

Appendix E

Annual Penobscot Bay Conference Held at MMA; Sessions Draw 140

By Penny-Jo Smith Clark
CASTINE—Everything from aquaculture to tips on regional planning to why people move to Downeast Maine was discussed at the second annual Penobscot Bay Conference at the Maine Maritime Academy this week.

More than 140 people turned out for the series of presentations and workshops held in MMA's Delano Auditorium on April 9, according to Ron Beard, conference organizer from the UM Hancock County Extension Office in Ellsworth.

MMA President Kenneth Curtis gave the opening address to start the daylong event Saturday, said John Staples, director of public relations at the academy.

"He talked about the necessity of drawing a balance between economic development and environmental protection. It's not a choice of one or the other in Maine. It's a matter of making it work in a collaborative effort, a joint effort, to create long-term sustainability," Staples said Tuesday.

Next, Les Watling, from the UM Darling Marine Center, showed a videotape of the "floor of the Penobscot Bay—which

was of a lot of interest to people who skin-dive," Beard said.

Four major presentations came during the morning session of the conference. The first discussed how the Penobscot Bay Region is perceived by retirees as a place to live and buy goods and services. Panelists included Raymond and Jamie Doubleday, owners of a small woodworking firm in Warren, and Bill Grady of Bucksport, representing Champion International.

Michael Perry, from L.L. Bean, and Gary Ensworth, owner of the Phoenix Centre in Blue Hill, discussed whether or not the region had an attraction because of its historical heritage and ecosystem. If so, then how could it be marketed? Tammis Coffin, Friends of Acadia, provided counterpoints on how too many people coming into an area can begin to change cultural and natural resources, said Beard.

Sonny Sprague, Island Aquaculture Co. on Swan's Island, and Brian Beal, from UM in Machias, related issues surrounding salmon and soft-shelled clams during the Community Initiatives in Aquaculture portion of the seminar.

The final morning session entailed a look at the role of regional transportation advisory committees. Pat Jennings, Mid-coast Regional Planning, and Bruce Hodson and Francis King with the MDOT in Augusta emphasized that communities "have a greater role to play advising the MDOT regarding road construction, traffic congestion, bicycle routes, and ferry schedules," explained Beard.

During the afternoon seminars, Robert Ho, executive director of the Maine Rural Development Council, led a panel discussion on how different agencies collaborate for regional planning. "Gladiators don't dance," Ho told the group. If people gear up to be adversaries, then they can't do a good job in collaboration. He urged folks to set the music and work together, Beard said.

Panelist Karin Tilberg serves on the Maine Environmental Priorities Project, a commission created by the Governor. She told those at the conference that her group is looking at what are the highest environmental risks to the state of Maine so that, with limited dollars, the state

can focus on the most important problems first. The commission consists of environmental, business, and industry leaders—all working together to set procedures for determining priorities. The project originated from the College of the Atlantic, Beard said.

Smaller workshops were held throughout the afternoon. Beard said, overall, he was pleased with the conference.

"We brought people together from diverse backgrounds and provided them with a chance to talk with one another," he said.

Over the next year, many of those involved in the conference will network to form a specific action plan. They will explore successful programs at work in Maine and other countries as they work on a plan for the Penobscot Bay area, he said.

Will there be a third annual conference next year? "Oh, who knows? It depends on how much these people talk with each other. It may make sense to do a third," said Beard.

COMPASS

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EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES SECTION
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Penobscot Bay Conference April 9 in Castine

CASTINE—Twenty years ago the issues were framed as “payrolls or pickerel,” trying to determine a middle course to protect jobs and natural resources. Today’s dialogue uses words like sustainability, an ecosystem approach, and quality of life. It is that dialogue that organizers of The Penobscot Bay Conference hope to continue at a second day-long session on Maine’s largest bay and watershed.

“Last year we focused on understanding what we knew about the bay, its people, and the land uses of the region. This year we’ll attempt to look at how we can sustain the region, tending to both economic and environmental benchmarks,” said Ron Beard, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and one of the planners for the conference. The day-long session, set for Saturday, April 9, is being hosted by Maine Maritime Academy in Castine.

Kenneth M. Curtis, President of Maine Maritime Academy, and former governor of Maine and US Ambassador to Canada, will provide a keynote address. He is expected to

comment on the potential for local sustainability even as work proceeds toward sharing opportunity and responsibility for larger maritime resources of the Gulf of Maine.

Curtis will be followed by an illustrated “anatomy of the bay,” presented by Dr. Les Watling of the University of Maine Darling Marine Center.

The idea for the conference stems from a visit to the bay region in 1991 by a team of land use experts from the US, Canada, England, and Wales. Under the auspices of the Vermont-based Countryside Institute, the study team observed the “world class” cultural and natural resources of the bay area and recommended attention by local land trusts to develop a regional identity and protect the “working landscape” devoted to agriculture, forestry, and maritime industry.

An evaluation by participants in last year’s conference led organizers to increase their focus on the role of local business and industry, as well as local elected officials, said Mike Bush of Eastern Maine Development

Corporation, a conference sponsor. “One session will look at the relationship between quality of life and the significant economic contributions of retirees and others who are attracted to the region,” he said. Bush and Pat Jennings of Mid Coast Regional Planning are also organizing a session on the community role in aquaculture, looking to the recent Island Institute experience with salmon culture on Swans Island, which sits at the easternmost edge of the Bay.

In addition to these sessions, panels will discuss transportation issues

for Penobscot Bay and the surrounding communities and trends in “ecotourism” that respond to visitor interest in learning more about the natural and cultural resources of the region. Afternoon workshops will highlight collaboration between communities and agencies, with participation by members of the Maine Environmental Priorities Project and others.

Following the close of sessions, participants will be able to celebrate the music, poetry, and scenery of the Bay in the Penobscot Punch Festival, co-sponsored by Maine/NH Sea

Grant Marine Program. The festival will feature the musical groups Old Grey Goose and Trillium, with readings by Bill Carpenter, Stuart Kestenbaum, Kathleen Lignell, Jack Merrill, Sylvester Pollet, and Susan Shetterly and a multi-image program by photographer Sherman Habrouck.

Advance registration for the conference is required due to space limitations. Information on the proceedings and registration for the 1994 conference are available from University of Maine Cooperative Extension in Ellsworth, at 667-8212 or 800-287-1479.

Aquaculture tops conference agenda

By Kathy Harbour
Of the NEWS Staff

CASTINE — Aquaculture ventures are writing a promising chapter in the history of Maine's economic and environmental links to the sea, according to the general manager of a salmon aquaculture business on Swans Island.

Sonny Sprague of the Island Aquaculture Co. spoke Saturday at the Penobscot Bay Conference at Maine Maritime Academy. It was the second consecutive year for the conference that drew more than 100 people who considered the economic and environmental health of the region at several workshops during the day.

As a lifetime resident of a year-round island community, Sprague said the aquaculture business provides a livelihood to island residents while preserving the environmental health of the coastal waters.

Ken Curtis, president of MMA, underlined the importance of marine industries in his opening remarks. Listing Maine's three basic resources — people, forests and the ocean — Curtis said action must be taken to protect the sea.

Sprague explained how he and others had turned to the sea to ensure the long-term health and vitality of their year-round island community that had seen its young people leave and never return for lack of employment opportunities.

The former Swans Island selectman and a handful of others on the island in Frenchman Bay purchased the financially ailing company last year and managed to turn a profit. The bitterly cold conditions this winter spelled near disaster for the penned fish but quick processing saved the lot.

For Sprague and many others on Swans Island, aquaculture is providing a livelihood to the is-

land community that historically has made its living from the sea.

Carter Newall of Great Eastern Mussel Farms in St. George explained how shellfish production is a good economic argument for clean water. Newall, who has played an active role in research into aquaculture, said a successful aquaculture venture must be built on sound environmental policy.

Newall said that research about eelgrass has proven that the marine flowering plant is vital for many species of coastal marine life, such as juvenile fish and shellfish, particularly young mussels. That information, Newall said, demonstrates the connections between economic and environmental health.

According to Les Walling of the University of Maine's Darling Marine Center, Penobscot Bay is home for at least 1,000 species of invertebrate animals and a perfect place for aquaculture.

BANGOR DAILY NEWS April 11, 1994

Ecotourist still elusive quarry for planners

Turning around Maine's traditional notion of mass-based tourism to capture the growing trend toward ecotourism will be difficult but not impossible, according to participants at last week's second annual Penobscot Bay Conference.

The conference, sponsored by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service and held at the Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, explored ways to create a "sustainable future" for the Penobscot Bay region. Ecotourism, which encompasses dispersed recreation as well as educational and cultural travel, was one economic opportunity explored by the more than 200 participants.

James Bernard, director of the natural resources division of the State Planning Office, pointed out that ecotourism contains a built-in conflict between promoters of what he called "special places" tourism and the conservationists' fear that special places will suffer environmentally if more tourists discover them.

Bernard said Maine tourism operators must first embrace a conservation ethic that is protective of natural resources rather than consumptive. Current tourism promotion, he said, focuses on moving masses rather than on developing niches.

"If you don't have the ethic, then you shouldn't be in the ecotourism business," Bernard said. "And the sad truth is that tourism groups and natural resources groups here don't even talk to each other."

Absent from the discussion in Castine were working members of the tourism community. Jim Thompson of the Maine Publicity Bureau said he was not aware of the conference and John Johnson of the Maine Office of Tourism said his office did not receive an invitation.

Mass tourism in Maine has focused on outdoor recreation, shopping and destination attractions such as Acadia National Park, all needing a large capital investment in highways, hotels and restaurants.

Ecotourism attempts to get travelers out of their cars and deeper into a host community and its working environment. Some examples in the Penobscot Bay region include bicycle tours between bed & breakfast inns, day trips aboard working lobster boats, working farm vacations and sea kayaking.

But Cate Cronin, executive director of the Maine Island Trail Association, which manages some 40 islands for the Maine Bureau of Public Lands with a staff of two and an army of volunteers, said the need for what she called "front-line education" overwhelms the resources. Cronin said her group hopes to enlist assistance from merchants and tour organizers to help educate travelers in "leave no trace" techniques as well as property access rules.

Tammis Coffin of Friends of Acadia said her group is fighting a losing battle in educating visitors to Acadia National Park on how to respect sensitive natural areas in the park. She said the goal of preserving undiscovered, pristine places in Acadia is trampled each year beneath the feet of 4 million visitors, and her group is planning a survey this summer designed to shed light on the importance of the park's natural resources to the local economy.

Ecotourism's low public profile could be a result of the way tourism is measured. Johnson of the Maine Office of Tourism said tourism revenues are tracked through lodging and restaurants, not outdoor gear, cottage rentals or other, less direct travel spending. State advertising focuses mainly on the Maine image ("The Way Life Should Be"), and contains little specific information on alternative travel resources.

The demographics of the ecotraveler, however, cannot be ignored by tourism promoters, according to conference participants. They point to an upscale, educated, affluent target market, whose smaller numbers bring higher returns with less impact on the resource.

Johnson acknowledged the need for collaboration between natural resource planners and promoters, but he said his Office of Tourism was charged with promotion, not planning.

"We need to identify, first, then plan and then promote," Johnson said.

Bernard of the State Planning Office took up the challenge.

"We'll make the first move," Bernard said, "if someone puts up the money." (By Ruth Robinson)

MAINE TIMES April 15, 1994

Penobscot Bay Conference set for April 9 at MMA

Future, health focus of session

By Kathy Harbour
Of the NEWS Staff

CASTINE — The health and future of Penobscot Bay will be the focus of a daylong session at Maine Maritime Academy in April.

The session, set for Saturday, April 9, will be a follow-up to last year's session on Maine's largest bay and watershed.

According to Ron Beard of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and a planner for the session, The Penobscot Bay Conference will "look at how we can sustain the region, tending to both economic and environmental benchmarks."

More than 250 participants attended the conference last year, with a focus on understanding the inhabitants and land uses of the region.

According to information released by Beard about the conference, participants decided last year to concentrate on the role of local business and industry and local elected officials, all with an eye on the region's long-range sustainability.

This year, MMA President Kenneth Curtis will kick off the discussion for the day by delivering a keynote address. His comments are expected to focus on the potential for local economic and environmental vitality in Penobscot Bay.

As explained by Beard, Curtis will present his views on local sustainability, "even as work proceeds toward sharing opportunity and responsibility for larger maritime resources of the Gulf of Maine."

Beard said the impetus for such a conference began when a team of land-use experts from the United States, Canada, England and Wales visited the bay region in 1991.

The team, under the auspices of the Vermont-based Countryside Institute, observed what they considered the world-class cultural and natural resources of the bay.

The team recommended that local land trusts develop a regional identity and work to protect a landscape that is devoted to agriculture, forestry and maritime industry.

A number of sessions are sched-

uled for the conference. An illustrated "anatomy of the bay" will be presented by Dr. Les Watling of the University of Maine Darling Marine Center.

Another session will consider the relationship between quality of life in the bay area and the economic contributions of retired people and others who have been attracted to the region.

Mike Bush of Eastern Maine Development Corp. and Pat Jennings of Mid Coast Regional Planning are organizing a session on the community role in aquaculture. That session will consider the Island Institute's recent experience with salmon culture on Swans Island.

The conference also will include panel discussion of transportation issues for the bay area and surrounding communities and trends in eco-tourism.

Afternoon workshops will look at collaborative efforts between communities and agencies, with participation by members of the Maine Environmental Priorities Project.

The music, poetry and scenery of the bay will be celebrated at the close of the session with the Penobscot Punch Festival, co-sponsored by Maine/New Hampshire Sea Grant Marine Program.

The festival will feature the musical groups Old Grey Goose and Trillium and readings by Bill Carpenter, Stuart Kestenbaum, Kathleen Lignell, Jack Merrill, Sylvester Pollet and Susan Shottley. Photographer Sherman Habrouck will present a multi-image program.

In addition to the Cooperative Extension, the conference is sponsored by the Penobscot Bay Land Trust Alliance, the Island Institute and these 10 other groups:

EMDC, MMA, Maine Aquaculture Association, the Maine Coastal Program and State Planning Office, the Maine/N.H. Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program, the Maine Department of Marine Resources, Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission, Penobscot River and Bay Institute, Penobscot Marine Museum, and Penobscot Center for Marine Studies.

Advance registration is required for the conference. For background information or to register, call 667-8212 or 1-800-287-1479.