



IROQUOIS ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

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Tribal Safe Fish Consumption Level Setting the Standard

In 1986 the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe issued a fish advisory after results of a Mohawk Breastmilk study revealed elevated PCB levels in nursing mothers. Exposed primarily through fish consumption, women of childbearing age were warned against eating any fish caught from the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. Also included in the '86 advisory was the advice, "Infants and children under the age of 15, should not eat fish with elevated contaminant levels. All fish taken from the St. Lawrence River should be considered contaminated." Certainly, a very scary thought considering until that point Mohawks, men and women alike were consuming fish without any knowledge of high contaminant levels in fish. It's unclear if the tribal advisory was ever updated or rescinded for the New York's Department of Health's (NYSDOH) "Fish Advisory." Nevertheless, the Tribe has been following the NYSDOH guidelines since 1990.

In 1995 the Tribe hired a consultant to revisit the issue of establishing a tribally issued safe fish consumption level. Referencing a need to establish

health-based guidelines specific to tribal lifestyles, Environmental Sciences Group (ESG), was hired to review Akwesasne dietary habits, fish consumption rates, fish advisories, cultural lifestyles, risk assessments and epidemiological studies and subsequently recommend a protective measure for all Akwesasne residents. In addition, the goal of the review was to combine human health and ecological risk assessment methods from western science, with newer more qualitative cultural risk assessment methods using information unique to native cultures.

After initiating their research ESG observed current advisories were not generally protective of Mohawk fish-eaters. Citing that advisories are published primarily for the casual recreational sportsman and not for more, "frequent tribal use of natural resources," ESG outlined some basic flaws in

Raquette River Clean-up: A Step in the Right Direction

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In August 2002, General Motors initiated the clean-up of the Raquette River which had been contaminated with PCBs from the processes used by GM for years. The main concern for the project was to remove PCB contaminated soils from the north bank of the river and contaminated sediment found in the river. The planned 16-week project began with removing contaminated bank soils. As agreed upon under the 1990 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Record of Decision (ROD), any soils with PCB levels above 10 parts per million (ppm) would be removed and sent to a secure disposal facility. Conversely, any soils with PCB levels under 10 ppm would be placed in the East Disposal Area at the GM facility.

As far as the river work went, GM initially planned to use sandbags in more shallow parts of the Raquette in order to remove contaminated sediment. However, due to fluctuation in river levels and the unplanned release of water from upstream dams, the sandbag technique had to be scrapped for an alternative plan. According to Craig Arquette, environmental specialist for the Tribe, "After GM realized the river levels weren't going to

remain constant in the area of concern, it was decided to go with a steel sheet pile wall." The sheet piling proved to be the best method for removing the contaminants from the river. In addition to the sheet piling, GM installed an internal wall creating 2 separate cells that isolated deep-water sediment from shallow water sediment. A dewatering process took place to remove water from the cells using a combination of hoses, storage tanks, and vacuum trucks. Once the dewatering was completed, excavators removed the remaining sediment and loaded it into sealed dump trucks and took it to GM's sediment stockpile area. This material will be sent off to a secure disposal facility. The goal of the sediment removal plan was to excavate until a clean-up goal of 1 part per million (ppm) could be reached.

To date over 11,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil and 1,400 cubic yards of river sediment, respectively, have been removed from the site. The Tribe views this clean-up as successful but is careful not to be overzealous in its praise because the largest concern regarding General Motors hasn't been addressed.

The 12-acre "industrial-dump" has been a long-standing point of contention for the Mohawk people, as the myriad of sludges, wastes, and other toxic materials placed in the dump continually leach into the river and threaten the health of Mohawk residents living near the Superfund site. "Certainly, anytime PCBs are removed from a site, that's a good thing. But the main issue at GM as far as the Tribe is concerned will be the removal of industrial dump or at least a serious attempt to present solutions that will eliminate the health threat posed from the dump. We haven't seen that yet," says Lornie Swamp, environmental health

West Nile Virus: The Facts

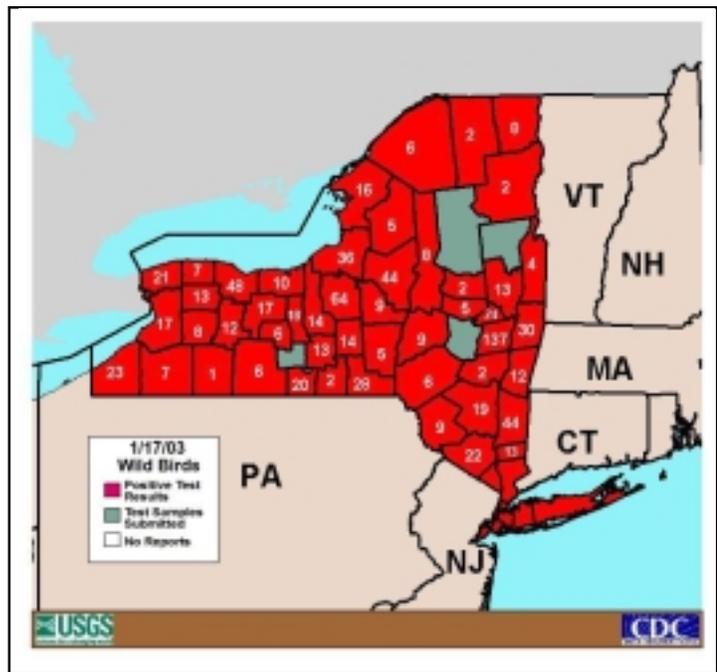
Background

Since West Nile virus (WNV) was first isolated in 1937, it has been known to cause asymptomatic infection and fevers in humans in Africa, West Asia, and the Middle East. Human and animal infections were not documented in the Western Hemisphere until 1999. In 1999 and 2000, outbreaks of WNV encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) were reported in persons living in the New York City metropolitan area, New Jersey, and Connecticut. In these two years, 83 human cases of West Nile illness were reported; 9 died. In 2001, human infection with WNV occurred in 10 states with 66 cases and 9 deaths. In 2002, WNV activity has spread to most eastern and mid-western states, with 113 cases and 5 deaths as of August 8.

WNV is transmitted to humans through mosquito bites. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds that have high levels of WNV in their blood. Infected mosquitoes can then transmit WNV when they feed on humans or other animals.

WNV is not transmitted from person to person and there is no evidence that a person can get infected by handling live or dead infected birds. But, to add a further level of safety, if birds or other potentially infected animals must be handled, a protective barrier (e.g., gloves, inverted plastic bags) should be used.

Most WNV infected humans have no symptoms. A small proportion develops mild symptoms that include fever, headache, body aches, skin rash and swollen lymph glands. Less than 1% of infected people develop more severe illness that includes meningitis (inflammation of the spinal cord) or encephalitis.



Positive Bird cases of WNV in NY in 2002

Prevention

Avoid Mosquito Bites to Avoid Infection

- Human illness from West Nile virus is rare, even in areas where the virus has been reported. The chance that any one person is going to become ill from a mosquito bite is low. You can further reduce your chances of becoming ill by protecting yourself from mosquito bites. To avoid mosquito bites:
- Minimize the time you spend outside during the evening when the mosquitos are typically feeding
- Wear long pants, long sleeve shirts, shoes, and socks when you are at risk of mosquito contact like walking in the woods or by water
- Apply insect repellent to skin when there is a risk of mosquito contact
- Limit the number of places available for mosquitos to lay their eggs by eliminating standing water sources from around your home.

More West Nile Virus Information on Page 13

River Remedial Efforts from Alcoa Plants in Massena Remain a Work in Progress By Jessica Jock

Upper Management changes in the EPA's Emergency and Remedial Response Division has been a leading factor for the stand still on decision making for the Lower Grasse River Remediation Project. As with any other complex environmental remediation, the EPA wants to make sure they're taking all factors into consideration before approaching the public with a Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP). To do this, the new management must fully familiarize themselves with 13 years of past river studies, Project remedial efforts, and public use along the Lower Grasse River. The Lower Grasse River Study Area consists of about an 8.5-mile stretch beginning just upstream from the Power Canal Dam. The river has been historically contaminated by discharge from the Alcoa Massena plant with contaminants known to be toxic to human health, including PCBs. The EPA is currently looking at two different methods to reduce risk of contaminants to human health: Dredging and Capping. These two methods have been broken down further into 12 different remedial component

alternatives. The EPA then compares the 12 Alternatives against EPA's nine criteria for Contaminated Sediment Remediation: (1) Overall Protection of Human Health and the Environment, (2) Compliance with Applicable and Relevant Appropriate Requirements (ARARs), (3) Long-term Effectiveness and Permanence, (4) Reduction of Toxicity, Mobility, or Volume through Treatment, (5) Short-Term Effectiveness (6) Implementability, (7) Cost, (8) State/Tribal Acceptance, and (9) Community Acceptance. The Remedial Alternative that incorporates all of the criteria with the maximum risk reduction will be the chosen alternative to remedy the Lower Grasse River.

Remaining efforts to finalize St. Lawrence River Remediation work is underway this spring with more sampling from the Alcoa East Plant (Reynolds). Fall 2002 sampling efforts determined that there is still some concern for lingering Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)

remaining at the Alcoa East Plant St. Lawrence River Remediation site from 2001 efforts. The initial remedial efforts focused on PCB removal from the riverbed. Post-dredging samples showed successful removal of the majority of PCB contamination. Those areas that were not removed to acceptable levels were contained with a temporary cap layer. More sampling for PAHs is to take place this spring in hopes to determine PAH contamination boundaries and then work forth to implement a remedial action plan.

Our Office Computer Guy



Daniel Benedict joined the staff at the SRMT Environment Division in October and entered his new position with a trial by fire introduction as he was immediately inundated with the installation of a new server and new internet connections. Previously, Daniel trained as a computer technician with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. His other interests include drawing and racket sports. Welcome aboard, Daniel!

New Email Addresses

The SRMT Environment Division staff have new email addresses, as well as a new website location.

ken_jock@srmtenv.org
 les_benedict@srmtenv.org
 denean_cook@srmtenv.org
 shawn_martin@srmtenv.org
 lornie_swamp@srmtenv.org
 laura_weber@srmtenv.org
 craig_arquette@srmtenv.org
 teres_seymour@srmtenv.org
 aimee_debo@srmtenv.org
 adrian_mcdonald@srmtenv.org
 tom_debo@srmtenv.org
 barbara_tarbell@srmtenv.org
 jim_snyder@srmtenv.org
 jenna_herne@srmtenv.org
 evan_thompson@srmtenv.org
 jari_thompson@srmtenv.org
 russell_phillips@srmtenv.org
 jessica_jock@srmtenv.org
 bobby_phillips@srmtenv.org
 daniel_benedict@srmtenv.org
 joyce_barkley@srmtenv.org
 angela_benedict_dunn@srmtenv.org

EPA approves SRMT Clean Water Act 106 Delegation

In October 2002, the USEPA approved the SRMT February 2000 application to administer programs of the Clean Water Act and be treated in the same manner as States. This approval gives the Tribe the eligibility to administer its water quality standards programs under sections: 303 – standards, 305 – water quality inventory, 319 – non point source, and 401 – certification of (National Permit Discharge Elimination System) NPDES general permit for storm water discharges associated with construction activity. This allows the Tribe to continue its work in reference to water quality programs and finalize the draft water quality standards already being developed. Once the standards are approved and meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act, the community of Akwesasne will review and comment on the standards. Once the community and Tribal Council agrees upon the water quality standards they will be instituted through a Council resolution. These standards will allow for upstream sources of pollution to meet Tribal water quality standards in all waters in Akwesasne. Pollution sources will be controlled in and around Akwesasne to allow for these stricter standards to be monitored and enforced. The program will continue to work on preparing the Tribes capability to administer Sections 308 – inspection, monitoring, and entry in regards to point source discharges, 309 – enforcement, 402 – NPDES permitting program, and Section 404 – wetlands dredge and fill program. If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water program please contact Shawn Martin at (518) 358 – 5937 x12.

Check out our new Website:

www.srmtenv.org

ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENT REPORT

By Craig Arquette

Sept.'02 - March'03

This is the quarterly installment of the Environmental Incident Report to the Iroquois Environmental Newsletter (IEN). An updated incident report will continue to be in all future issues of IEN. The purpose of this report is to make the readers of IEN aware of the numbers and types of incidents that our Environmental Response Team responds to.

The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's certified Environmental Response Team members include Ken Jock, Les Benedict, Shawn Martin, Craig Arquette, Laura Weber, Lornie Swamp, Angela Dunn, Marie Benedict, Aimee Benedict, Denean Cook, Teres Thompson, Jim Snyder, Tom Debo, Adrian McDonald, Jennifer Herne, Jessica Jock, and Evan Thompson.

NATURE OF INCIDENT NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

Residential Fuel Oil Leak	6
Motor Vehicle Leak	1
Business	2

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Tips for Safe Storage and Disposal of Gasoline

Information provided by
American Petroleum Institute and
Craig Arquette-Environment Division

Gasoline is an important part of our everyday lives. It lets us run our cars and trucks, getting the kids to school and the groceries home. It helps us keep our grass and gardens looking good, powering mowers and lawn care equipment. It lets us get away on vacation, running boats, off-road vehicles, and motorcycles.

But gasoline can be dangerous if not handled or stored properly. Gasoline should only be used for its intended purpose - as a motor fuel - and stored only when absolutely necessary. It should not be used as a solvent, cleaner, barbecue starter or for any other non-engine use.

Take the following precautions:

Gasoline must be stored in an approved container or tank. Keep gasoline containers tightly closed and handle them gently to avoid spills.

Gasoline is a flammable liquid and should be stored at room temperature, away from potential heat sources such as the sun, a hot water heater, space heater or a furnace, and at least 50 feet away from ignition sources, such as pilot lights. Gasoline vapors are heavier than air and can travel along the floor to ignition sources. Do not smoke where gasoline is handled or stored.

Put gasoline in a small engine (like a lawnmower) only when the engine and attachments are cool.

Store gasoline in a building separate from the house or place of occupancy, such as a shed or garage. Always keep gasoline out of reach from children.

For better ventilation, it is best to handle gasoline outdoors.

Do not mix even a small amount of gasoline with kerosene or diesel. Do not use gasoline in kerosene heaters or lamps.

News From the Tribe's Solid Waste Management Program

Written By: Laura Weber
Director- Solid Waste Management

This has been a busy season for the Tribe's Solid Waste Management Program. The Tribe continues to offer curbside collection of garbage through the use of its blue bag pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) program, and collection of recyclables through the use of its recycling depot. Since the inception of the PAYT program in July 2002, the Tribe has collected approximately 45 tons of garbage and 46 tons of recyclables through their recycling depot.

For the first time ever, the Tribe collected white goods, scrap metal, and other bulky items from residents in the community during their fall 2002 cleanup program. For eight weeks, old refrigerators, water heaters, stoves, couches, TVs, and other bulky items lined the roads of the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation. Four staff from the Tribe's solid waste program used two trucks to collect the materials. One truck collected recyclables and one collected non-recyclables. The recyclables were taken to a local scrap metal dealer for recycling and the non-recyclables were taken to a local transfer station for disposal.

The Tribe collected a total of 300 tons during their fall cleanup program; 102 tons of material was non-recyclable and 198 tons were recyclable. The cost for the fall 2002 cleanup program were covered by the Tribe's General Fund and many thanks go to Tribal Council and Tribal Administration for sponsoring this successful event.

The Solid Waste Program is also busy planning for the first time household hazardous waste collection day. This will be held on Saturday, July 19, 2003 and will be open to all residents that live on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation. The Solid Waste Program will be releasing additional information about this collection day in the upcoming months.

The goal of the Tribe's solid waste program is to provide reliable and flexible service at a cost people can afford. Please contact the Environment Division at 518-358-5937, ext. 32 to learn how you can begin saving money.



Black Ash Conference 2002
By: Les Benedict, ATFE
Black Ash Project
Coordinator

The Akwesasne Task Force (ATFE) hosted the second Black Ash Conference in Akwesasne Mohawk Territory, July 18 & 19, 2002. The conference was held in Kanatakon at the community recreation center. The purpose of the conference was information sharing, networking for Native Americans and support agencies involved with Black Ash restoration and preservation, reviewing previous work and planning for the future.

Many Tribal members who earlier in the week had attended the Tree of Peace Learning Center Basket Makers conference attended the Black Ash Conference and help make the conference a success by sharing their experiences and knowledge.

The Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment, the American Friends Services Committee (AFSC) and the US Forest Service are acknowledged and thanked for supporting this years conference and contributing to the success of the exchange of knowledge, information and friendship.

The format of the conference was a



blend of half-day presentations and half day site visits. This format seemed to work well for people to network and exchange information on an informal basis. In keeping with Haudonesaunee (Iroquois) tradition the conference was opened with the Thanksgiving Address, an acknowledgement to the natural world and to those in attendance of the natural cycles of life and interconnectedness and a call for opening of minds and joining as one for the duration of the conference.

A notable guest speaker, Mr. Peter Jemison, Director for the Ganadogan Historical site, Victor, NY an expert in Native culture and an author on Iroquois treaties opened with a thorough and insightful discussion of Iroquois interaction with European cultures throughout the time of colonization and to present day. Mr. Jemison's discussion revolved around the wampum or treaty belts that hold

forever the agreements that were made between the transitioning governments of colonial history to present day United States. Mr. Jemison related his discussion to the hunting, fishing and gathering rights that are applicable to modern day Iroquois people.

Peggy Pyke-Thompson, Wetlands Biologist, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, Environment Division, gave a presentation on wetlands, their cultural and ecological values. Ms. Thompson's presentation discussed the importance of Black Ash as a wetlands hardwood species and overviewed its site characteristics and identification.

Ms. Thompson also talked about the Presidential Award winning wetlands restoration project that she worked with

.....continued next page

the Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS) on over the past 2 years. The turtle shaped excavation won a President's Award in 2002 for its characteristics in restoring an impacted wetlands and fostering the return of many native wetlands plants and animals. Ms. Thompson is considered a leader in the community for her dedication to preserving wetlands plants and in particular traditional medicinal plants.

Mr. Richard David, Assistant Director, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, and co-author of the Black Ash Restoration book gave a slide presentation of the most recent Black Ash tree seedling distribution that occurred in spring 2002. Several thousand seedlings, obtained from seed collections made by Mr. David and Les Benedict over the past several years, were distributed amongst the Iroquois nations in New York and Ontario. The tree distribution climaxed the ATFE demonstration project that David and Benedict have been working on since 1991. The distribution of these trees represents the type of cooperation and coordination that can be done in preserving Black Ash and provides encouragement and incentive for other Native American's to conduct their own efforts.

The afternoon was spent touring, by bus, Cornwall Island Black Ash plantations at the residence of Mr. Lloyd Benedict and Ms. Marita Skidders. Mr. Benedict has a successful plantation, intended as a seed orchard, that is easily accessible for visitors. Mr. Benedict's plantation was part of a project funded by Mr. Peter Smallidge, Cornell University and David Greene, Sea-Grant, Buffalo in 1998. Ms. Skidders is the oldest plantation in Akwesasne, transplanted as seedlings from the Brasher State Forest in 1992.

July 19, 2002 began with field tours: A trip to the Akwesasne Cultural Center and Museum, under the Direction of Ms. Sue-Ellen Dow. The museum has an extensive basket display in addition to other Mohawk cultural displays. The Center is also a gathering place for basket making classes instructed by local Mohawk basket makers. Many new basket makers have learned from these experts and have gone on to become renowned basket makers in their own rights. By chance two Mohawk basket makers were making a delivery to the Museum gift shop and were able to sell some of their baskets.

The next tour was of the AFS wetlands site that was mentioned earlier. The site was hosted by Mr. Dave Arquette, AFS parent and Assistant Director, Haudensaunee Environmental Task Force. Mr. Arquette gave a brief history of the AFS and its mission goal, total

Mohawk language and cultural immersion in elementary to high school classes. He proudly mentioned that the wetlands had been worked on by many students, parents and faculty along with the support of State and Federal cooperators and was recognized nationally.

The afternoon of the 19th consisted of final presentations for the conference. Ms. Daniela Shebitz, SUNY-ESF graduate student presented a summary of her study and thesis regarding Sweetgrass preservation. Ms. Shebitz discussed the extent of Sweetgrass, its use in basket making and reductions in population. She presented information on study into the reproductive capacities of Sweetgrass and the challenges presented by it. Her study and set up of experimental plots ranged from greenhouse pots to a plot at the Mohawk resettlement community of Kanatsioharake, in the Mohawk Valley of New York. Her work has resulted in a transfer of technology that can be utilized by those wishing to propagate Sweetgrass.

Ms. Carole Ann Maracle, Mohawk Community of Teyindinaga, discussed her involvement with students at

with Black Ash restoration. Ms. Maracle, an accomplished craftsperson who does beadwork and leatherwork, had a long-time desire to make baskets. When Richard David got into contact with her as part of the seedling distribution she was working on an arts and craft curriculum. She also was the lead person for planting the Black Ash seedlings. She thought about these two needs and quickly connected them by developing a curriculum of basket making linked to Black Ash tree preservation and Mohawk culture. Her students readily and enthusiastically took on the challenge of planning for the trees, planted the trees in early spring in the wet and cold and eventually made crafts from ash splints. Her project has become a model of success that caught notice of local media, educators and community members.

Marla Emery, friend and supporter of the Black Ash preservation effort, from the US Forest Service, Burlington, VT highlighted her agencies role and efforts in “Non-timber forest resources (NTFR)”. She mentioned that she was the only NTFR representative in the agency and has been involved with developing and implementing USFS policy to support people who rely on NTFR for a variety of reasons: supplemental income; subsistence, crafts, etc. She discussed the legislation behind the USFS’s effort and explained her personal commitment to work with people in this area.

Before the traditional closing, a roundtable discussion took place, moderated by Les Benedict and Richard David, in which attendees were asked for comments and ideas about future efforts. In general it was requested that the previous effort be continued but an educational component be developed to incorporate basket making and support technologies (tool making, logging, tree identification) be incorporated into local educational programs.

Each presenter is thanked and acknowledged for their contribution to the conference. Ms. Shebitz provided Sweetgrass plugs for everyone who wanted one to take home and plant.

Each day of the conference every attendee was treated to wholesome break snacks and lunches prepared by the Recreation Center Staff. Anyone who's left hungry has only themselves to blame.

A basket display and a Black Ash informational display were provided for attendees to view while at the conference.

With the support of USFS funding, several conference attendees were provided travel and lodging assistance and honorariums were disbursed for presenters. This type of support was vital to the success of the conference. Conference room expenses were also supported by the USFS funds.

The conference was organized and planned by: Richard David, David Arquette, Joanna Sunday, Dawn David and myself. Several months of lunch-time meetings and after hours meetings as well as phone calls, letter writing, announcement distribution and the host of other tasks that must be done to organize such a conference were all done as volunteer hours by these people. Their efforts are appreciated.

A copy of proceedings is being developed and assembled and will be available mid year 2003 along with photos. The proceedings will be distributed to all attendees in electronic format, most likely Adobe PDF for cross platform access.

“Voices of the Water: Are we listening?”

**Native American Fish and Wildlife Society
Northeast Regional Conference
Akwesasne, NY
August 5-7, 2003**

**“Be part of this journey to Preserve, Protect and Enhance
Native American Natural Resources”**

The non-profit Native American Fish & Wildlife Society has been around since the early 1980's and its focus has been to bring together professional & technical personnel from many tribes throughout the country. The vision of the NAFWS has been to help guard, manage and preserve the Fish & Wildlife. The NAFWS hosts several conferences a year, one for each region and one national conference. This will be a great opportunity for the Akwesasne Mohawks to host the NAFWS first Northeast Regional Conference in Haudenosaunee Territory. The Conference will be held August 5-7, 2003. These conferences bring people together to discuss the policies used in decision making, environmental issues, tribal hunting & fishing, education, wildlife management, cultural and scientific concerns. The NAFWS has been coordinating with tribes to improve the overall welfare of our people and their natural resources. The Society also puts together quarterly publications "From the Eagles Nest" and some technical & educational training. If you or anyone you know would like to become a member of the society or attend the conference you may contact Jenna Herne or Jim Snyder at (518) 358-5937 (8-4pm) weekdays or at our website at www.srmtenv.org

Black Ash Silviculture and Preservation Workshop

Theme: Combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Science to Sustain a Natural and Cultural Resource

2nd Announcement!

Date Confirmed: October 4 & 5, 2003

Times 8:30-4:30 each day

Location: Akwesasne Mohawk Nation

Classroom Location – Cornwall Island (Kawenoke)

at the Richard David Center of Excellence. Directions and other information provided when you register.

The workshop is designed specifically for Native American/Aboriginal foresters, tree preservationists and community leaders that would like to develop hands-on skills in black ash preservation skills that incorporate Native American/Aboriginal traditional values and knowledge.

The workshop format will consist of classroom instruction, discussion and hands-on fieldwork.

Topics: Traditional knowledge as a basis for preservation; tree identification, seed collection and handling; and tree management practices.

A traditional meal is being planned. Other Native healthy foods will be served at the workshop. If you have something you would like to share let us know and bring it along.

Supported by the US Forest Service and the Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment.

We have travel support scholarships for those who require it. Please contact us about your assistance needs, we want to help as many as we can.

There is room for many, but we need to know ahead of time that you will be there so we can plan accordingly. The last date to register is August 1, 2003. Register by e-mail or phone. If you have to cancel let us know at least 2 weeks ahead of time.

Contact: Les Benedict les_benedict@srmtenv.org, (315) 323-5574; Richard David rdavid@akwesasne.ca, (613) 936-1408.

WNV..... Continued from Pg. 3

The symptoms of these illnesses can include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis. Of the few people that develop encephalitis, a small proportion die but, overall, this is estimated to occur in less than 1 out of 1000 infections.

What You Can Do

Around the House

All doors and windows should have tight fitting screens in good repair

Remove all discarded tires from your property . They provide breeding areas for mosquitoes

Dispose of water holding containers lying around your yard

Turn over any plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.

Always circulate and chlorinate swimming pool water. Drain off pool covers.

Change bird bath water twice weekly

Ensure that your eaves troughs are clean and flow properly.

If You Find a Dead Bird

All ill or dead birds should be reported to the Local Health Unit, please contact Lynne Thompson, at 358-3141, Ext. 193. Only crows which appear to be freshly dead (within 24 hours) will be sent in for testing. Please note: not all dead crows will be sent in - that will be determined by the Franklin County Public Health Department representative.

"gasoline storage," continued from pg. 6

Never dispose of spilled gasoline or cleaning materials on the ground or into your garbage, drains, toilets or sewers. If you do, it might cause a fire, or seep into streams, bays, lakes or your groundwater.

Minor spills should be absorbed with sawdust, paper or rags. For larger spills you should contact the Environment Division at 358-5937 and we will assist you in cleaning it up.

If you have gasoline that has become unusable for some reason, you should store it in an approved container. Mark the container so it is not used accidentally. You can call the Environment Division at 358-5937 to find out how you can properly dispose of it.

Raquette River.....continued from Pg. 2

education specialist for the Tribe. But progress is good and efforts put forth by all parties to make the Raquette River clean-up happen shouldn't be marginalized. In fact, Jane Kenny, EPA Region 2 Administrator has just visited Akwesasne to meet with the Tribe to discuss possible remedies for the toxic dump. However, a substantial health risk remains as the industrial dump ominously peers over the St. Lawrence River and over the border of Mohawk lands. As Mohawk people, we will need to remain as diligent as ever until a viable solution for the dump is in our foreseeable future.

The SRMT Natural Resource Damage Assessment Program has selected two researchers to carry out the first phase of the Cultural Impact Assessment project, to be completed this coming year: Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, a professor at the University of Victoria, and Kreg Ettenger, an independent consultant based in Syracuse and Montreal. This project's objective is to determine to what extent damages of natural resources have affected Akwesasne Mohawks. If you have any questions regarding this project or are interested in meeting Dr. Alfred and Mr. Ettenger, you may contact Jari Thompson or Barbara Tarbell at the SRMT Environment Division.



Dr. Gerald Taiaiake Alfred

Shekon skennenkowa akwekon. I was born at Tiotia:ke in 1964 and raised in Kahnawake, where I lived and worked until 1996, when I moved to the west coast. I've worked in our Nation for many years, and continue to be involved in the social, political and cultural life of our people. From 1987 to 2000, I was an advisor for the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake, and two years ago, I worked with the Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment on the NYPA relicensing project. I have a Ph.D. in political science from Cornell University, and have published two books and many articles on our people's history and Haudenosaunee philosophy. These days I work mainly with youth groups and traditional elders to bring forward a vision for change in our communities and to defend the land and the natural environment, which is our responsibility as Onkwehonwe.



Kreg T. Ettenger

My work focuses on the relationship between humans and the environment, And the role of traditional knowledge and cultural values in people's relationship to nature. I have worked in the U.S., Canada, and India on projects ranging from an environmental education TV series to groundwater protection on the Tuscarora Nation. Most of my experience is with Cree communities in northern Quebec, where I conducted fieldwork for my (almost-finished) doctorate in anthropology from Syracuse University. These and other projects have helped me understand the crucial role that natural resources, and nature in general, play in the lives of indigenous families, and how your communities are affected when resources are lost or damaged. I trust that this experience will serve me well as I explore the impacts that pollution has had on the people and culture of Akwesasne.

"Safe Fish," continued from Pg. 1

the advisories applicable to risk management and risk communication. Noting among other things, that Mohawk fishermen aren't required to purchase fishing licenses on Mohawk land, so the published health advisories usually accompanying hunting and fishing licenses weren't communicated. Furthermore, federal fish tissue action levels for consumption are not conservative enough to protect for health risks for Mohawk fishers. Consumption rates are significantly greater than the 0.5-pound per month assumed for the development of the federal guideline action levels. Another important aspect is that integrating and estimating cultural impacts and health risk evaluations, a relatively new trend in risk assessment, is difficult to define. However, ESG points out there are likely adverse health impacts to Mohawks from the stress induced when traditional uses of fish and wildlife are adversely impacted.

The information provided by ESG will serve to establish a safe fish consumption level and add another tribally set standard that is most protective of our people and ecosystem. The other Tribal ARARs (Applicable or Relevant Appropriate Requirements) or standards for sediment, soil, groundwater, and air are more stringent than the state and even federal guidelines for these media. The proposed safe fish standard will only illuminate an already impressive list of tribal standards that are above and beyond what is deemed as acceptable in other parts of the US. However, before the proposed fish standard becomes a tribal resolution, it will have to go through a peer review process and then through a public comment period. If accepted, the fish standard would be placed in a brochure/flyer format and put through a focus group to determine culturally appropriate content and messages. Finally, the brochure containing the tribal safe standard would be mailed out to the community and also placed at marinas and key locations around the community. The tribal safe fish consumption level will be released in Spring 2004.

IROQUOIS ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

Published Spring and Fall of each year by the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, Environment Division. The mission statement of the IEN is to inform and educate Iroquois Nation people and to network with other members of the Iroquois Nation regarding environmental issues in our territories.

The IEN is funded by the U.S.E.P.A, under the General Assistance Agreement Program.

The viewpoints contained in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the USEPA or the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. The IEN encourages free and open discussion of all environmentally related issues. We encourage submission of letters, comments, and articles from our readers so as to promote a greater awareness among our people about environmental issues and to foster the free exchange of information, technology, and culturally relevant values of all Iroquois people.

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IEN

Issue #20

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Spring '03

Iroquois Environmental Newsletter

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