



ATLANTIC REGIONAL MEETING OF THE CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION

by Winston Johnston, Provincial Director from P.E.I. to CNF

Four Island representatives, Winifred Cairns, Rosemary Curley, Winston Johnston and Dan MacAskill attended on Nov. 7th in Halifax, the first regional meeting of CNF held in the Atlantic Provinces. John Willms, Toronto, President of CNF; Hal Mills, Halifax, Vice President of CNF; Rick Pratt, CNF's Director of Conservation, Ottawa; and about 30 other representatives from the four Atlantic Provinces were in attendance.

The Environmental Action Program conducted by CNF was discussed by R. Pratt. Acid rain continues to have a high priority with CNF and they have recently lobbied the political leaders of both United States and Canada on their responsibilities in reducing air-borne contaminants released in each country. Northern development, whaling and other conservation activities continue to occupy much of the resources of CNF. Incidentally, this last postal strike, while not disrupting CNF's activities critically, has resulted in a drop in income and the necessary reshuffling of priorities.

A panel discussion chaired by Ian McLaren, former President of CNF, centred primarily on the large losses in the forest industry from fire and pests and those forestry practices which are relying on pesticide use to protect both developing and mature forests. Other speakers on the panel were Clinton Edmonds, Regional Director General of Environment Canada; Bill Freedman, a forest ecologist from Dalhousie University; and Elizabeth May, board member of CNF. Other issues of concern brought forward for discussion were the Point LePreau nuclear plant, disposal of mining wastes, and of interest to the Natural History Society, development of shore land such as that proposed for the Greenwich area of P.E.I.

This meeting allowed CNF to hear of the concerns of the Atlantic Provinces and to be able to prioritize these with concerns of others and the resources of CNF to deal with such environmental problems. It is to be hoped that such a meeting will be held on a yearly basis so that more individual CNF members may attend and participate in the work of both their regional organizations and of CNF.

Chief Atlantic Region Environmental Concerns as Identified by Panelists and Speakers

1. impacts of forestry (clear cutting, fire, pests, nutrient transport)
2. long range transport of air pollutants (acid rain plus other toxic chemicals)
3. marine environmental quality (offshore oil and gas, pollutants, seabird effects)
4. marine resources (depletion of fish stocks, broader ecological implications of exploitation, by-catch of rare species)
5. ecological reserves (lack of action, some habitats under represented)
6. hazardous waste disposal (present methods illegal, not-in-my-backyard syndrome)
7. energy (implications of tidal, coal, nuclear, hydro; conservation)
8. coal mining (loss of land, pollution, acid mine drainage, effects of no scrubbers)
9. pesticide use and regulation (screening and licensing, culling of most dangerous)
10. mining developments (tin near Yarmouth, uranium elsewhere in N.S., lead near Bathurst; concern with wastes)
11. loss of public concern for environmental matters and getting information to affected members of the public
12. current total state of the environment