

Environmental Review Committee

Tompkins County Oil and Gas Leasing Requests: The Committee discussed at length how to advise the BOR regarding oil and gas leasing proposals on Tompkins County properties. These proposals now include, in addition to two sites in Lansing and one in Newfield, an additional one in Danby at the Hillview Road Landfill site. The committee agreed upon general procedures for all leasing proposals and specific recommendations for each site.

Danby Community Park: Steve Uzmann, Chair, contacted Sue Beeners and requested interested agency status in this matter from the Danby Town Board, the entity requesting Lead Agency status.

Elmira Road Shopping Center Site Plan: The City of Ithaca has issued a Positive Declaration under SEQR for this project and a DEIS will be prepared for the project. The committee agreed to re-submit comments made previously regarding this project.

Black Diamond Trail: The committee is reviewing documents provided at the second public information/input session in Trumansburg on October 23, 2001. We will discuss this matter at our next meeting and keep EMC members informed of developments and the timing of the 3rd and last public input meeting.

Price Anderson Bill Renewal: Committee members discussed drafting a resolution opposing the renewal of this bill by Congress. The bill limits liability of nuclear power producers for accidents.

Submitted by Steve Uzmann

Education Committee

We are preparing a traveling UNA display to take to the NYSAEMC annual meeting in Saratoga Springs. This display will highlight the award winning UNA project, and hopefully will inspire other counties in New York to identify and catalog their own special natural areas. After the conference, it will be possible to use the display at our annual Earthday table, and in public places such as the library.

The UNA committee is being re-activated, and will convene with the Education committee to discuss the correct procedure for designating a 10 acre Hawthorne stand off of Mitchell Street, on Cornell University land, as UNA #193. Apparently this area contains important warbler stopover habitat. We hope to work with the Cornell administration to ascertain if this site meets the criteria to be included as a UNA. Timing is both awkward and crucial, as plans for the site include turning it into playing fields.

To all EMC members with young school age children, Professor Gary Evans of Cornell is working on a study about children's environmental attitudes. He is comparing children of the general public to children of "environmentalists." The first phase of this study involves developing tests to determine how environmentally aware children are. He is looking for children in K-1st grade to interview. If you would like to participate, please email Aliya Hawke at ash27@cornell.edu. My first grader participated and really enjoyed the "games". Gary hopes to ultimately identify what experiences influence a child to become an environmentalist.

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Pesticide Committee

The opt-in deadline for Tompkins County to adopt the Neighbor Notification Law in 2002 will occur before any action can be taken. The four New York counties that have adopted the law have recently won some victories over the legal challenges from the lawn care industry, but decisions are still pending. Onandaga County recently voted 14-10 to not opt in. Our committee is gathering information from these participating counties concerning the issues of enforcement, costs, and public support strategies. Steve will bring back information from the NYSAEMC conference, as this topic will be covered. We will present a report to the BOR in the next few months. While the implementation of this new law has been frustrating, the ultimate goal of dramatically reducing pesticide use through public educational campaigns will remain an important component of any environmental "management".

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Don't Forget!

November 14, 2001 EMC Meeting

Guest Presentations:

George R. Frantz & Associates, Tompkins County Purchase of Development Rights

Gwen Fay, Tompkins County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Results

Announcements

Energy Saving Tip of the Month

Programmable Thermostats

As the heating season has been suddenly thrust upon us, do not be content with last years heating bills again. The US Department of Energy suggests that you can save as much as 10% a year on your heating bills by simply turning your thermostat back 10% to 15% for 8 hours. You can do this automatically without sacrificing comfort by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat. Using a programmable thermostat, you can adjust the times you turn on the heating according to a pre-set schedule. As a result, you don't operate the equipment as much when you are asleep or when the house or part of the house is not occupied. (These thermostats are not meant to be used with heat pumps.) Programmable thermostats can store and repeat multiple daily settings (six or more temperature settings a day) that you can manually override without affecting the rest of the daily or weekly program. When shopping for a programmable thermostat, be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR® label.

Make no mistake, the root cause of all of our recent wars is our dependence on foreign oil. In a recent opinion column in the New York Times by Rob Nixon, he said " Importing oil costs the United States over \$250 billion a year, if one includes federal subsidies and the health and environmental impact of air pollution. America spends \$56 billion on the oil itself and another \$25 billion on the military defense of oil-exporting Middle Eastern countries. There are additional costs in terms of America's international reputation and moral credibility: our appetite for foreign fossil fuels has created a long history of unsavory marriages of convenience with petrodespots, generalissimos and fomenters of terrorism." See <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/29opinion/29NIXO.html> for the full article. This wake up call must include every household reducing their use of fossil fuels through greater energy efficiency.

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Purchase of Development Rights Study Upcoming Public Meetings

Public Meeting: November 8, 2001 at 7:00 PM

Cornell Cooperative Extension

615 Willow Avenue

County Board of Representatives:

December 18, 2001

County Courthouse, Tioga Street

No Reports Submitted

Chair's Report

Coordinator's Report

Executive Committee Report

Water Resources Committee Report