

# Environment UPDATE

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## Note from Minister for "Environment Update"

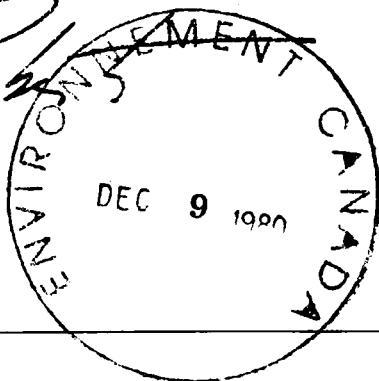
As the federal Minister of the Environment, I am pleased to send you a copy of this new publication.

"Environment Update" will be distributed every two months. It is designed to inform its readers of major departmental programs and activities taking place across the country which involve the various services of Environment Canada. It will also be useful in providing a summary of departmental action on issues such as acid rain and hazardous wastes.

The publication is another of my department's efforts aimed at providing the Canadian public with relevant and basic information on environmental issues and is intended to have a positive effect in the public consultation process that will soon be implemented by Environment Canada.

I encourage you to send any comments you may have on "Environment Update" to the editor so that they may be kept in mind when future issues are being planned.

John Roberts  
Minister



## Hazardous Wastes

Shipping potentially dangerous waste products across provincial or international boundaries is to be more closely controlled with a manifest system for monitoring cargo.

This manifest system will track the movement of hazardous wastes from the time they leave the producer or generator. It will continue to monitor them when stored, and when sent for treatment and disposal.

Environment Minister John Roberts noted that the manifest system will watch over day-to-day movement of hazardous wastes and ensure they arrive at their destination. The control will be included in regulations under the new Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act.

The generator will issue a manifest or tracking document to accompany shipments of waste material, and send a copy to the appropriate authority. The transporter must produce this manifest when requested by an inspector. The receiving facility will verify receipt of the materials and forward a copy of the manifest to the same authority. It will list the nature of the waste, the producer or generator, the transporter and the method of treatment or disposal.

This manifest will be compatible with provincial manifests already in use or planned for the intraprovincial transport of

hazardous wastes. A similar manifest proposed for the United States Environmental Protection Agency differs from the Canadian system, but efforts will be made to ensure compatibility. Some states have manifests similar to the one proposed for Canada.

The manifest system for hazardous waste was recommended by the Canadian Council of Resources and Environment Ministers in January, 1980. A federal/provincial/territorial committee has been established to coordinate a complete waste management system across Canada.

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Forest Renewal

Forest renewal has been rated a top priority for the Canadian Forestry Service (CFS) which received a significant boost recently with appointment of its own assistant deputy minister, Les Reed.

Exports of forest products reached nearly \$12 billion in 1979 and one job in every 10 in Canada is dependent on the forest industry. But timber shortages are emerging across Canada and serious attention to renewing timber supplies is critical.

At the recent National Forest Congress in Toronto representatives of major forest companies and unions enthusiastically urged government to give new and massive support to better forest management practices that will result in forest renewal.

"The challenge of forest renewal will be met in the 1980s provided all concerned share in the task of making it happen," Mr. Reed told delegates at the congress.

"Other forest benefits, more apparent to most people, are also endangered: recreation, wildlife habitat, unique ecological zones, watershed protection and oxygen supply. Healthy forests are an integral part of our well-being."

Mr. Reed has an extensive background in studies of forest management performance and development of forest policy across Canada and abroad.

He plans to strengthen the federal role in forestry to better support the provinces and the forest industry in their efforts to maintain and enhance "Canada's most valuable resource".

Traditional CFS work in research and development will continue with increased emphasis on silviculture and forest management. Research will be expanded for fire protection, disease control and prevention, and tree improvement.

An interdepartmental committee, chaired by Mr. Reed, is reviewing the federal role in forestry and considering new policies. Studies of funding mechanisms, research and development, graduate training, manpower planning, transportation and industrial strategy are already under way.

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Public Consultation

Environment Minister John Roberts has announced that the department will consult with public interest groups to finalize a new policy on public consultation.

Regular consultation, starting next spring, with a wide range

of citizen groups will strongly influence policy for Environment Canada. "We will use the public as an information resource to help us make better decisions on major issues," he declared.

Mr. Roberts has issued tentative guidelines to the department proposing that managers hold annual meetings with public interest groups and others to respond to their concerns related to the operations of Environment Canada. A letter has been sent to groups requesting their comments on the proposed policy.

National private and public interest groups are being invited to bring forward their comments in a series of meetings with Environment Canada officials at headquarters, from November 17 through November 28.

Groups contacted include those concerned about:

- the environment
- recreation
- history and heritage protection
- civil liberties
- nature rights
- agriculture
- health.

In addition labor organizations, professional and trade associations, academic institutions, provincial and municipal governments and any others with environmental concerns have been invited to participate.

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"It is my conviction that the '80s, this key decade, will be the time when we realize as individuals and as a nation that we must view these issues (environmental concerns) with a new perspective - a perspective that speaks of people and the environment, not people versus the environment."

Environment Minister John Roberts at the annual awards dinner sponsored by the National Survival Institute.

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### Offshore development

Putting offshore oil and gas development in perspective - and debating possible conflicts with fisheries and land activities - will be the task of a three-day conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, starting December 2. This is the first conference to focus on the environmental impact of offshore hydrocarbon development on Canada's east coast. Panel speakers and workshops will discuss the need to protect the environment and the need for new sources of fossil fuels.

They will examine the social and economic implications of the extensive oil and gas exploration and development in the Atlantic region. Historically, the region has been largely dependent on the fishing industry, and there is grave concern about the effects of oil pollution on the marine environment.

The conference is of interest to the petroleum industry, government scientists and managers, scientific specialists, academic institutions, environmental interest groups, business, industry and native interest groups (particularly those from Labrador) and the general public.

It is sponsored by Environment Canada, the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Consumer Affairs and the Environment, the

Nova Scotia Department of Environment, Dalhousie and Memorial universities, the East Coast Petroleum Operators Association and the Canadian Petroleum Association.

Further information:

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Air Pollution Agreement

A major step has been taken by Canada and the United States, who have pledged to begin formal negotiation of an international air pollution agreement by June 1, 1981.

A Memorandum of Intent signed this summer commits both countries to vigorously enforce existing pollution laws and regulations in order to control air pollution crossing international boundaries. They will advise each other of changes in policies or regulations which may affect the transboundary flow of pollutants.

In preparation for this agreement Canada/United States working groups have already been established. Their concerns will be: assessing the impact of pollution, creating mathematical atmospheric models to forecast problems, identifying control technology that is available and developing long-term control strategies.

As part of the \$41 million Canadian effort, comprehensive scientific and control strategy programs have been launched by Environment Canada, the departments of Energy, Mines and Resources, Agriculture, Fisheries and Oceans, and Health and Welfare. The Department of External Affairs will lead negotiations with the United States.

The technical program includes an integrated scientific program that will examine all aspects of the acid rain problem, as well as engineering and socio-economic studies to design control strategies.

Under this accelerated program, funds committed for the fiscal year 1980/8 have been trebled from \$4 to \$12.5 million, with further funding planned for the following three years.

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Acid Rain in the West

Acid rain is not yet a serious problem in the West, but some sensitive areas need to be watched, senior federal and provincial environment officials decided recently in Edmonton.

Much of western Canada has been immune to acid rain because of low levels of industrial emissions and the alkalinity of prairie soils and water bodies that neutralize acid precipitation.

However, industrial activity such as oil sands extraction, heavy oil processing and base metal and uranium mining is increasing in northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Environment Canada and the environment departments of Alberta and Saskatchewan launched a joint study in 1979 to determine effects of increased industrial emissions and to identify areas vulnerable to acid rain.

While the study was under way, Environment Canada invited the environment deputy ministers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba to consider all relevant information on acid precipitation in

the West. They agreed that present emission levels are not a threat, except in the Canadian Shield areas of Manitoba and northeastern Saskatchewan and within the mountain ranges of British Columbia, but that continued vigilance is warranted, especially in monitoring the sensitive areas. They have formed a consultative committee to maintain a close watch. A seminar to present preliminary findings of the joint study, carried out by the Saskatchewan

Research Council, will be held in Edmonton in December.

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Wildlife And Acid Rain

Is acid rain affecting wildlife in Canada? To answer the question the Canadian Wildlife Service has undertaken studies in areas affected by acid rain, measuring biological effects on wildlife food and habitat.

Field investigations are being conducted in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to assess its effect on aquatic migratory birds. A report is being prepared integrating known facts about biological responses to increased acidity, and sensitivity of wildlife and their habitat.

At present there is little information. Because of the documented toxicity of acid rain to fish, invertebrates and amphibians, it is believed wildlife populations suffer through reduction in quality and availability of food and habitat. This may result in lower reproduction, lower population densities and reduced survival.

Immediate effects are expected for aquatic wildlife, particularly those spending critical stages of their life cycle in habitats most susceptible to acid rain.

Frogs and salamanders are especially susceptible during developmental stages. Their decline will in turn affect predators such as raptors, herons, mink and otter.

The common loon's diet is roughly 80 percent fish, the rest made up of other aquatic organisms which are most sensitive to acid precipitation. The loon nests on lakes in the Precambrian Shield, an area highly susceptible to the effects of acid rain. Other fish-eating birds, such as mergansers and bitterns, will likely be affected where fish populations are lost.

Caribou too may suffer from acid rain. Lichens, the principal winter food for caribou, absorb rain directly through their cell walls and have little opportunity to buffer any acid. In eastern Canada most of the caribou range lies in areas receiving acid precipitation.

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"Forest, too, have the potential for producing energy through the use of forest biomass. By the turn of the century our forests could supply up to 10 percent of Canada's energy demands as well as opening a vast market for tree species and forest residues that are now unmarketable."

Roger Simmons, M.P., parliamentary assistant to Environment Minister John Roberts, speaking to the Canadian Institute of Forestry.

Weatheradio

A network of stations broadcasting up-to-the minute weather information 24 hours a day, seven days a week will eventually be available to 80 percent of Canadians.

Already served are Gander, Moncton, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina and Vancouver. Edmonton will have the next station scheduled.

Weatheradio provides detailed, accurate weather information to businesses or individuals. It is operated by Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service.

It provides weather warnings and forecasts immediately and in detail, to make them useful to those who might be seriously affected.

Most weather warnings, reports or forecasts are disseminated by the media but distribution may be subjected to various degrees of delay. Direct transmission of weather information is particularly useful where the life or welfare of weather-dependent users is concerned.

Shortly after the Halifax Weatheradio station began broadcasting from Bedford, N.S., the Government of Nova Scotia agreed to share the cost of establishing repeater stations. Today, virtually all of Nova Scotia and many fishing areas are covered.

Repeater stations will extend the range of the broadcast areas of Weatheradio stations in Moncton and Gander.

Serving the weather-sensitive prairie farming community, stations now broadcast from Regina and Winnipeg.

The construction industry, municipal services (snow removal, etc.) retail businesses, recre-

ational boaters and pilots and others involved in outdoor recreation are among thousands of Canadians who benefit.

A special receiver is required, costing from \$30 to \$150. Weatheradio stations have a limited broadcast range, usually 60 to 80 km. They broadcast on the VHF FM band.

An added feature is the alert signal, broadcast when a weather warning is in effect. It automatically activates a suitably equipped receiver to give a warning tone or flashing light signal.

The Weatheradio network, when completed, will reach most Canadians almost instantaneously, and its use could expand to include emergencies such as search and rescue missions, strategic operations, or natural disasters.

Further information:

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Conservation

A sharper focus on conservation has been established at Environment Canada with creation of a new Environmental Conservation Service.

It will encompass three important groups: the Canadian Wildlife Service, Inland Waters and Lands directorates. Together with Canadian Forestry Service - now a separate service - these groups once comprised the Environmental Management Service.

The new service will endorse the theme of the International Union for Conservation of Nature: "We have not inherited the earth

from our parents: we have borrowed it from our children." It will promote the long-term availability and quality of inland waters, land and wildlife resources for the economic and social benefits of Canadians, and advocate sound conservation principles in the management of these resources and the environment. Heading this new service is assistant deputy minister William "Bill" Mountain. Formerly with Agriculture Canada, Dr. Mountain is well known as a manager and leader in the field of research and development.

Historically, the conservation movement tried simply to preserve dwindling renewable resources as Canada changed from a frontier nation to an industrialized state. Modern conservation, however, implies prudent, sustainable use of resources, particularly renewable resources.

Environmentalism in the past has been largely perceived as a negative force, a "nay-sayer". Today, conservation is concerned that there be something left for posterity. It goes beyond mere survival. It will pay current dividends in many forms, but most important will ensure an environment in which our descendants can thrive.

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### Quebec Restoration

A comprehensive project to preserve and restore the historic walls and gates of Quebec City has started with an extensive public consultation program by Parks Canada.

This program, ending on December 14, 1980 is centred in la Poudrière de l'Esplanade

(parade ground powder magazine), itself an historic site (and formerly a restaurant), close by the famous Porte Saint-Louis.

An overall proposal with options is being submitted for comments, suggestions and recommendations from the general public and special interest groups.

The project has four purposes:

- . to protect the fortifications from deterioration
- . to restore the walls and gates and bring back the image of a fortified city
- . to demonstrate the evolution of Quebec City's defensive system using the most important sites to interpret its historic significance
- . to improve the urban environment and way of life, while seeking out possible recreational features.

The fortifications play a key role in proving the historic significance of Quebec City as the capital of New France and later of British North America. Today they recall a multitude of individuals, events and sites that are among the most prominent in Canada's history.

Following the public consultations Parks Canada will publish a complete and detailed report of the program outlining its future direction.

Further information:

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"Here, in Canada, we politicians have been fortunate in knowing that Canadians are reasonably well informed and recognize the dangers of acid rain."

Environment Minister John Roberts in an address during Environment Week.

# Calendar

Plenary Meeting of NATO Committee on the Challenges of modern society, Brussels, November 24-25, 1980.

Environmental and other issues seen as challenges of society will be subject of round table discussion by representatives of participating countries.

Minister John Roberts plans to participate in proposed meeting of environment ministers to take place parallel to CCMS plenary meeting.

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World Meteorological Organization, Meeting of Experts, Geneva, November 24-29, 1980.

WMO is active in promoting applications of meteorology to energy problems with particular regard to solar wind energy utilization.

Following meetings on solar energy in 1978 and wind energy in 1979, this meeting of experts has been called to reconsider further WMO activities taking into account new developments in the fields of energy problems and the pertinent needs of developing countries.

Considerable attention will be given to plans for WMO's participation in the United Nations Conference on new and renewable sources of energy which will be held in 1981.

M.K. Thomas, Director General of the Canadian Climate Centre, Atmospheric Environment Service, will participate.

American Association for the Advancement of Science - Annual Meeting, January 3 - 8, 1981, Royal York Hotel, Toronto.

Program includes, on January 4 a full day on acid precipitation. Morning session will examine ecological and technical aspects of abatement at source. Afternoon session will examine the political and institutional aspects.

Environment Canada Minister John Roberts will give the luncheon address - an overview of acid rain problem from a political point of view.

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American Meteorological Society Meeting and Conference, San Diego, California, U.S.A. January 20-23, 1981.

Organized by the American Meteorological Society Committee on Climate Variations, conference will focus on several research areas of current major concerns. Principal emphasis will be on large scale regional and global climate variations extending over a broad spectrum of periods ranging from a month to many thousands of years.

Jim Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Atmospheric Environment Service, will participate.

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"What we must all remember, as we face the environmental challenge of the 80's, is that our most valuable weapon throughout the decade will be whole-hearted public support."

Environment Minister John Roberts, speaking at the annual awards dinner sponsored by the National Survival Institute.



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