



# The Upper Peninsula Environment

Newsletter of the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition • MARCH—APRIL 1992

## UPEC hosting Baikal-Superior program

by Jo Foley

UPEC Marquette members will introduce the Superior-Baikal Connect sea kayaking expedition to the Marquette community on Thursday, April 23, when they sponsor a slide and video presentation by team members in Jamrich Hall, Room 102, on the NMU campus from 7-9 pm.

Jackie Huntoon and Drew Pilant, from the Department of Geology at Michigan Tech, were members of a North American and Soviet team that spent six weeks on Lake Baikal in southern Siberia last summer. The last days of their trip coincided with the short-lived hardliner coup. This summer the Russian team members will visit Lake Superior. The two expeditions, circumnavigating the lakes and visiting communities, are part of a "sister lakes" program which aims to symbolically link the world's largest lakes and increase public understanding of freshwater issues. Together, Superior and Baikal hold about a third of the world's surface freshwater and share the characteristics of being in remote, low-density population areas with struggling extractive economies. Both communities are exploring and exchanging ideas on how to build sustainable economies while preserving the quality of these beautiful lakes.

The audience will view scenes of the 1991 Baikal portion of the expedition, including biology, geology, culture, and the coup. UPEC's connection through shared goals will be explained in Scot Stewart's introduction, and UPEC membership and information materials will be available. There will also be a preview of this summer's Superior expedition by the same team of nine North Americans and eight Russians. The Michigan portion will consist of visits to Houghton-Hancock July 14-16, Marquette July 19-21, Munising July 21, and Grand Marais July 24-25. Since the Connect expedition route follows much of the proposed Lake Superior Water Trail, they will also be introducing this project to the communities involved.

Attendance at this event could indicate to the media, and through them to the politicians, how much local interest there is in preserving Lake Superior. Come, bring your friends and be part of the action. There is no admission charge.

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In the tangle and bustle of everyday life, it can be hard to focus in on a little matter like paying your UPEC dues. So here's a friendly reminder. Check your mailing label: if it has a "92" in it, that means you have not paid your 1992 dues yet. But it's easy to do: just send us your check along with the form on the back page. Thanks for supporting UPEC!

## Marquette's UPEC group decides agenda

by Joanne Welsh

Attendance has been very good at the three UPEC Marquette group meetings held thus far because they have given members a long-awaited opportunity to communicate on local environmental concerns. Structure has been extremely informal; UPEC president Bill Malmsten chaired the first meeting and UPEC board member Bill Kariainen the second and third, and the members chose the topics for discussion at each meeting. Nine areas of concern were identified at the outset and eight remained after the second meeting: (1) toxic chemicals in Lake Superior; (2) forestry and clearcutting; (3) Little Presque Isle Campground; (4) Grand Island development plan; (5) Escanaba River State Forest plan; (6) Presque Isle zoo; (7) styrofoam use in the schools; and (8) Sands River wetlands.

At the February 19 meeting a good deal of time was spent discussing forestry issues and the possibility of doing an aerial video of local areas that have been clearcut. The group passed its first resolution, one opposing a new zoo at Presque Isle. The general consensus was that a new or expanded zoo should be located elsewhere in the city or just outside of Presque Isle.

The major topic of the March 18 meeting was the DNR plan for developing Wetmore Landing and Little Presque Isle Point. Opponents of the plant were present to outline their concerns which included dismay at the recent clearcut of a tract of state land of over twenty acres across the road from the proposed campground. The area was supposed to have undergone a "modified" clearcut. The major objection, however, was to drive-in camping at Little Presque Isle. Plans were made to begin a letter-writing campaign to the Natural Resources Commission and to send letters to the editor in opposition to the current plan of development. Litigation is also being considered in the hope of

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## Envirocalendar

April 11: UPEC Annual General Membership Meeting, Holiday Inn, US-41, Marquette. Business meeting: 5:00 pm, dinner 6:00, guest speaker Stephanie Mills, 7:30 (ET). Votes for Board members due in Houghton by April 10.

April 15: Marquette UPEC group meeting, Bonanza Restaurant, 6:30 pm.

May 2: FOLK benefit dance, live music, 8-midnight ET, Onigaming Supper Club, Houghton

May 12: UPEC Board meeting, Ely Twp. Hall, West Ishpeming, 7:00 pm ET. All members are welcome!

(Envirocalendar cont'd on p. 4)

## Marquette UPEC group (from p. 1)

keeping the bulldozers at bay so that this sensitive area will be preserved, not only for the 1400 or 1500 people who signed the petition opposing development, but for future generations. For more information, contact Steve Brandt (228-3680) in Marquette.

The next Marquette UPEC meeting will be April 15 at the Bonanza Restaurant. Dinner is at 6:30, the meeting at 7:00.

## Your Turn

### *Operation Action U.P. Annual Meeting and Whine-In (as witnessed by Chuck Harris and Kraig Klungness)*

At this year's meeting of Upper Michigan's vanguard industrial promotion organization, Operation Action U.P., the order of the day seemed to be whining and self-pity. Speaker after speaker bemoaned the failure to site a major new pulpwood industry and the threat of environmental restrictions.

Martin Wilk of Benson Forest Products opened a series of speeches with one of the ever-popular gardening analogies industrial foresters love (remember Mead's "thinning of the carrot patch" model for forest management during the Keweenaw Bay pulp mill controversy). Wilk's analogy dealt with the need to replace what is taken from the woodlot, as you would in a garden. He said Benson's primary interest is sawlog production, but that they also desire a better pulpwood market for the thinnings they plan to sell from their lands. He never did explain what they intend to give back to the land.

Benson currently controls 350,000 acres in Upper Michigan, with a goal of eventually owning 500,000 acres.

Wilk explained Benson's "Eyes in the Forest Program" (or, as we called it, "Stooges in the Woods"). This is a plan to lease 10-acre sites with a cabin in which the person leasing agrees to watch over 100 acres of Benson's holdings. The lease holder would guard against theft, vandalism, and illegal dumping, and keep an eye on conditions in the timber stand.

The pulp mill mania advocated by Operation Action U.P. executive director Dick Dunnebacke was tempered by logging contractor Dave Moberg, who stressed the importance of sawlog-based manufacturing, such as furniture, cutting boards, and specialty products. However, in conversation with another conference participant, we learned that some of the existing wood products manufacturing operations are having trouble obtaining enough U.P. sawlogs. It was thought that this was due to sawlogs already being overcut, and that existing pulpwood demand was interfering with sawlog availability.

Mead Woodlands manager Jim Okraszewski complained extensively about the lack of adequate public support for a major new U.P. pulp mill. It seems the only public position acceptable to Mead is one of far fewer regulations, restrictions, and taxes, with no back talk.

Okraszewski seemed obsessed with the spotted owl controversy in the Pacific Northwest, and fearful of the same situation developing here. As a public relations defense against such a scenario, Mead has instituted an "Environmental Management Strategy," which seemed to us a clever way to head off any future land set-asides related to biodiversity and endangered species.

Okraszewski was pessimistic about the future availability of timber on public lands and the threat of zero toxic discharge being put into place for the Great Lakes, especially Lake Superior.

Okraszewski's remarks raised questions in our mind

about the relationship between Mead, the Forest Resource Alliance, and WLUC-TV (Channel 6) in Marquette. Many of us have seen pro-clearcutting spots on channel 6. Amazingly, these misleading segments qualify as public service announcements.

The meeting's most amusing presentation came from State Representative Dave Anthony, who endorsed clearcutting as a boon to endangered species. With such wisdom, Anthony hopes to encourage common ground between industry and environmental groups.

The meeting ended with a presentation by the so-called Great Lakes Water Quality Coalition. This is an industry front group whose mission is to undermine the Great Lakes Initiative under the guise of environmental concern.

Even though the past few years have seen two major pulp and paper mill projects put on hold, and growing concern for environmental quality, the Operation Action U.P.'ers seem firmly committed to the same old vision of major industrial development solving all our problems. The concerns of citizens will be answered with public relations jargon and assurances that all will be fine if we put our trust in the corporations.

Overall, the conference was enlightening and entertaining. However, we paid 25 bucks each and there were no doughnuts with the morning coffee, and the noon meal portions were minuscule and bland.

—Chuck Harris, Hancock, and Kraig Klungness, Houghton  
(The views expressed in the "Your Turn" column are those of the authors exclusively and do not necessarily represent, nor do they imply, any official position of UPEC.)

## News & Notes

**Wild Rivers bill enacted** Finally, in early March Bush received and signed the legislation adding portions of eleven U.P. and three downstate rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The bill survived several attempts to derail it. UPEC testified two years ago at hearings in Marquette on behalf of the bill. We are also involved in the current study of a number of other rivers which might be added to the System.

**We protest ship sinking scheme** The Board voted in March to oppose Davis's idea of taking surplus ships and intentionally sink them in various places around the Lakes to form artificial attractions for scuba diving. We recalled the Coast Guard's readiness to scuttle the doomed cutter Mesquite without any regard for removing hazardous materials beforehand. Only a strong protest from the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community environmental office forced a removal. Davis's amendment to the National Reserve Fleet Ship Disposal Act, as announced in the press, made no provision for such basic environmental safeguards. Moreover, the Board objected on strictly philosophical grounds to the idea of using the Lakes as a dump for anything, no matter how seemingly innocuous and economically beneficial. Finally, the Board considered that, in these tight budgetary times, the surplus ships might be better sold for scrap than scuttled. UPEC member Howard Anderson fired off several detailed letters to Davis, Riegler, Levin, and other decision-makers to outline our objections.

**Underwriting clearcut photos** The Board voted in March to spend \$100 on a proposal to film clearcut areas in the Michigamme highlands. The proposal, made by UPEC member Doug Cornett and to be carried out by him and colleagues, is to fly over the areas before the snow melts to get pictures that suggest the size and extent of clearcutting, which Doug reported to be

# The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition

founded 1976

*dedicated to preserving & maintaining the environmental quality of Upper Michigan*

## SUPPORTING & MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- Chippewa Rapid Audubon Society, Menominee-Marinette
- Citizens Against the Road, Grand Marais
- Copper Country Audubon Society, Hancock
- Copper Country Peace Alliance, Houghton
- Dickinson Citizens for Clean Air, Norway
- Friends of the Land of Keweenaw, L'Anse
- League of Women Voters of the Copper Country, Calumet
- MTU Student Pugwash, Houghton
- National Wildlife Federation Great Lakes Office, Ann Arbor
- Northern Michigan Wolf Sanctuary, Negaunee
- Pictured Rocks Trail Crew, Munising
- Ottawa National Forest, Kenton
- Recycle Marquette, Marquette
- TMI / Project Oh!Zone, Marquette

### UPEC is a member of:

- Alliance for a Paving Moratorium
  - Great Lakes United
  - HONOR
- Lake Superior Alliance
- Michigan Environmental Council
  - Northwoods Alliance
  - Timber Wolf Alliance
- Upper Peninsula Recycling Coalition
  - Zero Discharge Alliance

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extensive in the forests north of US-41. We will use the photos to try to make out case for better forestry practice to the public.

**Benson plans developments** Benson Forest Products is bidding to become the largest private landowner in the U.P., if it isn't already. Benson, which currently owns hundreds of thousands of acres, reportedly is in the process of buying out Connor Forest Industries and (so rumor has it) may have talked to Lake Superior Land Company about their holdings. Benson appears to be a very well-capitalized outfit, at least judging from the speed at which it is moving to develop lakeshore property. UPEC drafted a letter to the board of Forsythe Township (Marquette County) which stirred the interest of local residents in a Benson development on Bass Lake. And Benson reportedly has punched in a road off of M-28 between Shelter Bay and Laughing Whitefish Point to develop a housing tract on Lake Superior. The U.P. is beginning to attract the attention of vacation developers in a big way. Some other examples: the controversial Domino's gigaresort on Drummond Island; condo complexes in Eagle River, Grand Marais, and Epoufette; subdivisions going in around Lake Bailey (Keweenaw County); proposals for a resort at Bete Grise; and of course the existing large ski resorts in Gogebic County and south of Iron River. It is also quite possible that a significant resort will be promoted by the Forest Service on Grand Island.

**UPEC opposes GLM mine** The Board voted in March to draft a resolution opposing the Great Lakes Minerals copper mine start-up near Gratiot Lake in Keweenaw County. Among our concerns are the prospect of widespread mining throughout the peninsula by Noranda, a huge multinational which bought GLM's options on thousands of acres of land; the direct impacts of GLM's mine; the fact that GLM never responded to our demand for an updated environmental assessment of their project (an EA for the mine was done in 1976 but a review by UPEC member Bob Brown indicates that it needs significant updating); the fact that GLM has refused to create a clean-up escrow fund to reclaim the site after mining is completed, as we demanded; and the fact that no one has ever assessed the need to mine Keweenaw copper when more environmentally sound alternatives (such as recycling existing stocks) remain unexplored. Eagle Harbor township, where GLM's site is located, is now thinking about taking back the zoning power from the County—a situation, you may recall, rather similar to the one which resulted in the kaying of the proposed paper mill at Arnheim.

**ERSF plan out....** The Escanaba River State Forest plan has been published, and, unfortunately, it doesn't sound too progressive. Doug Cornett gave it a scathing review at our March meeting. The bottom line: the ERSF is to be managed primarily for pulpwood. We, along with groups such as the Sierra Club, will be working to try to amend the plan to make it more palatable.

**U.P. recycling conference set** The fourth annual U.P. Recycling Coalition conference will be held May 16 in Escanaba. UPRC was formed in 1990 to provide a network of recyclers and recycling/reuse/reduce activists in Upper Michigan. UPRC tries to build better relations among private recycling firms, government, and other recycling programs. Aside from the conference, UPRC does quarterly newsletters. At the Fourth Annual Conference, there will be speakers from around the U.P., exhibits from vendors, and tours of Lakestate Industries, the new Delta County Recycling Center, and Escanaba's composting site. The conference, which is open to anyone interested in recycling, will be at Bay de Noc Community College, starting at 8 am. For more information, get hold of UPRC at P.O. Box 279, Escanaba 49829; phone 786-9212.

**ZD update** In a February 17 newsletter, Greenpeace's Zero Discharge Campaign reported several advances on the ZD front. Time Magazines, Inc. (which includes Time, Life, Sports Illustrated, People) has agreed to use chlorine-free paper in its publications as soon as it becomes available. Greenpeace credited this to 22,000 letters received by the company in response to a Greenpeace appeal. Maclean-Hunter, Canada's largest magazine company, made a similar commitment last summer. Second, British Columbia's provincial government announced that pulp and paper companies will be required to end use of chlorine bleaching by 2002, with significant progress required by 1995. This is the first government on the continent to put together a phase-out timetable for chlorine bleaching. Third, Alabama's Attorney General has petitioned the EPA to make zero the national water quality standard for dioxin. This would be bold indeed, and it is especially heartening given the recent

attempt by industry to portray the carcinogenic risks of dioxin as overblown. There is a very interesting article in (of all places) The Wall Street Journal on February 20 called "How Industries Created a Fresh Spin on the Dioxin Debate." The article recounts how the pulp and paper industry launched a PR campaign to convince the public and the regulators at EPA that dioxin is not nearly so dangerous as previously thought. The article tells how the American Paper Institute and the Chlorine Institute "aggressively promoted" two pieces of "evidence": one a re-evaluation of a 14-year-old tumor study, and the other a scientific conference, sponsored by the Chlorine Institute, whose results were then interpreted by the Institute to suit its own agenda. In the meantime, other research suggests that dioxin is more, not less dangerous.

**GLI letters needed** The Great Lakes Initiative (GLI) is the effort to standardize the water quality regulations among all the Great Lakes states. This is probably the most important current environmental initiative concerning the Lakes. Polluters have joined forces to delay the GLI from being published in the Federal Register (the official listing of government regulations) for public comment. We must pressure Engler to get EPA to go ahead and publish the GLI regs. Please write him at P.O. Box 30013, Lansing 48909.

**Trail volunteers sought** One of UPEC's new member groups, the Pictured Rocks Trail Crew, is looking for volunteer trail workers who can donate a week this spring or summer to work in the park. A great chance to get to know this beautiful lakeshore from the ground up! Contact: Volunteer Coordinator, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, P.O. Box 40, Munising 49862, Phone: 387-2607.

### ENVIROCALENDAR (cont'd)

April 22: Earth Day teach-in, MTU, Houghton. (Organized by MTU Student Pugwash; UPEC to participate.)

May 1-3: Great Lakes United Tenth Anniversary meeting, Saginaw. Contact: GLU, SUC-Buffalo, 1300 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222.

July 8-August 8: Advanced nature writing course, Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute. Contact: SOEI, Northland College, Ashland, WI 54806; 715-682-1699.

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