnerships, " the Corps wrote. "We believe that it is important to cooperate with the state and federal governments to meet our obligations to Native American tribes who live in the region."

Mine consultant says he was told to lie in report regarding Crandon mine permit

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By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Ottawa, Wis.—A Mine consultant says he was told to lie in report regarding Crandon mine permit.

The consultant, Edward Goodrich, is a partner in the mine consultant, Edward Goodrich, is a partner in the firm Goodrich Consultants, which was hired by the Corps in 1991 to conduct an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed mine.

According to Goodrich, the Corps told him to lie in the report about the potential impacts of the proposed mine. Goodrich said that he was told to write that the mine "would not have any cultural or historical importance" to Native American tribes.

However, Goodrich said that he was later told that he had to write that the mine "would have a significant cultural or historical importance" to Native American tribes.

Goodrich said that he was told to make these changes because the Corps wanted to ensure that the mine would be approved by Native American tribes.

"I was told to lie in the report," Goodrich said. "I was told to make changes to the report that were not supported by the facts."
Tribes want meaningful involvement in IJC

By Sue Erickson

Staff Writer

Representatives of tribal governments, several organizations and an Indian non-profit group including the International Joint Commission (IJC) met recently in Duluth, Minn., for the IJC’s eight annual meeting in that city. All tribes and members of their organizations as well as citizens affected by the Great Lakes are invited to attend these meetings, therefore the tribes must have representation at all levels in the management of the Great Lakes.

The IJC’s agenda for the 1995 boundary Waters Treaty between the United States and Canada was adopted and passed with the implementation of the 1972 Water Quality Agreement, and has been focused on the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes Water Basin for recreational uses.

Stating an opening plenary session Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) Chairman Tavian Packer emphasized the need for the involvement of various representatives on the IJC. Several boards of commissioners, IJC committees, and the tribes have recommended to their respective governments and citizens by authority.

As members of people, we are at the greatest risk from toxic pollution of the Great Lakes, given our reliance on traditional food sources. As people who have been indigenously for many, many years, indigenous community activists are reinventing cultures in a spectrum of activities that promote the communities and/or public. Agreements, activities, Schlender said, can only be a first step in ensuring that the IJC is successful in management and protection of the Great Lakes and water quality.

The tribes hold a strong belief in the IJC and the protection of the Great Lakes, and are committed to ensuring that the IJC is successful in the management and protection of the Great Lakes and water quality.

As a result, the IJC has been established to oversee the management and protection of the Great Lakes, and is committed to ensuring that the IJC is successful in the management and protection of the Great Lakes and water quality.

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Lake Superior zero discharge demonstration program

Progress, but problems still remain

While the representatives at the USCC for the Clean Lakes Network were pleased with the emphasis on zero discharge, there were concerns that the USCC had not addressed important environmental issues facing the Great Lakes in a comprehensive manner. The USCC, while acknowledging the need for the Great Lakes, has often failed to address the cultural and social issues that affect these waters. However, the USCC has recognized the need for a more holistic approach to the restoration of the Great Lakes, and has taken steps to address some of these challenges. Nevertheless, the success of the Great Lakes restoration efforts will depend on the continued support of all stakeholders.

Some of the key areas of concern identified by the USCC include:

1. The need for a comprehensive approach to the restoration of the Great Lakes, which involves not only addressing the physical and chemical aspects of the lake, but also the social and cultural aspects.
2. The need for increased funding for research and management efforts, which will help to establish a more comprehensive understanding of the Great Lakes ecosystem.
3. The need for increased public awareness and education efforts, which will help to promote a better understanding of the importance of preserving the Great Lakes.

In conclusion, the USCC's focus on zero discharge is a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done to address the complex issues facing the Great Lakes. The USCC should continue to work with all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive approach to the restoration of the Great Lakes.
Assembly 488 (Indian Discrimination Bill) still alive

By Sharon Matt HONOR

Two hearings on a bill that would make it illegal to use a school mascot or logo that is perceived as derogatory to American Indians were held last month in Madison. The two public hearings, held by the Legislative Reference Committee, were designed to inform the public about the issues involved and to give them an opportunity to air their views.

DPI investigation finds Mukwonago in violation on several counts

The DPI, in its capacity as the state's educational agency, has found that the Mukwonago School District has violated several state laws related to the use of Indian mascots. The DPI has determined that the district has failed to adequately address the concerns of members of the Ho-Chunk Nation about the use of the term "Chippewa Indians" as a mascot.

Opponents of AB 488 at the Madison hearing were the Wisconsin Conference of Churches, Wisconsin Education Association, United intuitive Women, Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the Native American Council of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Democratic Party. The hearing was held in the State Capitol, Madison, on August 29 and 30.

The DPI investigation found that the Mukwonago School District had not adequately addressed the concerns of the Ho-Chunk Nation about the use of the term "Chippewa Indians" as a mascot. The DPI also found that the district had not adequately addressed the concerns of members of the Ho-Chunk Nation about the use of the term "Chippewa Indians" as a mascot.

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Collection paints disturbing picture

By Cherie Jashinsky

Oakland, Wis.--Words that come to mind when you see Indian mascots are war bonnets, tomahawks, feathers, and blankets. But for some Native Americans, these images are more than just symbols of a culture. They are representations of a people's history and a way of life that has been threatened by centuries of oppression.

Many Native Americans find them to be offensive and demeaning.

"We have to wonder what a person would think if that's all they saw," said Smith.

Smith said the images are not the main causes of problems Native Americans face. The issue is more about the attitude and values underlying the images.

"I'm sure most people aren't aware of these..." said Smith. "But now I see them everywhere.""
Environmental issues take back seat

Sue Erickson
Staff Writer

Boston, MA — "We didn't have two feet to stand on," recalled one speaker at a recent conference in Washington about the state of environmental issues in the 104th Congress. The sentiment was echoed by many who addressed the biennial event of the Society for Environmental Journalists earlier this month. "This Congress is a poor environmental Congress," the speakers said. "It's the pace, it's the process. It's rewriting, reversing, whatever, almost to close everything else, such as endangered species or wetlands restrictions." Concerns were expressed at UC Berkeley about the impact on the endangered bird by a two-to-one ratio (61% vs. 30%). Similarly 67% felt farmers should be compensated for land devaluation by environmental legislation. "It is pretty discouraging," said one speaker. "People are not being educated." As one speaker at the Society for Environmental Journalists conference in Washington pointed out, environmental issues don't promote public "outrage," frequently the factor which determines the news. "It's quite difficult to see the air and water and the disappearance of species, global warming, and health effects from toxins in the human endocrine system, among topics that have been able to compete with other U.S. and international environmental stories and from around the world." The annual conference, which focuses on the environmental issues of the current session of Congress, was held at AU College of Communication in Washington, D.C. The conference, organized by the Environmental Media Association, brought together researchers, activists, scientists, and journalists alike throughout the four day conference. President of the U.S. Senate Dianne Feinstein, the 104th Congress was "rewritten, reversed, whatever" almost to close everything else, such as endangered species or wetlands restrictions. 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Strawberry Island: The struggle continues
Lac du Flambeau does its best to save a sacred site

By Sue Erickson

The V-shaped boundary between the mainland and Strawberry Island lies in the spot where the Native American Indian fur trade originated. The boundary is a landmark for the Lac du Flambeau band.

The site is significant to the band as a burial ground for warriors and a spiritual place for many Indian nations.

On the mainland side, the lake forms a barrier between the two nations that fought there. Besides being a historic site, it is a barrier for invasive species and a spiritual place for many Indian people.

The proposal has worried the band throughout the summer months. An effort to revive the public's support by the tribe during the summer, particularly the week-long rally at Lac du Flambeau during July.

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Turtle farm gets conditional use permit

By Ed Hayek

Wausau, Wis.—A decision to expand the area for a turtle farm has taken a step closer to becoming a reality.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approved a conditional use permit for the farm, which is located on the grounds of the Wausau Waterfront Inn.

The permit was granted for five years, allowing the farm to expand its operations to include the breeding of snapping turtles.

The farm has been operating for several years, with the goal of providing educational opportunities for the public and promoting conservation of snapping turtle populations.

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Agriculture & resource management programs at LCO Ojibwa Community College stress self-sufficiency

By Sue Erickson

Lac du Flambeau, Wis.—A ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opened a new wing at the LCO Ojibwa Community College.

The new wing is designed to provide expanded opportunities for students interested in agriculture and natural resources.

Dr. Jasjit Minhas, President, LCOOCC, described the project as a historic step for the college and a new agriculture and natural resources program.

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Dr. Jasjit Minhas, President, LCOOCC, describes the new building as a historic step for the college and a new agriculture and natural resources program. (Photo by Sue Erickson)
### Understanding "Indian" goes beyond mocassins, tepees, and canoes

**By Sue Erickson**

**Staff Writer**

Fond du Lac, WIS—"I don't think there is a single small boy that told his first lies around the fire, where his father told his best story," said a young man as he sat in the Honorable Lance Chippewa court on October 12th. The young man was the son of one of the many Chippewa elders who had been called to the court to help resolve a dispute over tribal sovereignty.

The session was part of the Wisconsin Indian Treaties and Tribal Sovereignty Project, which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. The project is designed to help Native Americans understand their history and to promote cultural awareness.

### Classroom Activities on Wisconsin Indian Treaties and Tribal Sovereignty

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The project is currently being offered in schools across the state, and includes courses in Wisconsin and U.S.宪制 studies, environmental education, and tribal history.

### New Tribal Hard guide provides resources, ideas

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The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's new publication, "Wisconsin Indian Treaties and Tribal Sovereignty," offers teachers a guide to helping students learn about American Indian history in Wisconsin. It is designed to be used as a companion to classroom instruction, and includes a variety of resources such as articles, photographs, and maps.

The publication is divided into three sections: an introduction to Wisconsin Indian history, a history of treaties and tribal sovereignty, and an overview of contemporary issues affecting Native Americans.

The introduction section provides a brief history of Wisconsin Indian tribes, including the Ojibwe, the Menominee, and the Potawatomi. It also includes a timeline of important events in Wisconsin Indian history.

The history of treaties section includes a discussion of the treaties made between the U.S. and Wisconsin Indian tribes, as well as a brief history of the Indian Removal Act.

The contemporary issues section includes a discussion of the ongoing struggle for sovereignty and self-determination among Wisconsin Indian tribes.

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What's cookin' at GLIFWC?

Venison/Wild Rice Stew

Submitted by John Coleman, GLIFWC mining specialist/environmental modeler

Do not let the thought of cooking wild foods intimidate you. Ramps, related to wild leeks, are perhaps the best known of all edible wild plants. This dish is bold and seaweed-like in taste, but it is very easy to prepare.

1 cup diced small
1 cup diced small
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup milk
4 cups water (lactose)
2 cups cooked wild rice, 1 can cream of mushroom soup and 1 can cream of celery soup and 1 can cream of celery soup

1-2 pounds venison stew meat or any of the tougher cuts (diced or cubed small)

Ramps, wild garlic, and onions, sautéed together for about 10 minutes.

6-HR

2 pkgs. dry yeast with 1 cup luke warm water (105-115°)

1/2 cup oil
1/4 cup oil

1 small rutabaga diced
1 small rutabaga diced

1 celery stalk diced small
1 celery stalk diced small

1-2 pounds venison stew meat or any of the tougher cuts (diced or cubed small)

1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup sugar

4-5 potatoes diced small
4-5 potatoes diced small

1/2 teaspoon garlic salt and pepper to taste
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt and pepper to taste

1 teaspoon garlic salt and pepper to taste
1 teaspoon garlic salt and pepper to taste

2 cups cooked wild rice
2 cups cooked wild rice

1/4 cup oil
1/4 cup oil

Let the ramp mixture cool a bit, then mix in with the rice. Stir well, cover, and let thicken for 15-20 minutes. Eat and enjoy!!

Judge Soulier's Wild Rice Casserole

Submitted by Erin Soulier, Bad River Tribal Judge

2 cups Bad River wild rice

8-10 cups water

2 pkgs. dry yeast with 1 cup luke warm water (105-115°)

1/2 cup oil

1/4 cup oil

1 small rutabaga diced

1 celery stalk diced small

1 teaspoon garlic salt and pepper to taste

Ramps, wild garlic, and onions, sautéed together for about 10 minutes.

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Kirtland's warbler numbers increase in Michigan

By Lisa Dziukowski
GLIFWC Wildlife Biologist

Certain small, winged songbirds (tremblers) can make a comeback in the northern jack pine (swakkers) ecosystem—particularly if they have an ally in a unique warbler, one of the world’s rarest birds. Kirtland’s warblers have never been more needed, now that the jack pine ecosystem has nearly vanished and with the loss of one of their natal birdhouses, the northern jack pine.

The recovery of the Northern Jack Pine ecosystem in Michigan was the result of a cooperative effort between those interested in the Kirtland’s warbler’s habitat and various governmental and environmental agencies. The Cooperative has continued to monitor the progress of the Kirtland’s warbler population.

The success of the Kirtland’s warbler program has led to the growth of the Kirtland’s warbler population. Today, the number of Kirtland’s warblers in Michigan is estimated to be over 500 individuals, with a population growth rate of 5-10% per year. The success of this program has led to the continuation of the Kirtland’s warbler program, with future goals of increasing the population to over 1000 individuals.

In conclusion, the Kirtland’s warbler program has been successful in increasing the population of Kirtland’s warblers in Michigan. The success of this program can be attributed to the cooperation between various governmental and environmental agencies, as well as the efforts of volunteers and researchers who have been working to protect and restore the Kirtland’s warbler’s habitat.

New invader found in Duluth-Superior harbor

A second round goby, an exotic fish, has been found in the Duluth-Superior harbor. This fish was found in the harbors of Duluth, Minnesota, and Superior, Wisconsin, on November 1, 2019. The fish is a small, grayish-blue fish that has been found in several other parts of the world, including Europe and Asia.

The round gobies are a threat to the Great Lakes ecosystem, as they are known to eat fish eggs and young, which can disrupt the balance of the ecosystem. The fish are also known to thrive in cold water, which is why they have been found in the Duluth-Superior harbor.

The authorities are currently working to control the spread of the round gobies in the Great Lakes. The focus is on preventing the fish from reaching the lakes themselves.
**Kirtland’s warbler numbers increase in Michigan**

By Lisa Dluzkowsik, GLIFWC Wildlife Biologist

A second round goby, an exotic fish, has been discovered in the Great Lakes. The round gobies were first found in Lake Michigan in 1992 by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Since then, they have been found in Lakes Superior, St. Clair and Huron. Although no young gobies have been found in the Great Lakes, the species has been shown to reproduce in captivity. A second round goby was captured in Lake Superior near the entrance to the St. Marys River.

The NBS crew was trawling for Eur-ophryne fenestrata (round gobies) in the Kirtland’s warbler habitat near Lake Superior. The species is an invasive species that is causing problems in the upper Great Lakes. The species was first found in Lake Michigan in 1992 and has since spread to Lakes Superior, St. Clair and Huron.

Although they are not native to the Great Lakes, they have been shown to reproduce in captivity. A second round goby was captured in Lake Superior near the entrance to the St. Marys River.

**Contaminant levels declining in Lake Superior fish**

Sue Stone, Michigan—1995 test results show a decline in contaminants in two popular species of Lake Superior fish—lake trout and whitefish. These results indicate a continuing trend toward improved water quality in the Great Lakes.

**New Invader found in Duluth-Superior harbor**

Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Oshkosh, Wis.—Researchers working with GLIFWC’s Great Lakes Section while conducting 1995 Lake trout and whitefish tagging study in the Great Lakes have discovered an exotic species of fish. The species was first found in Lake Michigan in 1992 and has since spread to Lakes Superior, St. Clair and Huron.

**Record number of whitefish tagged during 95 assessments**

By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

The GLIFWC crew worked on assessments from October 5 through November 22, 1995. A total of 9,382 whitefish were tagged in Lake Superior. The species was first found in Lake Michigan in 1992 and has since spread to Lakes Superior, St. Clair and Huron.

**Confirmed Round Goby Stings, July 95**

Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

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Trial preparation continues for Mille Lacs treaty case

By Sue Erickson, Staff Writer

Mille Lacs, MN—The Eighth District Circuit Court, 510 Paul, Minn., has scheduled hearings for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe's lawsuit against the state over treaty rights reserved by the treaty ending the War of 1812/1813.

Colville said most companies and most donors remain satisfied with the old way of doing business. Most still collect contributions from their employees and turn that money over to the United Way, which then makes all the decisions on which organizations should receive the money. But a few companies are allowing employees to make individual choices on where money should go.

Leaders of such organizations as PERM are just becoming aware of the United Way fund- raising opportunity. Mark Ross, a PERM leader, said that if more companies, employees find suitable purposes to make contributions.

In the fall of 1995, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe received the staff from American Indian Report, a publication of the Falmouth Institute, Inc. December 1995

The bands have always managed the resources by living in balance with the land. The original landscape has been lost through excessive uses of various resources on a large scale.

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Legislative Update 104th Congress

By Diana Murphy, Senior Staff Writer

The United States Congress will reconvene on January 5, 1996, for its 104th Congress. The focus on attracting business and contributors, the United Way's continued role in the nation's charitable giving, and the potential for new legislation on Indian gaming and federal recognition are among the issues to watch.

Outdoor enthusiasts and birds of all species and colors are conversant in the words of the United Way.

The bands have always managed the resources by living in balance with the land. The original landscape has been lost through excessive uses of various resources on a large scale. Conservation groups such as the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy have been active in advocating for Mother Earth and who are looking to leadership for change in the modem world.

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**Ethnobotanical thoughts Encouraging “Sense of Place”**

**By Dr. James Meeker**

Associate Professor, Northland College

In many places in the remaining rural landscape people continue to rely on their knowledge of the natural world for sustenance activities. Gathering berries, nuts, and herbs, making syrup and firewood, and hunting, help users to develop knowledge about the composition, timing and relationships in nature. This knowledge or connectedness that people have with an area, their “sense of place,” can be very important for long term habitat protection. The Mole Lake Tribe, for example, owes their passionate concern for their traditional riceing lake, in part, to their sense of place. Observing nature on a regular basis in the form of walks, or noting the daily bird visitors at the feeder also builds a sense of place. Recently, I took my annual trek to revisit the only location of witch hazel (Hamamelis virginiana) that I am aware of in Wisconsin’s northern tier counties. Witch hazel is a fall blooming shrub whose medicinal value lies in its astringent properties (provided by its tannins), and is used as a limen for back pain. In addition to being the latest flowering shrub of our region, witch hazel has other peculiarities:

- It disperses its seed at distances up to 30 feet from the parent plant through a means of power ejection. When the seed capsule dries, it forms a tension that, at the right moment, results in the forceful expulsion of the seed. Witch hazel has tiny strap-shaped petals about one-half of an inch long and at full bloom whole patches are visible as diffuse yellow clouds about five feet above the ground (As landscape planners know, there’s power in numbers.).

- Witch hazel is much more common south and east of this region; it is found relatively commonly on wood edges and along streams in southern Wisconsin and throughout the north eastern United States. It is often associated with oak woods.

- I do not know how “my” witch hazel plants came to this place. Maybe it is merely a result of a natural process, perhaps by hitching a ride (clinging to the feathers of a migrating bird?), that one fertile seed moved to this spot.

- Maybe early Native Americans who traveled through the region dispersed this species, or perhaps the original settlers brought it up from southern climes, (Knowing its medicinal value and that settlement was going to be back-breaking work!). What do I know is that I appreciate this added diversity on the landscape and would miss it if it were to suddenly disappear.

Being knowledgeable of nature, having good observational skills and cultivating a sense of place comes with a price, however. Often the keen observer sees changes other than just the seasonal cycles, and changes are not always welcome. Unwelcome changes take the form of a new building development or logging road smack dab in a special place (like the witch hazel spot), a new “cabin” on an otherwise undisturbed lake shore, or land newly posted, where one once felt free to walk.

All these changes appear to be taking place at ever increasing rates in the north country. Even those whose living depends on this progress will lament, in an unguarded moment, the changes that they see. The price or cost of a sense of place than, is the anxiety about what the future may bring.

To borrow an image from our towns and cities that are also changing, I fear the idea of complete dominance by forever young, “pepsi” forests in a “Mac landscape,” a landscape homogenized into habitats where only the most common and weedy species thrive. Uplands dominated by fast growing aspen on short rotations and roadside wetlands with cattail and reed canary grass are examples of these trends.

Is there hope for diverse forests and wetlands in the long term? I think so, although this hope exists on a meager diet (to borrow a phrase from Wendell Berry, a well known protector of the rural landscape). In order to protect native landscapes and maintain the same “sense of place” and opportunities for our grandchildren, we need to elevate the importance of traditional indigenous uses of the land to one of equal footing with whole scale timber production and the development that threatens it.

As I see it, we have opportunities here in the north country that other regions no longer have. We have a forested region that has not yet been totally modified, unlike the former prairie regions south and west of here. Most of our northern landscape is privately owned (by individuals, not large companies) in small parcels and is approaching the second or third cut.

We must pursue a land ethic that encourages these owners to include a portion of their private lands as large tree and wildlife diversity areas, as well as using portions to provide timber and fiber for humans. We need to support and employ those loggers and foresters who believe in small set aside’s and believe that these areas are just as important as the remaining portions that they manage. These land managers interact with the private landowners and are in an excellent position to encourage forest plans that are future reaching. Only by instilling “sense of place” in the very people that will be using and managing the land can we protect the northern landscape and be sustainable in the long term.

(Jim Meeker is an Assistant Professor of Natural Resources at Northland College, Ashland, Wisconsin and is active in regional conservation. Jim received his PhD in Botany from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and his research interests include studies of Great Lakes wetlands and investigations in regional ethnobotany, including joint authorship of “Plants Used by the Great Lakes Ojibwa,” published by GLIFWC.)