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Earth First!

The Radical Environmental Journal
Beltane May-June 2007



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TASMANIA'S SOUTHERN FORESTS
STILL WILD
STILL THREATENED.

STOP LOGGING THE WELD.

Earth First!

The Radical Environmental Journal

Beltane May-June 2007

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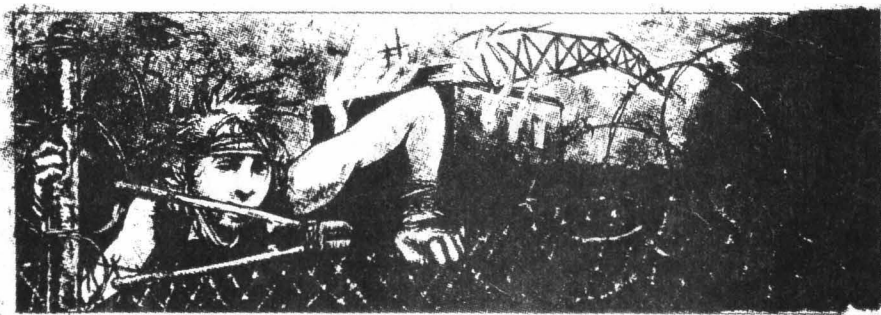
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artwork by Hash

Thoughts on a Changing Earth First!

Reflecting on this past Earth First! Organizers' Conference (OC), I noticed a specific category of people who left the OC really excited about Earth First!

These were people who—after attending workshops on sexual assault, radical mental health and Challenging Oppression Within—expressed their delight in how we EF!ers finally seem to be working on our issues. "I have a friend who stays away from EF! because it's not a space they want to be in. Now, I can tell them to come back and see what we're doing!" related a persyn in this group.

In contrast, the majority of people with five to 10 years of EF! experience who came to the OC—people who are increasingly finding themselves in positions of responsibility as older EF!ers fade away—seemed generally apathetic about EF!. Many in this group are concentrating on projects that don't directly hoist the Earth First! banner, and they have been attending fewer and fewer national gatherings. This has contributed to a lull, with fewer actions occurring in the US—which, in turn, means that the *Journal* needs to look elsewhere for content.

What does all of this mean?

Earth First! is portrayed as having gone through three separate waves in its history. EF! started as "rednecks for wilderness," prioritizing biocentrism and direct action, while dismissing the patriarchy and racism that reared its head during this time. The late 1980s ushered in the second wave, often characterized by Judi Bari and her focus on nonviolence (including discouraging property destruction) and building coalitions with loggers and other workers. The third wave began in the mid-to-late 1990s. It was represented by the green anarchists within EF!—the same folks you might have found in the black bloc. Idols were toppled, and anarchist values were implemented much more thoroughly throughout the movement.

It may not surprise people to hear that there was drama in EF! during the transitions between these waves. The people who identified with the receding wave tended to take their loss of influence without much grace. But with each prophecy of the end of Earth First!, the movement has evolved into something different and grown strong again.

Is this the beginning of a fourth wave? Much of the newer energy that is being poured into the movement is more centered around humyn concerns, including encouraging Earth First! circles to be safe spaces for those involved. People who are not straight, white males have been marginalized within EF! since its inception. While some EF!ers have worked against this in each era, it's way past due that we, as a movement—both collectively and individually—actively address our sexism, racism, homo- and transphobia, feelings of superiority over less experienced activists, issues with inflated egos.... There is a lot we have to work on. But let's get to it!

I recognize that not all EF!ers are on the same page with this. If you feel differently—or similarly—write in to the *Journal*! Come to the Rendezvous! Let's get a discussion going about this. I also think, if we're serious about encouraging diversity in our movement, some voices need to take a step back to allow others room to speak.

I'm hopeful that Earth First! will survive this lull like it has survived the others—only to re-emerge stronger and more poised for sustainability. As we broaden our inclusiveness, I'm excited to meet those who will join our ranks.

—DONNY

Earth First!

Beltane

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We welcome submissions of articles, letters, poetry and art that put the Earth first, aid in healthy debate shaping the growth of the movement and advance the creation of a world free of speciesism, classism, racism, sexism, violence, exploitation and oppression.

Submission deadlines are the first of every odd-numbered month in the calendar year. Articles should be typed or clearly printed. We encourage submissions via email. Art or photographs are desirable to illustrate articles and essays. Send a SASE if you would like submissions returned. If you want confirmation of receipt of a submission, please request it.

All submissions are edited for length and clarity. If an article is significantly edited, we will make a reasonable effort to contact the author prior to publication.

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West Virginia Governor's Office Occupied for Marsh Fork Elementary

BY SKYLER SIMMONS

On March 13, the West Virginia Surface Mining Board approved a permit for Massey Energy to build a second coal silo adjacent to Marsh Fork Elementary School in Coal River, West Virginia. The site is already home to a coal sludge dam, an 1,800-acre mountaintop removal site and a sprawling coal-processing facility that has been making schoolkids sick for years (see *EF/J* July-August 2005). It has also been the scene of numerous protests and acts of civil disobedience, which helped get a previous silo permit denied in 2005.

On March 16, about 80 protesters with Coal River Mountain Watch, Mountain Justice Summer, Katúah Earth First! and other groups rallied at the state capitol and proceeded toward Governor Joe Manchin's office. Singing the old union song "Which Side Are You On?," the group first occupied the office's reception area, where they demanded that the permit be revoked and that a new, safe school be built in the community. Coalfield resident Ed Wiley gave a rousing speech and led other locals toward the governor's door, getting stopped just short by capitol police.

Having failed to gain access to the actual office, the group of coalfield residents settled for blocking the doors as the rest of the crowd continued to raise hell in the reception room. The governor managed to duck out the back door (we'll do better recon next time) as it became apparent that folks meant business. But that didn't stop the crowd from disrupting work at the capitol. Neither of the governor's

administrative assistants were able to answer calls due to the noise, and the crowd managed to effectively block two other offices presumably belonging to the governor's underlings. One elderly woman, blocking a door with her walker, proclaimed, "This is our declaration of independence from King Coal."

A couple of hours into the occupation, and with no end in sight, Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Martin was sent in to placate the crowd. His promises

the waiting arrest vehicle. In the end, 13 people were arrested, many of them residents of Coal River.

For years, the communities of Coal River Valley have been demanding the closure of Massey's Marsh Fork coal facility and the building of a new school. Kids who attend the elementary school repeatedly complain of headaches and dizziness, and there is an abnormally high rate of cancer among its students and teachers. In addition, the school sits immediately

below a leaking earthen dam that holds back 2.8 billion gallons of toxic coal sludge. In 1972, a similar sludge dam in Buffalo Creek, West Virginia, failed; 118 people were killed.

It is important for a new school to be built in the community. It has been a longtime strategy of coal companies to depopulate areas rich in coal. This leaves nothing standing in the way of them getting their greedy hands on the coal lying beneath the land. If the students are forced to attend school outside of

their community, many families will have no choice but to leave, thus paving the way for further pillaging and plundering by King Coal.

While Governor Manchin is still refusing to budge on revoking the coal silo permit and building a new school, the people of Coal River are remaining strong and vowing to continue this fight. The Mountain Justice Summer network is gearing up for another Summer of community organizing, mine monitoring and protesting to demand the end of mountaintop removal coal mining in southern Appalachia.

For more information, visit www.mountainjusticesummer.org.



Protesters occupying the reception area of the West Virginia governor's office

photo by Skyler Simmons

to send their concerns to the governor were greeted only with louder chants of, "Hey Joe, kids first!"

The police finally got tired of the waiting game and gave the ultimatum for the crowd to clear away from the office doors. The protesters again refused to budge, and the cops rolled in. Small shoving matches broke out as the crowd tried to hold its ground in front of the governor's doors. But the cops won out as they grew increasingly violent, throwing people to the ground and putting them in pain compliance holds. Many of those arrested went limp and forced the cops to carry or drag them a few hundred yards to

Dear Shit for Brains

~ letters to the editors ~

Dear SFB,

I think it's time to examine not "global warming" but "global climate change." The question arises, "Does mankind have anything to do with this?" All right, let's look at it this way....

Look at what the internal combustion engine has done to the environment in the about 120 years it has been around. Now, the experts said, "Something's going to happen here." And, of course, it happened a lot quicker than they predicted....

Now what are the experts saying? "Something's going to happen...." Right? And if we take the previous example as a template, whatever happens is probably going to occur much more rapidly than we anticipate. Now, I will explain to you just how these events will take place physically.

A barrel of crude oil is a heavy object. As a conservative estimate, the US alone burns about 100 million barrels of crude oil per day. A supertanker holds about 256,000 barrels of crude oil. So, the point? The point is, we are taking heavy crude oil out of the Earth and burning it. This transforms it into heat and vapors and particulates.

Any physicist can tell you that "matter" cannot be reduced past its initial mass; therefore, when one burns oil, the products produced weigh the same as the original substance. However, a vapor rises up into the atmosphere. And, the Earth is not only spinning on its axis, but it is orbiting around the Sun. So, the vapors and gasses produced by the burning of oil rise into the atmosphere. Follow me so far?

Now, Isaac Newton's Law of Gravitational Attraction states that the attraction between two bodies is "inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them." That means that as two bodies get farther apart, the gravitational attraction between them is reduced quite a bit (by the reciprocal of the distanced squared). So, if two bodies are two units apart, the attraction is one-quarter. But if they are three units apart, it is one-ninth.

So, what happens if one has two bodies in orbit and one becomes a lot lighter? In the case of the Earth, it has an elliptical orbit. The Sun is a very massive object. So, what would happen if the Earth suddenly became very much lighter? Because that's exactly what's happening.

You know what a comet looks like? It has a long tail, because it is moving at speed. And so is the Earth. As we burn off the heavy products, oil, coal, metals, we are putting the vapors from this burning into the atmosphere. And, as the Earth spins and orbits, those vapors are lost, just like a comet loses its vapors, obvious to plain vision.

It seems that, as the Earth's resources become scarcer, one would make efforts to conserve them. But the opposite is the case. So, as we burn off the heavy materials of the Earth, the orbit changes. The Winters will grow longer and colder, and the Summers will grow shorter and hotter. Because the elliptical orbit of the Earth is changing as the Earth grows lighter. It's like stretching a rubber band longer and longer. Soon, the Earth will get very close to the Sun. Either

it will fly off into the Universe and freeze, or it will get sucked into the Sun and fry. Either way, we will see dramatic climate change.

Interesting how Man could do such profound changes, huh? We know how sensitive our environment is, yet we continue to just touch it up, for the sake of what? Like one famous man said, "Gosh, oil has so many uses, it seems a shame to just burn it!"

And I reiterate, when scientists warn us about changes, it's probably going to happen a lot faster than we anticipated. I wish you all the best, and I'll try to help....

Love,

—JOHN MUELLER

Dear S.F. Brains,

I want to add to the discussion that has been going on in the past couple issues about the term "Green Scare." I really agree with Chris Calef (see *EF!* January-February 2007) on this. In response to Will Potter's and Marc Hurley's letters (see *EF!* March-April 2007), I think what Calef was explaining, and what I agree with, is that the term "Green Scare" identifies a group of mostly white, privileged, animal rights and radical environmental activists, and it implies that this group is somehow more targeted and repressed than other movements.

I do not want to invalidate the experiences of the SHAC 7 or the defendants in Operation Backfire. However, when we lament how persecuted we are—as I think the term "Green Scare" does, in drawing similarities with the Red Scare—and don't recognize other groups and activists that have experienced similar and more intense

periods of repression, we are not actively recognizing our privilege.

I think we need to more actively contextualize the repression of animal rights and environmental activists in the general climate of oppression that exists right now and do more solidarity work that draws direct connections between diverse movements. Last year in Boston, there was a great event called Resisting Political Repression. For the first time in my experience, folks involved in the animal rights and black liberation movements spoke together about political repression. They shared experiences and talked about ways to support each other in resisting grand juries, while drawing connections between past and present climates of repression.

To blindly defend using the phrase "Green Scare" as a handy and expressive term—even when it communicates elitism—shows a lack of self-criticism and reinforces the dangerous tendency of latching onto labels. Unfortunately, this is all too common within radical movements today. While I think it is important to identify with people who are taking similar actions of resistance and to publicize and comment on the part of a movement in which you feel most involved, I think we all need to be conscious that the labels we create for ourselves can be isolating and divisive.

If we want to build "long-overdue relationships with social movements," perhaps being more conscious of what the term "Green Scare" implies and how it separates us is a good way to do this.

—PASSIONFRUIT BLOSSOM

A Different Kind of Gathering

THE 2007 ORGANIZERS' CONFERENCE

BY NEHAR HUDSON

Although I've only been to a handful of Earth First! gatherings, I've come to expect some continuity: an isolated rural setting; a self-sustaining camp; an overflowing schedule of presentations, workshops and discussions; a wide representation of EF! groups from various bioregions; an opportunity to meet new people, catch up with old friends and network myself silly; and a bioregionally significant action.

But this year's Organizers' Conference (OC) was a very different kind of gathering.

First, the OC was held at the Rhizome Collective's brownfield in Austin, Texas. While I couldn't help but long for the tall tree stands, placid lakefronts and starry skies of previous locations, I'm happy that we finally had an urban gathering. Over the past 27 years, the focus of EF! has grown to include social and environmental justice concerns, yet our OCs and Round River Rendezvous are still based on the old wilderness-protection platform. More urban gatherings focused on community gardens, bioremediation projects and anti-development struggles would help bridge the gap between theory and action. The Austin crew helped nudge EF! in that direction.

However, an unanticipated result of being so close to civilization was that people seemed to be constantly venturing out to get food and beer, go swimming or attend nightly movie screenings. This OC lacked the secluded, self-sustaining, green-separatist feel that typically promotes a surprisingly strong sense of community and interdependence at gatherings. If future OCs and Rondys are held in similar settings, it would be helpful to find ways to reduce the lure of the outside world or at least to incorporate it more productively into the gathering's structure.

Second, there seemed to be less going on than at other OCs. With meals imported by Austin Food Not Bombs, for example, there was less dependence on group participation. And although the schedule was full, it wasn't as overloaded as usual. I appreciated having some unanticipated leisure time, but the point of the Organizers' Conference is to *organize*. Last year's OC in Florida was so incredibly successful in this regard that it set a new standard

for what can be achieved through hard work and innovative planning. It'll be hard for future gatherings to rival the 2006 OC, but if we're going to get anything accomplished in this movement, we'd all better try.

Third, I was disappointed to see so few EF! groups represented. Granted, there were EF!ers from Tucson, Maine, Katúah, Cascadia, Santa Cruz, Sierra Nevada and Indiana. But many of them seemed to be there as representatives of Rising Tide North America (RTNA), Root Force or Challenging Oppression Within (COW). With the number of active EF! groups constantly shrinking, I can't help but wonder if EF! might be shifting away from a bioregional model and toward a network of issue-specific working groups—many of which have dispensed with the EF! banner altogether. Unfortunately, this doesn't help encourage new folks to join existing EF! groups or to form new bioregional ones.

Additionally, the seasoned EF!ers in RTNA were almost constantly in private meetings, making them inaccessible to both old friends and newcomers. This unintentional self-imposed barrier around some of the most experienced and active EF!ers further contributed to the OC's unusual social dynamic and poor EF! representation.

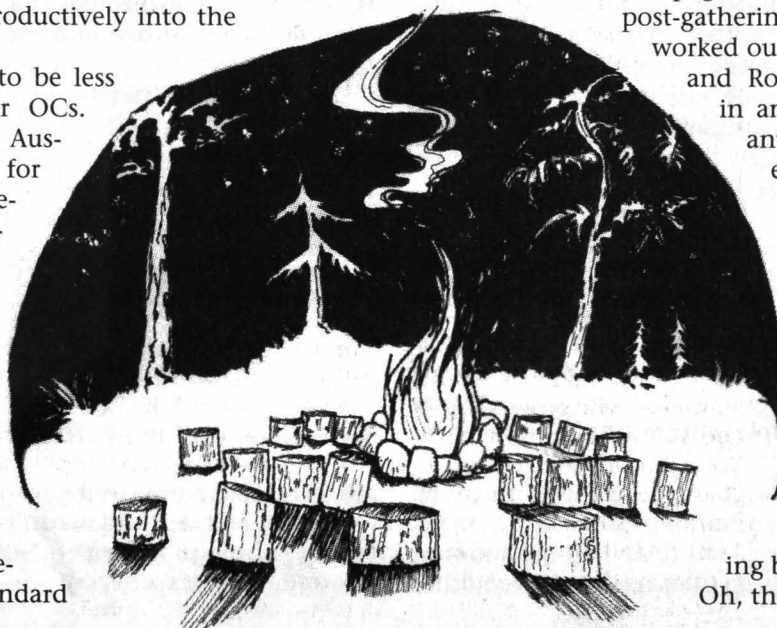
Yet even though it was unconventional, this year's OC was also surprisingly productive. It provided a unique opportunity for new groups like RTNA and Root Force to do some crucial planning and outreach, while COW presented a much-needed sexual assault and accountability workshop (see page 8). And the well-attended *Journal* discussion finally addressed some concerns that have been burdening the magazine for years (see page 34).

But the highlight of the Austin OC had to be the actions (see pages 6 and 8). Yes, there were *two* post-gathering actions! With no action

worked out ahead of time, Root Force and Roadblock EF! both stepped in and devised complementary anti-development actions, ensuring that we wouldn't have to leave town without first raising some good, old-fashioned hell.

And to my surprise and delight, as we stormed CompUSA and Cintra-Zachry, I think we finally achieved the sense of community, interdependence and wild fun that had been mysteriously missing before.

Oh, the power of direct action!



EF!ERS STOMP COMPUSA IN AUSTIN: IN AUSTIN:

FIGHTING DAMS AND ATTACKING THE SYSTEM WITH ROOT FORCE

BY PENFISH

On February 25, the Stomp CompUSA campaign was launched with style and flair, as only Earth First!ers can deliver. Departing the site of the Organizers' Conference for a lightning, guerrilla-style raid, nearly 50 EF!ers stormed a CompUSA in Austin, Texas, and turned it upside down. Our message was clear: CompUSA will have no rest as long as its owner proceeds with plans to dam the Papagayo River in southern Mexico.

We arrived in a caravan of five vehicles. As we had no clear plan for entering the store in an inconspicuous fashion, most of the 30 or so people who were part of inside-store affinity groups ended up going through the doors within a few minutes of each other. Seeing 30 mostly young, dirty customers pour into the store was enough to freak out one of the cashiers, who called management at once. Fortunately, the affinity groups were moving quickly enough that chaos started to unfold throughout the store before this early warning could make a difference.

The first sign that something strange was going on was all the people running back and forth, pulling merchandise off the shelves, stacking it in the aisles and shouting the word "dam!" Once the dam builders started to run out of materials from the shelves, other store displays started to join the boxes on the floor. By the end, nearly every aisle was blocked, and displays were being tipped over right where they stood.

Meanwhile, a gang of about 10 people was stripping down to their underwear in various parts of the store. Members of the Underwear gANG (UANG)—pronounced "wang"—couldn't seem to keep their hands off each other



and were soon making out in prominent locations. Shoppers were split between staring at UANG and refusing to look at them.

Another affinity group used helium balloons to deploy an anti-CompUSA banner to the ceiling, then spread another on the floor, bearing the message, "Carlos Slim: Unplug La Parota Dam!" Other activists were handing out fliers explaining the reason for the protest to shoppers, or secretly stowing the same fliers inside boxes of store merchandise. As the fliers ran out, these folks put on the shopper hat themselves and ran up to employees, interrupting their conversations with customers and demanding to know what was going on in the store. Finally, one person wandered through the aisles, loudly denouncing CompUSA and its owner Carlos Slim for involvement in La Parota.

Using the chaotic environment as cover, some protesters took the opportunity to unplug electronics displays, conceal numbered eggs throughout the store or scrawl messages on restroom walls, including "Stomp CompUSA," "CompUSA Funds Dams" and "CompUSA Money Supports Dispossessing Mexican Farmers."

Outside, the rest of the protesters—dressed as clowns, otters and beavers—were dancing, chanting and encouraging shoppers to go elsewhere. The last of the fliers were distributed onto car windshields.

After about 15 minutes, with the store substantially rearranged, all the affinity groups withdrew from the store. A break-dancer blocked the entrance for a few minutes, and then the group scattered. The police had only just arrived and hadn't even gotten around to asking people to leave yet. Needless to say, no one was arrested.

So why all the ruckus? This action was the kickoff for Stomp CompUSA, an effort by the Root Force campaign to destroy the profit margins of this electronics retailer. Stomp CompUSA is part of a wider effort to stop the construction of La Parota Dam in southern Mexico.

Root Force targets the companies involved in specific infrastructure expansion projects in Latin America, with the goal of canceling those projects and choking off the supply of cheap resources that the system needs to maintain itself (see *EF!* September-October 2006). The campaign is based on autonomous affinity groups taking direct action against the targeted companies, which are publicized on the Root Force website.

One of the projects that Root Force targets is La Parota Dam, which is slated for an area near Acapulco in the Mexican state of Guerrero. If built, the dam would destroy the lives of 75,000 indigenous *campesinos* (subsistence farmers), devastate a delicate bioregion and extend the life of the US economy by generating electricity for the Southwest (yes, the US Southwest). Nearly four years of road blockades and other resistance have kept the dam in the pre-planning phases—but six *campesinos* have already been murdered as a result (see *EF!* March-April 2007).

So how can activists in the US have an impact on a project taking place so far away? It's easier than you might think.

CompUSA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Grupo Carso, a holding company controlled by Mexican businessman Carlos Slim. Slim just became the second-richest person in the world. He controls a vast financial empire including telecommunications, construction and retail companies. A variety of Grupo Carso companies in Mexico have announced their intention to be involved in every aspect of La Parota Dam, from financing to construction to operation.

So it's as simple as this: If Slim and Grupo Carso want to profit off a genocidal and ecocidal project like La Parota, we'll just have to cost them so much money elsewhere that they realize involvement in the dam is not worth it. All Grupo Carso companies will remain on the Root Force "bad guys" list until Grupo Carso publicly renounces any involvement in La Parota.

After all, if they can't get anyone to build the dam, it simply won't be built.

Hence, the call put out by Root Force, Rising Tide North America, Arizona Earth First! and *Justicia Global* for ongoing

boycotts and protests of CompUSA, Sears and Kmart—all tied to Slim and Grupo Carso. And hence, Stomp CompUSA.

The action in Austin was an energizing and inspiring kickoff to this campaign. Best of all, it would be incredibly easy to replicate in any city around the country. So for those of you who are scheming up a store demo at a bad guy near you, it seems appropriate to analyze some of what went wrong with this action.

One problem was less-than-perfect communication between activists and shoppers. The fliers should have included the suggestion that shoppers contact and/or boycott CompUSA.

The other problem was that, due to a failure of advance planning, people ended up leaving way earlier than they had to. Although there was an agreed-upon exit protocol, some affinity groups decided to leave early because

they had run out of things to do. When others saw this happening, they sounded the retreat signal. But the police had barely arrived, definitely didn't have the capacity to arrest so many people (there were only two of them), were not aggressive and had not even asked folks to leave the store. The protesters could probably have spent another 15 minutes there before even getting a warning.

The other thing that needs mentioning is that the second

the in-store "educator" started to shout about why the mob was there, the manager picked up the phone and called the police. But given the relaxed nature of the police response in this case and given that the manager would eventually have noticed either UANG or the dams of merchandise in the aisles, it's not likely that this affected the action much.

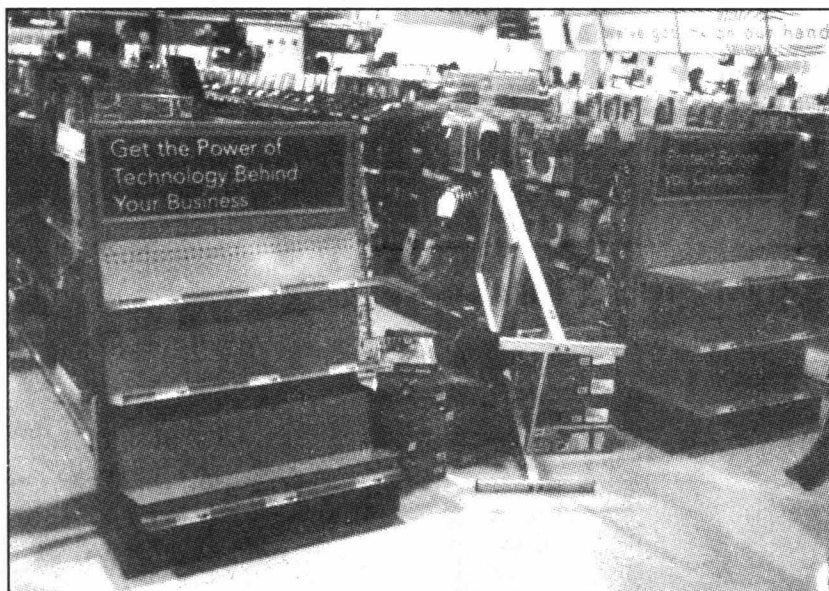
The truth is, the action was incredibly successful. There's no way to know how much revenue we cost that store, but I guarantee that it was substantial. And with each action that builds on this one, the cost to the company will be compounded by the damage to its brand image.

A myriad of campaigns have already shown that it doesn't take much to bring a retail chain to its knees. Let's get to it!

Contact CompUSA at 14951 N. Dallas Parkway, Dallas, TX 75254; (972) 982-4000; (972) 982-4030 (fax); www.compusa.com.

For more information, contact Root Force, POB 1302, Tucson, AZ 85702; info@rootforce.org; www.rootforce.org.

Penfish is an endangered cichlid from the Papagayo River.



"Dams" were made in the aisles of CompUSA.

photos courtesy Penfish

Challenging Oppression Within

BY CLARA

"Don't become an anarchist!" a friend of mine said, warning me that the anarchist subculture was "inherently racist and sexist." I began to wonder if just associating myself with the Earth First! movement was weakening my resistance to these forms of oppression, especially when those who expressed the most concern were my friends of color.

When I arrived in Austin, Texas, at the Earth First! Organizers' Conference (OC) in February, there seemed to be an even balance of male- and female-assigned people, but they mostly appeared to be white. I grew more hopeful, though, after learning that Challenging Oppression Within (COW) would be facilitating a "confronting sexual assault" workshop at the beginning of the OC. The workshop had been a condition set by our hosts, the Rhizome Collective, in order to address Earth First!'s reputation as a mostly white male movement oblivious of privilege.

"The problems with sexual assault within EF! can realistically be traced back to the problems with oppression and hierarchy within EF!," one COW organizer said.

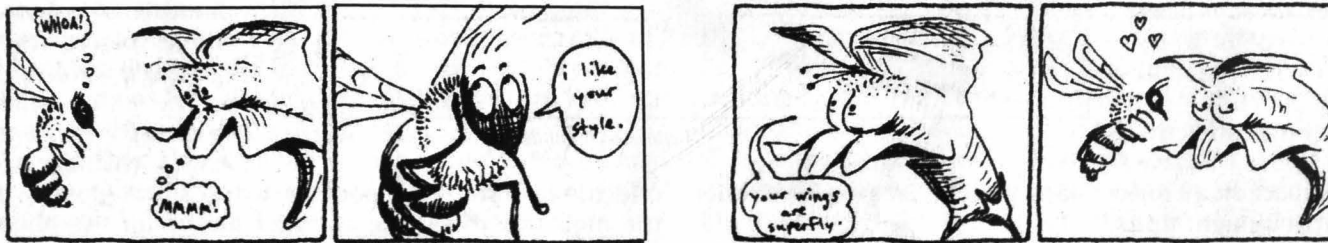
Many people's perceptions of the EF! movement come from the image they get from the gatherings. For this

reason and others, members of COW want the caucus to have a presence at all gatherings, offering support and resources for fighting oppression (see *EF!J* November-December 2006).

COW held a meeting to share ideas for the caucus's possible roles in the movement. There were about 20 people sitting on dry grass at the top of a ridge overlooking the main fire pit when we started brainstorming COW's next steps.

Making a Statement

One of the main ideas we came up with was to write a policy for dealing with acts of oppression that could be adopted at gatherings or by groups in different bioregions. First and foremost, this policy would declare that any discrimination or alienating actions will not be tolerated. Some people thought that it would be appropriate to come up with flexible guidelines for certain situations—for example, when honoring the accountability process of a sexual assault perpetrator attending a gathering. The circle acknowledged that we must always look at each case individually. Regardless of whether COW writes something and considers it a policy or guidelines, many pushed for the use of very



Office Occupation in Austin

BY A "COUPLE OF EF!ERS"

Following this year's Organizer's Conference, affinity groups planned a direct action targeting the corporation Cintra-Zachry. Cintra-Zachry's parent company, Cintra, is involved in road building and privatization plots around the world, including the infamous I-69 free trade corridor. In particular, it injects road-building funds into Departments of Transportation by buying existing

roads, as well as buying the rights to build more.

In order to confront the road-builders and the corporations that profit from "development," activists festively took over the Cintra-Zachry office in Austin, Texas, with noise-makers, instruments, banners and chants. Confusion reigned as Earth First!ers played trumpets, performed a kiss-in, banged on drums and shouted in opposition to destructive superhighway projects. Office workers responded in

a variety of ways, apparently depending on their status in the company. While many of the secretaries seemed friendly and amused, upper managers responded with mild violence, pushing people and preventing them from accessing certain rooms. (We wonder what they had to hide).

Cintra-Zachry managers eventually called 911 to rid their office of activists. Action participants had discussed this likelihood beforehand and had decided that it would be safe to stay

at the 2007 Earth First! Organizers' Conference and Winter Gathering

strong language in order to clarify that gatherings are meant to be safe spaces for everyone.

Anti-Oppression Values in Action

COW also wants to make anti-oppression tools and resources available at gatherings and to local EF! groups. People recommended workshops, trainings, ally teams and mediation groups. We brought up having skits and performances at gatherings, as well as having banners with anti-oppression messages in trees. We also talked about including an article related to challenging oppression in every issue of the *Journal*.

Ideas for the 2007 RRR

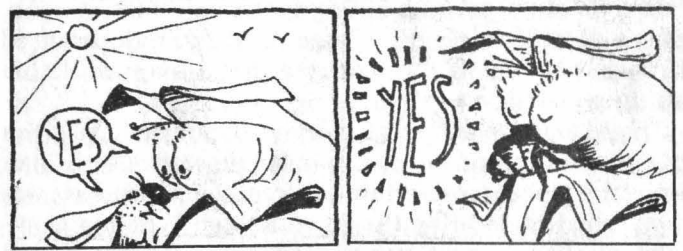
Eventually, we honed in on this Summer's Rendezvous. How could the organizers and COW make it welcoming for more people? Someone proposed inviting indigenous elders to help plan the gathering. Someone else thought it would be good to have workshops led by Spanish speakers with English translation provided—as well as translation into Spanish for workshops conducted in English. We also discussed inviting someone who could work as a sign language translator. Someone requested that there be more of a gender

balance in terms of workshop facilitation and action planning at the RRR than there was at the Winter OC, to counter the "Earth First! boys' club." Along these lines, there was talk of a future action entirely planned and carried out by people who identify as wimmin. In addition, we decided that coming to an overt consensus during decision-making processes and having frequent "go-arounds" are helpful guidelines for balancing power based on privilege.

One of the RRR organizers talked about plans for a Trans' and Wimmin's Action Camp (TWAC) prior to the RRR. We all liked the idea of having gender-related skillshares and actions planned by TWAC participants. Local men have already volunteered to do dishes and cook for TWAC.

The COW caucus checked out by going around the circle to hear general feelings and to make tangible arrangements. A possible anti-oppression policy or set of guidelines for the RRR will be finalized once people get to Indiana this Summer. Everyone felt excited about our plans and good about the meeting. The sky had become dark by then, and we could see the fire pit glowing.

Clara's first EF! gathering was the Austin OC. Her interests include the I-69 roadblock roadshow, grassroots projects in Detroit and exposing Coca-Cola's crimes. She is excited about COW.



Against I-69

for a predetermined length of time without risking repression. In the end, the group departed at the agreed-upon time, making sure no one was left behind and leaving Cintra-Zachry's candy baskets empty (another blow to the megamachine!). As a result, there were no arrests. Similar office demonstrations—quick, disruptive and without arrests—have erupted throughout the proposed route of I-69.

Cintra-Zachry owns several pieces of the Trans-Texas Corridor, a highly

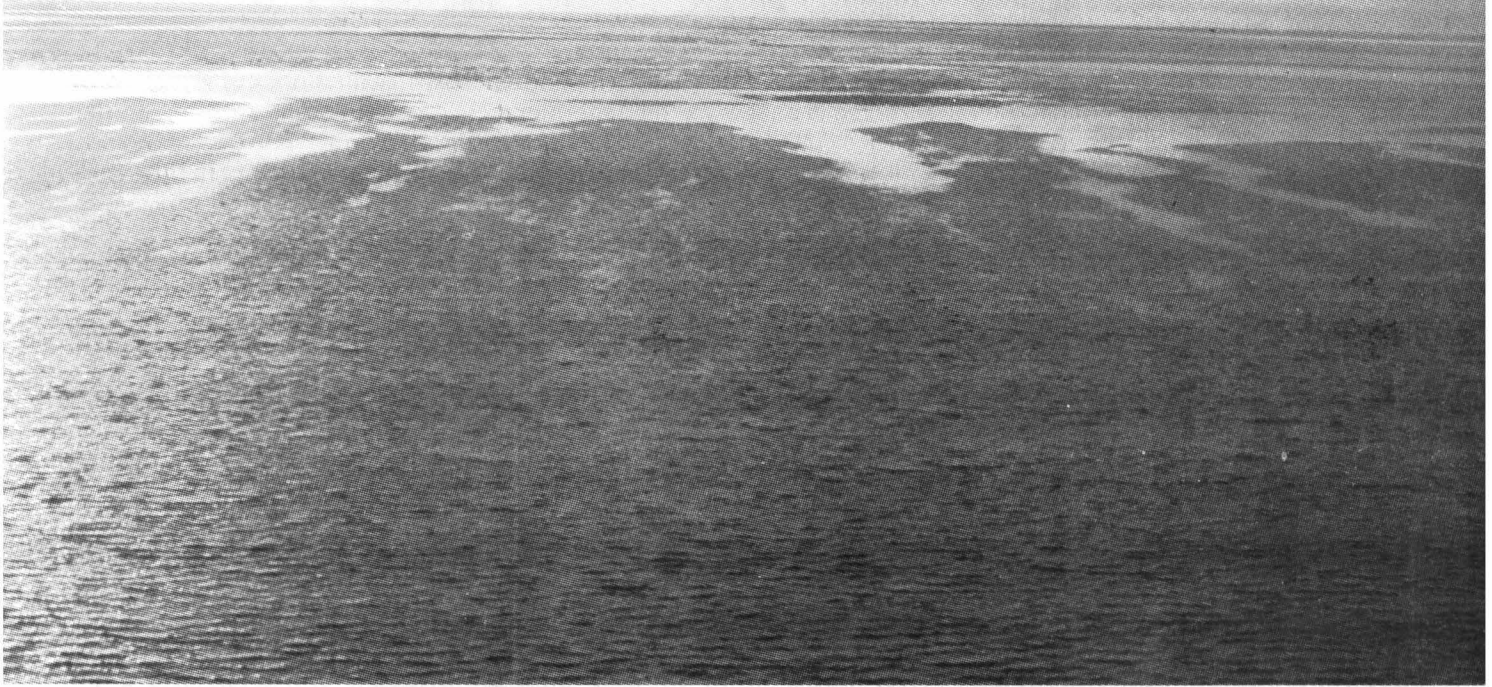
contested road building project which hopes to facilitate the easy transport of goods from Mexico and Central America to the US. This Trans-Texas Corridor is the southern piece for the "NAFTA Superhighway" (I-69) in the US, planned to connect commerce from Panama to Canada.

Roadblock EF! is at the forefront of the fight against I-69. For more information about this and related infrastructure projects, see pages 23-25.



Operation Leviathan

Protecting Whales off the Coast of Antarctica



BY THE SEA SHEPHERD CONSERVATION SOCIETY
COMPILED BY DONNY

Every year, a massive killing machine orbits the continent of Antarctica. It's a large, floating, industrialized factory that acts as the mother ship to five fast, lethal hunting machines.

The *Nisshin Maru* is this factory ship, but we have given it a more appropriate name—the Cetacean Death Star. Since the global moratorium on commercial whaling was established in 1986 by the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Cetacean Death Star has murdered some 18,000 defenseless and endangered whales in an area designated as the Antarctic Whale Sanctuary.

One is not allowed to set up an industrialized factory on the shores of the continent of Antarctica. It would be a violation of the Antarctic Treaty, which also forbids the hunting and exploitation of Antarctic wildlife. Yet, Japanese whalers have moved a floating factory into the waters off the coast and are engaged in the systematic slaughter of endangered whales. In fact, they are targeting three different species—piked (Minke), humpback and fin whales.

This year, they have targeted nearly 1,000 whales. Next year, they intend to increase this number.

Dubbing this year's campaign "The Impossible Mission," the crews of the Sea Shepherd ships *Farley Mowat* and *Robert Hunter* were determined to find this fleet and keep it from killing the whales.

The *Farley Mowat* and the *Robert Hunter* met up in the Ross Sea, off of Antarctica, on January 19. The crews of

both ships then constructed a steel helicopter deck on the *Robert Hunter* in two and a half days, in order to allow the helicopter *Kookaburra* to work between both ships.

On January 22, the ships began a search pattern through the Ross Sea. For 19 days, the ships searched, sending out helicopter reconnaissance whenever the weather permitted.

Sea Shepherd suspected that the whalers were using a satellite tracking program to monitor the movements of the Sea Shepherd ships. Captain Paul Watson decided to work the ships through two hundred miles of ice southeast of the Balleny Islands, where the satellite could not track them.

Finally, on February 9, the *Robert Hunter* found the whaling fleet—three harpoon vessels and the factory ship, the *Nisshin Maru*—and there were whales nearby.

As the *Robert Hunter* approached, the harpoon vessels fled to the north, the whales escaped to the west, and the *Nisshin Maru* fled to the east straight toward the *Farley Mowat*.

When the factory ship was two miles away, the *Farley Mowat* deployed three Zodiac inflatables and sent them to head off the *Nisshin Maru*. The Zodiac crew used nail guns to fasten steel plates over outtake drains where whale blood drains off the deck, and tossed smoke canisters and stink bombs onto the deck of the factory ship, shutting down its operations.

As the pursuit continued, the weather changed abruptly, and the vessels were quickly engulfed in fog, sleet, snow and wind. Captain Watson called back his boats, but only two of the three returned.

It quickly became apparent that the third boat was lost. The *Farley Mowat* initiated a search grid and issued a maritime distress call. This obligated the Japanese factory ship to participate in the search. The other Japanese vessels in the fleet refused to participate.

The search grid worked, and the two crew members were found seven hours later. Both were wearing wetsuits under Mustang survival suits and were in good spirits. They were found just in time, since the weather got very nasty soon after.

Captain Watson thanked the Japanese for participating in the search and then politely said that it was back to the business of protecting whales.

For two days, the weather prevented any whaling activities. Then, on February 12, the *Robert Hunter* spotted the whaling vessel *Kaiko Maru* chasing a pod of whales. Captain Alex Cornelissen placed his ship between the whales and the whalers, allowing the whales to escape.

The ships were in an area of ice floes, and the *Kaiko Maru* swerved into the side of the *Robert Hunter*, forcing it to strike a large pan of ice. The collision put a large gash in the *Robert Hunter's* bow and the ice buckled a plate below the water line on the port side.

The *Farley Mowat* arrived on the scene in time to observe the *Kaiko Maru* deliberately back into the *Robert Hunter's* port stern, inflicting a second gash in the hull—this time above the deckline.

The *Kaiko Maru* then put out a distress signal and reported that they had been rammed. Of course, this wasn't true. Aside from video evidence, there is the fact that Sea Shepherd ships have rammed whalers before, but have always admitted to it. (Only a year ago, the *Farley Mowat* hit the side of a whaling fleet supply ship, the *Oriental Bluebird*.) If the *Robert Hunter* had deliberately rammed the *Kaiko Maru*, Sea Shepherd would proudly admit it. This didn't happen. The target was the *Nisshin Maru*, the Death Star of the fleet.

The *Nisshin Maru* is not a very safe ship. About 10 years ago, while en route to the coast of Antarctica, the vessel suffered a major fire that forced it into a South Pacific island port for repairs.

Well, it has happened again.

The good news is that the fire prevented the *Nisshin Maru* Death Star from continuing the slaughter of the whales. The whalers had slain about 400 of the 960 whales they targeted. The fire saved the lives of more than 500 whales. And the hated Cetacean Death Star burned for days.

"Of course, we are concerned for the welfare of the crew on the *Nisshin Maru*," said Captain Watson. "However, we

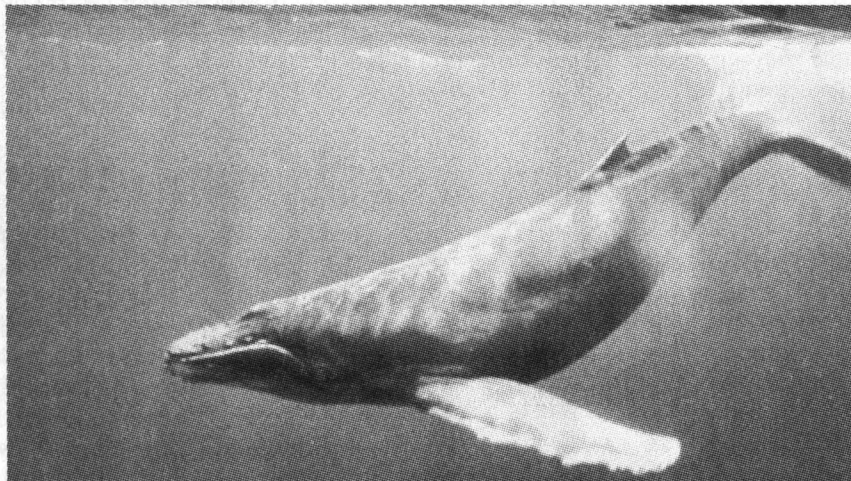
are down here because of our concern for the welfare and fate of defenseless whales. These highly intelligent, socially complex, sentient beings are now safe for the rest of this season from the merciless harpoons."

Ironically, the fire on the Death Star was fueled by whale oil and blubber. The ship became a crematorium for its victims, with the slain whales contributing to the destruction of the vessel that took their lives.

Japanese officials reported that the blaze broke out below deck, where whale carcasses are processed. Most of the vessel's 148-member crew were evacuated to the three harpoon boats, though one crew member died in the fire.

After the fire, the Sea Shepherd ships could only pursue the whaling fleet for two more days. They were forced, by lack of fuel and bureaucratic harassment, to head for port.

The impossible mission was fulfilled. Against all odds, two ships came from opposite sides of the planet and found the whaling fleet operating illegally off the coast of Antarctica. Two pods of whales were saved. This campaign highlighted the continuing illegal operations of Japan's ruthless whaling fleet, and the message that the whalers were killing endangered whales in a whale



A humpback whale gets in singing position.

sanctuary was widely publicized around the world.

Now docked in Melbourne, Australia, the *Farley Mowat* may be seized as an undocumented vessel. The damage on the *Robert Hunter* needs to be repaired. And most importantly, preparations must be made to return next December, with a dedicated and determined crew, to halt new plans to slaughter the humpbacks and the fin whales.

Sea Shepherd will be speaking with the relevant authorities about the possibility of keeping the *Farley Mowat* in Melbourne permanently as the Southern Oceans Whale Sanctuary Information Center and Museum. Keeping it in service to the whales is a fitting retirement; Sea Shepherd cannot afford to operate both ships, and the *Farley Mowat* is getting old.

The media finds it difficult to understand that these whalers are involved in a criminal operation. Violence is being caused by harpoons and electric lances in these waters each and every day. Hundreds of whales die in horrific agony as their convulsing bodies pump hot blood into the frozen seas.

This is the violence that is being ignored and trivialized.

One thing is for certain: the 2006-2007 whaling season was a disaster for the Japanese whaling fleet. The Cetacean Death Star was knocked out of action for the season and, with luck, will not be operable by the end of the year. But if it is, Sea Shepherd ships will be back in the Antarctic Whale Sanctuary to once again intercept and disrupt the whalers' lethally criminal activities.

For more information, visit www.seashepherd.org.

Angelic Upstarts Defend Weld Valley

Coming down to Tasmania, I wasn't sure what to expect. One hears about the forest defense happening in Australia, but being from Cascadia, it was hard to imagine what the struggle was like on the far side of the planet. I quickly learned that, despite the vast distance, the game is pretty much the same. It is great to have the chance to talk face to face with dedicated forest activists on the other side of the Earth and learn from them, while lending what skills I can from my time in the forests of Cascadia. There are moments—when hiking through the ancient forests or planning an upcoming action—that I forget I am not home in Oregon. It just goes to show that no matter where you are on this Earth, those of us who care enough to act in defense of this planet are held together by a cause greater than any one of us, greater than the thousands of miles separating us. That cause, of course, is protecting the Earth from those who would destroy it and standing up for the Earth First!

—Gedden Cascadia

BY JENNY WEBER

Creative direct actions were recently taken at three critical access points for logging in Tasmania's Weld Valley to put the spotlight on this threatened ancient forest valley. A forest defender halted logging truck access from a platform suspended from a bridge over the wild Weld River, while another activist was locked to a barrel at the gate of the main entrance to the logging highway. Less than 20 miles away, along a prominent tourist route also used for logging, an angel tripod displayed our creative defiance. The majority of the tourists who were shuttled past the action showed signs of support for the forest defenders' message.

Logging in Tasmania's southern forests is destroying large areas of remote wilderness for woodchips (see *EF!* September-October 2006). Because of an unrelenting thirst for forest destruction on behalf of the Australian federal and Tasmanian state governments, and the monolithic company Gunns Ltd., large areas of wilderness

were logged and burned during the Southern Hemisphere's Summer of 2006-2007.

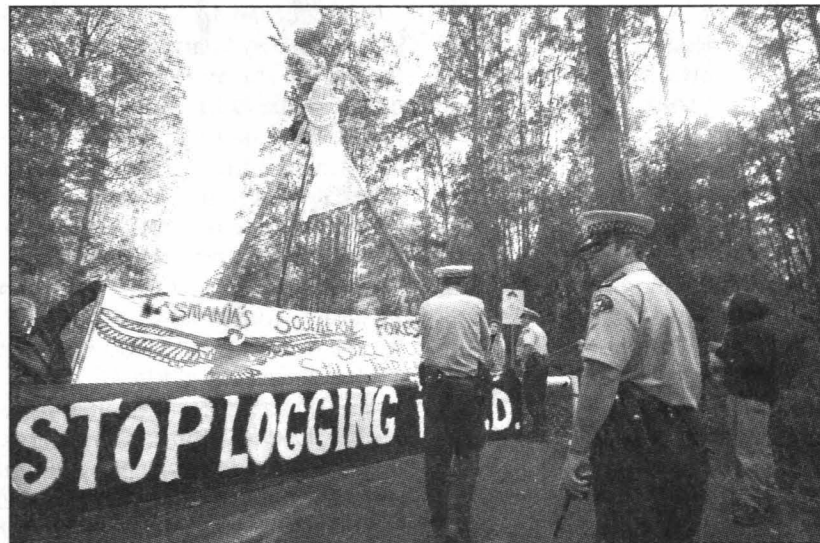
A yearlong Weld Valley community forest occupation ended last November, when 60 police arrested people staying at the blockade and proceeded to dismantle the road-blocking, life-sized pirate ship. Immediately, we launched 10 days of passionate direct actions and com-

direct action during which almost all the Weld campaigners have been arrested.

Loggers have often initiated violent confrontations since the direct actions began. Nonviolent protesters have had machinery driven at them, been assaulted by loggers and been threatened with sexual violence. In one instance, in the searing heat of Summer, a protester had stink bombs

thrown in his lap and honey poured on him to attract large, biting flies while he was locked to machinery for seven hours.

A new attack on free speech was launched this February by the government's logging agency, Forestry Tasmania, when it filed a Supreme Court injunction aimed at halting the Weld Valley campaign. Its purpose was twofold: to force us to halt a planned walk-in on the coming Sunday and to completely



The filth tries to break up a blockade.

photos courtesy Jenny Weber

halt all support for nonviolent protests in the Weld Valley. If successful, Huon Valley Environment Center (HVEC) members would no longer be able to provide things such as housing, first aid, food or transport to those involved in protesting.

community walk-ins to highlight the new logging road that pushed miles past where the pirate ship had stood. A large community mobilization ensued, with 25 arrests resulting from a series of nonviolent actions. Since November, there has been ongoing

Forestry Tasmania eventually withdrew the case during the hearing, after the bulk of its hastily drawn-together Internet evidence was found to be inadmissible. The company had trawled through forest protest blogs, video sites and the HVEC website to provide evidence of a conspiracy to cause economic harm to the corporation, lumping it all together onto one badly copied CD. Activists waited another week to hear if Forestry Tasmania was going to pursue the injunction. Thankfully, it did not. Instead, it was ordered to pay our court costs of about \$6,000, as well as its own fees. At taxpayers' expense, this was a futile attempt to put the clamps on forest defenders.

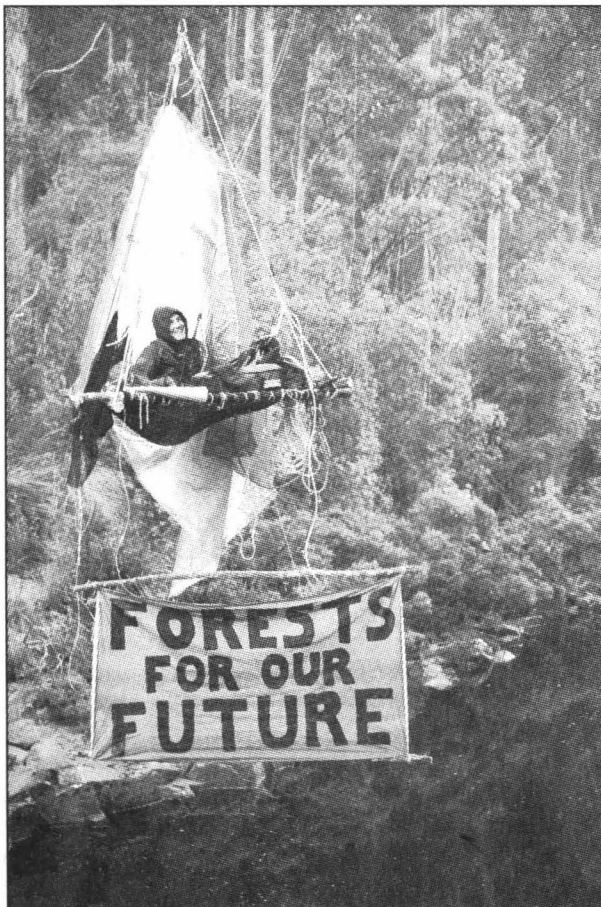
Weld Valley activists were joined this Summer by a blockade camp in another ancient valley of the southern forests, the Upper Florentine. The Upper Florentine Valley is home to hundreds of acres of pristine, old-growth forest, spectacular mountain ranges, wild rivers, and numerous indigenous and cultural heritage sites. The valley is bordered on

three sides by the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and has been recognized by numerous experts as being of World Heritage value.

For more than five months, the Florentine blockade—home to local and international activists—has effectively held off logging operations that would make way for a proposed road in the southern part of the valley. It has been the base for a number of nonviolent direct actions in the area. This blockade was raided by more than 40 police and forestry workers on February 21, and 16 arrests were made over the following three days. However, a blockade consisting of a complex system of new structures has been built, and the camp continues to prevent Forestry

Tasmania's proposed devastation of this ancient ecosystem.

The government is ignoring the advice of numerous national and international experts, who call for protection of these ancient forests. It is ignoring the federal court, which says that the government logging



A sitter hangs from a bridge over the Weld River.

entity is undertaking illegal logging practices. It is also undermining the wishes of the Tasmanian people by proceeding with this illegal and unsustainable logging. Instead, large areas are being closed off to allow for logging, and three legally binding exclusion zones have been placed over the entire ancient wilderness of the Weld, Denison and Upper Florentine valleys in the past few months to prevent the public and the media from visiting them.

You can help us by joining our campaign to protect Tasmania's wild, ancient forests. For more information, visit www.huon.org.

Jenny Weber is a forest activist and a mother. She is also a founding member of the Huon Valley Environment Center.

BARE BONES

Judge Revokes Coal Mining Permits

On March 23, a federal judge ruled that the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) had illegally issued permits to Massey Energy for four mountaintop removal coal mines in West Virginia. Judge Robert Chambers revoked the permits, stating that USACE had violated the Clean Water Act and the National Environmental Policy Act by permitting mines that would bury valley streams in rubble.

Although USACE is allowed to reissue the mine permits, it must now conduct more extensive impact studies and comply with environmental regulations.

"The evidence to date shows that USACE has no scientific basis... upon which it bases its decisions to permit this permanent destruction of streams and headwaters," said Earthjustice attorney Steve Roady.

Venezuela Freezes New Coal Mines

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez has prohibited the opening of any new coal mines in the state of Zulia, as well as the expansion of the Guasare and Paso Diablo mines.

On March 20, Minister of the Environment Yubirí Ortega announced the decree before leaders of the Yukpa and Wayúu communities. Although these and other indigenous communities—which have long opposed the expansion of mining interests throughout Zulia—celebrated the announcement, they were reluctant to claim victory just yet (see *EF!* July-August 2005).

A press release issued by the Yukpa and Wayúu communities stated, "We will continue this struggle.... We know that the powerful multinational mining interests in Zulia will keep trying to keep their coal megaproject alive, whatever the cost."

L@nd@n Rising Tide

Carb@n Neutr@l C@mp@ny

BY LONDON RISING TIDE

The three of us who walked into the Carbon Neutral Company (CNC) at 9:30 a.m., on February 21, had a good day. We decided to dispense with duplicity and say we were from London Rising Tide. Having signed in, we decided one of the two boardrooms in CNC's spanky new King's Cross offices would do the trick and quickly barricaded ourselves inside with the boardroom's table and chairs.

It took a while for the employees to work out what we were doing. They might have wondered why we moved the table and drew big words in felt pen on the flip chart paper, but that didn't automatically spell out the words "office occupation" for them. Weird kindergarten types, maybe, but protesters, no. The words on the flip chart sheet eventually spelled out the slogan "Carbon Offset = Climate Upset," and we stuck them to windows facing down on the insanely busy street below. There, three friends had a banner fiendishly bearing the exact same slogan. They were busy symbolically sweeping coal under a carpet for a Swedish TV crew and anyone else who was intrigued.

Back upstairs, we spent the day drawing more big slogans, such as "Carbon Neutral Con," phoning the press, playing the blues on the harmonica, throwing executive stress balls at each other, talking over the issues, sleeping and chatting to the CNC CEO, who subsequently told employees that we had refused to talk to him. In fact, *he* declined *our* invitation of a reasoned discourse, albeit through the glass of our barricaded door.

Why is it that people like that always think that a meeting with us in

their boardroom, where we get to sit with the grown-ups and maybe even eat some of their biscuits while outlining our concerns, is going to result in anything other than yet more prevarication and empty, greasy promises of some future fruitful working relationship? And why would the world outside have any interest whatsoever in the news that yet another campaigning group has been coaxed in from the icy streets to join a mutually beneficial partnership with another bunch of

We decided that one of the two boardrooms in CNC's spanky new King's Cross offices would do the trick, and quickly barricaded ourselves inside.

bemusing, statistic-spouting, besuited lunatics who claim that markets are going to dig us out of the climate crisis? Phew. Here's the short version: Watch out if you get invited into the cozy offices of the dark forces, girls and boys, unless you want to end up on the boss's knee.

When the police arrived, one asked with dark jocularly if the one of us whose neck was locked on to the door-blocking table had any life insurance. But then they went away, having said this action was unlawful but not illegal, and that it was a civil matter. This

left us to enjoy the tranquil, drowse-inducing Summer sunshine until we decided to make a move at 4:15 p.m.

The CNC-run All Party Parliamentary Committee on Climate Change—to which we had declined the opportunity to make a presentation—was still in session. The Women's Institute took our place alongside Friends of the Earth and Stop Climate Chaos.

We declined the invitation to address this meeting because we believe in the creation of mass movements striving for *systemic* social and ecological change. Engaging with the committee would be a distraction from that, as it's not in the interests of either Parliament or private companies to advocate, or work for, such change. Also, we are deeply skeptical about the apparent privatization of the committee process, especially when the company concerned is profiting handsomely by selling the phony solution of carbon offset to the public.

We had been harboring a stray piece of coal all day. Once we had tidied up the boardroom after ourselves and pulled the table from the door, we presented the coal to the (extremely helpful) receptionist along with a note reading, "Offset this (please)." Actually, on reflection, I think it should have read, "Offset this (cannot be done)," or some such notion. But never mind. We were free, at least after I had scampered to the open-plan office and said to the underwhelmed assembled, "Goodbye, and by the way, please find a better way to save the planet, because this method ain't working."

At least, I hope that's what I said. We discussed throughout the day what effect our action might have on

uppies

the employees working in their open-plan office behind one of our boardroom walls. The indications we could glean were that we had upset them mightily. Who wouldn't be upset by a group of outsiders wandering in with a message that what the company does is the opposite of helping the climate heal? We tried to make it clear that our critique was of the company, not to mention capitalism itself, and not of the employees, but still, it can't be a hundred laughs to have our lot saying that the morality of offsetting is deeply flawed.

Finally, with an apology to the man at the desk who signed us in—he seemed relaxed about things, fortunately—we really were free. Free to enjoy the bourgeois delights of this teeming metropolis. Free

to accept a free lobotomy—sorry, I mean a free copy of the newspaper *London Lite* from an overworked giver-outer chasing a quota. Free to enjoy a rush-inspiring throwaway-cupped smoothie at a caff down the street. Free to trundle home to a warm house and immediately access the wonders of the Internet. Yes, we were free to acknowledge how embedded we are into a system built on exploitation and injustice, topped off with a wholesome-looking but totally toxic layer of bullshit and greenwash. Hypocrites? Probably. In that case, how about hypocrites who helped strip that toxic layer away for just a millisecond to let some real daylight flood into the debate? Definitely. And I feel really good about that.



BARE BONES

Bush Moves to Gut Endangered Species Act

Undeterred by the failure of previous legislative attempts to undermine the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Bush administration is now hoping to cripple the ESA through new administrative regulations (see *EFJ* November-December 2005). A leaked draft of the regulations was released by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility on March 27.

If approved, the regulations would: establish current extinction rates as an acceptable baseline; undermine critical habitat recovery by protecting only natural features that existed at the time of designation; prevent the listing of new species by limiting extinction projections to 20 years and ignoring historic loss of range; allow states to veto new listings and to assume control of species listings, critical habitat designations, and recovery and conservation plans; and more.

OfficeMax Announces New Paper Standards

On February 19, OfficeMax announced a new and more environmentally responsible paper procurement policy. The policy states that OfficeMax will maintain better records of where its paper comes from, avoid suppliers that "convert natural forests to industrial plantations," aim for 30 percent post-consumer content in its paper products and no longer carry paper derived from endangered areas.

OfficeMax's new policy is the result of the Dogwood Alliance's and Forest Ethics' seven-year market campaign against the highly destructive paper industry. Unfortunately, OfficeMax has not accepted Dogwood Alliance's demand to avoid paper from southern Appalachian forests.

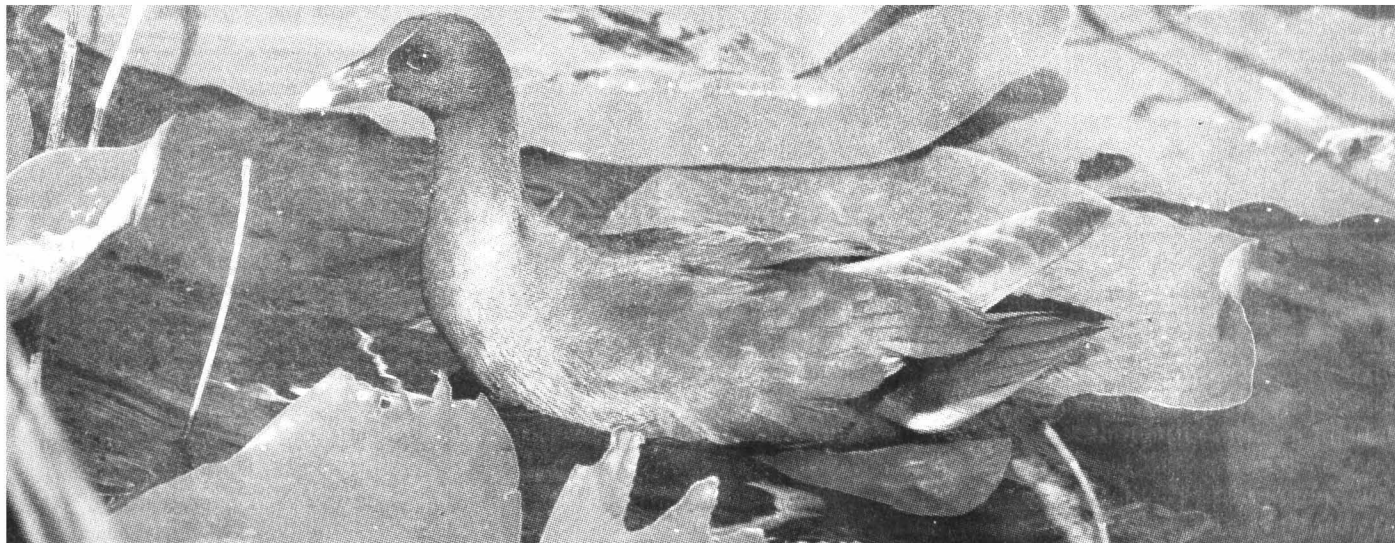


Photo by Wing-Chi Poon

An American purple gallinule in Everglades National Park, Florida

RESIST FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT IN DEFENSE OF THE *EVERGLADES!*

BY EVERGLADES UPRISING!

Who can envision a more dastardly duo, or more worthy opponents, than the fossil fuel barons and real estate developers encroaching into the Everglades? Between pollution, water consumption, sprawl and catastrophic climate change, our generation may well be the last to know the Everglades ecosystem, also known as the River of Grass. Both hydrologists and climate scientists have spelled this out repeatedly and with terrifying clarity. Yet Florida Power & Light (FPL) is raising the torch high for the south Florida tradition of acting without regard for consequence or reason.

The Swamp's Final Days?

FPL has proposed two huge fossil fuel power plants in the Everglades region: one in Glades County powered by coal and one in Palm Beach County powered by gas and oil. They are both being presented as having the cleanest, most efficient and "best" available technology, but the facts and statistics show the contrary.

The reality is, no industry has ever presented itself as a toxic, destructive, expensive, irresponsible entity that will poison and overextend the water supply; spew harmful substances into the air; cause cancer and emphysema; leak, spill or explode; facilitate

unwanted urban growth; heat up the planet; kill the last living reefs; or increase the ferocity of hurricanes and the spread of tropical diseases.

Nor would any profit-driven corporation admit that its next project would compromise the world's largest and most expensive restoration project, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, which is being crafted for the Everglades using billions of public dollars.

Companies simply don't present themselves with these images. They speak only of the jobs and tax base they will bring. In FPL's case, often-fabricated economic benefits are followed up with a heavy greenwashing campaign, where it touts small environmental efforts to hide its massively detrimental projects from public scrutiny. While FPL boasts openly of a 250-kilowatt solar power project on the Gulf Coast (which has not actually been completed), it hires high-powered public relations firms, such as Wragg & Casas, to sneak these atrocious fossil fuel plants, which total over 5,000 megawatts, past the public right here in the world-renowned Everglades.

Between the 1,960-megawatt coal plant in Glades and the 3,300-megawatt gas plant in Palm Beach, the hazardous emissions would total more than 25,000 tons annually,

including sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, coarse particulate matter, volatile organic compounds and sulfuric acid mist. Carbon dioxide emissions, the leading greenhouse pollutant and global warming culprit, would total nearly 28 million tons per year. Highly toxic mercury (mainly from the coal) would total about 200 pounds. Billions of gallons of water would be drawn from surface and aquifer sources every year.

These power plants are the dirty engines of an urban sprawl bulldozer. Nearly a million new units of development—many of which would be aimed at rezoning land in rural, wild South Florida for commercial, residential and industrial construction—would be built. As one Everglades Coalition participant put it, "It used to be that the Park Service saw big agriculture as the enemy—but now with urban sprawl, agriculture looks good!" Urban demands are sucking the Biscayne Aquifer dry, causing further saltwater intrusion. Now, the South Florida Water Management District wants to increase extraction from the Floridan Aquifer. In addition, we are losing open, water-permeable space to concrete at unprecedented rates. Between urbanization's concrete and canals, and the power plants themselves, we are altering the essential evapotranspiration cycle—the combination of evaporating water and

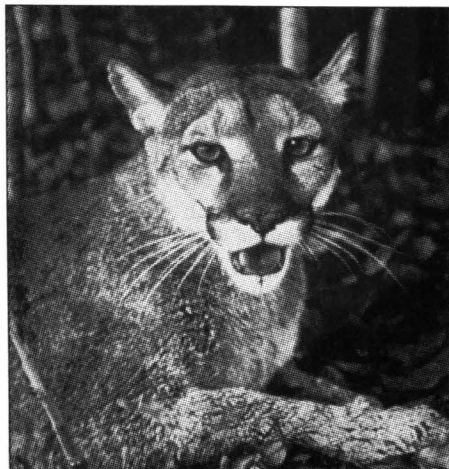
transpiring plants—which keeps wet ecosystems like the Everglades alive and productive. Everything on the planet (including us) would survive, and potentially thrive, without fossil-fuel generated electricity; but without clean, fresh water, there is nothing left of the Everglades.

A Call to the Frontlines of Restoration

What the Everglades needs is grassroots momentum against FPL from legal, legislative and *extralegal* angles. To most of us who know South Florida as home, or who follow national environmental issues, this urgency is not new. However, while the 'Glades region has been on a life-support system of pumps and canals for several decades, the threat is now of a new caliber. These two proposed power plants, slated for either side of Lake Okeechobee, represent an ultimate assault on this ecosystem and on those of us who make it our home.

Yet FPL's failure could represent an Achilles' heel, preventing further destruction in South Florida. At the recent pace of commercial, industrial and residential development, there appears to be no hopeful light at the end of progress's dark, destructive tunnel. But without these giant power plants, the machine inevitably slows down. Conversely, with small-scale, renewable, clean energy sources, a restored Everglades and a sustainable economy become something we can actually envision.

While many work diligently and sincerely at getting the River of Grass off of a failing life-support system, others are insistent on continuing



The endangered Florida panther, caught on film by a motion sensor camera

to inflict the deep wounds of development on its historic family of rivers, sloughs, ridges, creeks, estuaries, lagoons and reefs. Restoring the Everglades and healing those wounds depends first on fending off the attackers. In this light, stopping a massive new fossil fuel infrastructure and its "fire-breathing dragons" (as one FPL opponent calls them) from being built in our Everglades is the real frontline of restoration efforts.

What the wilderness of South Florida could really use right now is an uprising of hearts and minds, a "Fellowship of the Swamp," to stop FPL's awful plans. We want to use all the tools in the activist toolbox—from letters to lawsuits to monkeywrenching—and we want to initiate a new vision of growth, energy and human development here in the 'Glades, while we still have a chance....

Get Involved, Get Organized!

Everglades Uprising! (EU!) is a growing movement of radical environmental activists in South Florida—loosely affiliated with the international Earth First! network—advocating and utilizing direct action in the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades bioregion. EU! is mobilizing for a public presence at FPL's 2007 Annual Shareholders Meeting on May 25.

We raise a holistic critique of FPL that calls for opposition to its proposed fossil fuel plants in the Everglades, as well as the shutdown of its dirty and dangerous old plants along the coast. Instead, we propose massive conservation efforts and sustainable innovations.

We truly cannot afford the arrogance of the energy industry any longer. Its fear-mongering about potential blackouts is completely meaningless in the face of melting ice caps, increased hurricanes, poisoned fish, massive droughts, world wars for oil (and soon, clean water) and all of the other well-documented results attached to FPL's profits. We will not stand by as human greed causes our wetlands to dry and our oceans to rise.

For more information, contact jeagaeearthfirst@riseup.net; (561) 588-9666; www.riverofgas.info.

Everglades Uprising! is a growing movement of uncompromising voices in South Florida's environmental activist community.

BARE BONES

NYPD Spied Before GOP Convention

In March, the *New York Times* revealed that the New York Police Department (NYPD) engaged in a massive campaign of surveillance and infiltration against activists planning to protest the 2004 Republican National Convention (RNC). According to NYPD records disclosed during recent lawsuits, undercover officers infiltrated activist groups in more than a dozen US states, Canada and Europe.

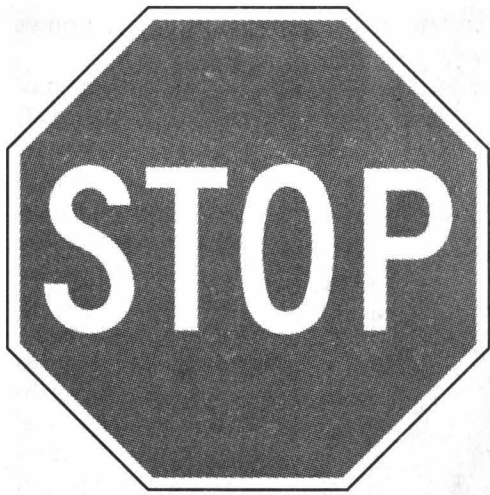
Beginning in 2003, the NYPD's covert RNC Intelligence Squad profiled and monitored hundreds of activists and organizations that it felt posed a security threat. Targets included "self-described anarchists," anti-war activists, church groups and even elected officials.

The NYPD's aggressive approach to silencing political dissent has been coming under fire recently. On February 15, a federal judge banned the NYPD's indiscriminate videotaping of political protests, on the grounds that the practice violates the Handschu guidelines, which govern police surveillance.

WTO Protesters to Receive \$1 Million

On April 2, approximately 175 protesters and pedestrians who were arrested during the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) summit accepted a settlement of \$1 million from the city of Seattle, Washington. In January, a federal jury determined that mass arrests by Seattle police had violated the plaintiffs' constitutional rights.

Each plaintiff in the class action lawsuit will receive between \$3,000 and \$10,000; the arrests will also be erased from the plaintiffs' records. The city has already paid \$800,000 to resolve dozens of similar lawsuits.



THE INTER-COUNTY CONNECTOR

BY LUKE KUHN

Some battles are fought every generation. One of these has been the battle to stop the Inter-County Connector (ICC) in Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. The ICC is scheduled to be a link in the supposedly dead outer beltway around Washington, DC—and the most destructive and persistent link in that scheme.

The ICC would begin at Interstate 270, south of Gaithersburg, and end at Route 1, south of Laurel. Why at Route 1 and not Interstate 95? Because mega-developer Jay Gould's Konterra project has been stalled there by lack of access. This \$3 billion road would effectively provide a (toll) driveway for his planned megamall.

In the affected area, the highway would cross the headwaters of every stream that feeds into the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, and run parallel to Mill Creek, just north of it. This part of the route has been shifted slightly north so it would cut through dozens of homes. In this way, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) could claim to spare Mill Creek, which of course would still get the oily, nasty runoff. Paint Branch, one of the streams feeding into the filthy Anacostia River, is itself clean enough to support a wild population of brown trout.

However, if the ICC is built, the only "brown trout" remaining in Paint Branch will come from the sewers, just like they do in the rest of the Anacostia River. In addition, the Rock Creek area threatened by the ICC supports spotted salamanders, but they will be replaced by SUVs if the ICC is driven though their homes.

Maryland residents nearly killed the ICC in 1999, but now it's back, due to Republican malfeasance and corruption. In 2003, then newly-elected Republican Governor Bob Erlich relaunched the ICC with great fanfare and instant

opposition. It's not as well known that Gould wrote him checks totaling some \$60,000 for campaign expenditures.

Just like in 1999, the 2003 ICC public hearings were dominated by opponents of the highway, but with one key difference: public energy was lower. In 1999, hearings were totally taken over by crowds dressed as trees, trout and other beings adversely affected. In 2003, only *one* trout suit appeared—sitting forlornly against the wall. Perhaps the pro-ICC crowd considered this a sign of weakness?

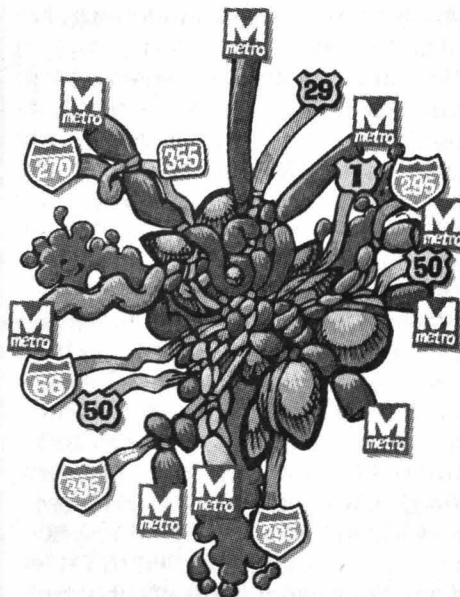
In addition, ICC supporters cynically moved a small section of the route out of Rock Creek Park by selecting dozens of expensive homes in Winter's Run and Cashell Estates to be seized and demolished instead. This sent other communities the message that opposing the ICC on pro-Earth grounds would put their own homes in danger. The official reason given was that it's easier to use "eminent domain" to take people's homes than to take parkland.

The highway is now further along than ever before, with a final EIS accepted and a Record of Decision issued. The ICC website offers contracts for bid for segments of the route, and construction was supposed to start in March. This is a big delay from the formerly planned Summer 2006 construction start, which was intended to give the highway's supporters a boost in the polls.

There is just one problem for Jay Gould and the Chamber of Commerce: the Republicans lost the election! Bob Erlich, prime mover of the ICC, is now out of office, and former pro-growth Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan has been replaced by Isaiah Legget, who is proposing a development freeze.

All the anti-ICC groups endorsed the winning candidates, including new governor Martin O'Malley—the only major party candidate not committed heavily to the ICC.

Two days after the election, O'Malley issued the first of a series of public statements supporting the ICC, to the dismay of so many who voted for him. There is



artwork by Mike Fitzgerald

suspicion that some very large checks may have landed on his desk from Gould and other pro-highway business interests.

In early January, the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club and other "Big Green" groups filed lawsuits seeking to block construction. The Audubon Society lawsuit points out that the EIS is grossly inadequate and that federal law was violated in the route selection. The Sierra Club lawsuit even covers global warming, as well as smog impacts. The EIS totally ignored climate change, of course. It also glossed over the local pollution impact from all those cars.

The lawsuits do not seek an immediate injunction, as it is claimed that no "environmentally damaging" work, such as bulldozing or tree removal, will come before the expected resolution of the lawsuits this Summer. This represents another slippage of their construction schedule, though the State Highway Administration has just awarded a contract to begin construction to Intercounty Constructors of Annapolis. This is a joint venture of Corman Construction Inc., Granite Construction Company and G.A. & F.C. Wagman, Inc.

But, word is that Governor O'Malley has submitted a budget for the year that does not include ICC spending! With a fiscal year changeover in the Summer and construction schedules subject to further delays, this leads to new hope!

Still, this could be a scheme by O'Malley to trick the public—as has happened so many times before—or even to delay things until he finds out who is stronger: Gould and the developers, or that odd coalition of both homeowners resisting eminent domain and those who love our Earth.

Although the governor has voted no money for the ICC in next year's budget, state representatives are already filing eminent domain cases against homeowners along the route. Cashell Estates is reportedly emptying out, implying that even some who will not lose their homes are leaving.

If the lawsuits by the Big Greens fail, *anything* could happen. It will be up to the public to prevent the construction of the ICC.

It should be mentioned that the DC area is a national leader in killing freeway projects. In the 1960s, there was a proposal to extend I-95 south of the Capitol Beltway, directly through DC in a project called the Northwest Freeway. That proposal to divert cars driven mostly by whites through African-American neighborhoods got so far as to

evict all residents in the path and board up their homes before it was finally stopped.

What happened to the Northwest Freeway? Well, some protesters took over one of those boarded-up rowhouses, pulled off the boards and occupied it in a flashy urban housing takeover.

Old coverage makes this look like a Homes Not Jails action. After that "incident," things got moving and the project was canceled! The ICC is not even as far along as the Northwest Freeway was when those homes were boarded up, and the political landscape is changing.

With the lawsuits in play and the ICC budget stuck, it is impossible to predict when the project may actually start, but a good guess would be this Summer or even later. Since construction

gets more difficult in Winter, it may not take much to kill off a second construction season, just as delays ruined the last one. If a big "Stop the ICC" eco-mobilization came to Maryland, and construction got off to a late start, it could be a real nightmare for our road-building, tree-bashing, stream-fouling, home-destroying enemies!

In many ways, stopping the ICC could be a lot like stopping the war in Iraq. It may come down to holding a bunch of Democrats' feet to the fire. The power of the streets and the power of the forest must force these DemoRats to live up to the expectations of those who put them in office, though they may try to wiggle out of it.

Perhaps the most effective form of direct action would be to use SHAC-style tactics against any companies accepting ICC work, severely restricting the availability of everything from rental equipment to subcontractors. It can be damn hard to build a road if nobody will rent anything to your contractors out of fear for their equipment at other, less-guarded sites. It is equally hard to build a road if your main contractors can't get subcontractors. It's probably too late to prevent bids by primary contractors, but then again, maybe not.

In this case, home demos might be more effective than treesits. Does direct action work? Just ask all those pharmaceutical company executives who are telling Congress and the UK Parliament that they will leave the US and the UK if animal rights protesters can't be stopped. We know what works from the screaming of these CEOs.

For more information, contact stoptheicc@hushmail.com.

Luke Kuhn has been an activist since Ronald Reagan tried to bring back the draft in the early 1980s. The more he investigates capitalism, the more he says it looks like a trip through a sewer in a glass-bottomed boat.



artwork by Brian Bowes

Cell Phones Suck II

BY MOUNTAINREBEL

Rumor has it that cell phones aren't very secure. Most cell phones nowadays have Global Positioning System (GPS) devices in them, and even older phones that don't can still be easily tracked by triangulating their signals to towers. Every time you call someone or someone calls you, information about your phone, their phone, and the start and stop times of the conversation is recorded. Word on the street is that the feds can even remotely turn on the microphone in your cell phone and use it to eavesdrop on nearby conversations, in some cases even when your phone is turned off, all without you knowing. This is why Earth Firsters often take the batteries out of their phones before sensitive meetings. I've often wondered how much of this is true and how much is the product of paranoid, security-culture junkies. Turns out, it's all true.

Introducing Roving Taps

Every security culture guide tells you not to discuss anything illegal over the phone because the phone might be tapped. Actually, you shouldn't discuss anything illegal if a cell phone is anywhere close by. Last November, the US Justice Department approved what are known as roving taps.

During a criminal investigation of members of the Genovese family, a major organized-crime syndicate, the FBI bugged restaurants where the mobster John "Buster" Ardito had meetings. When Ardito and his associates discovered three of the bugs, the feds changed their tactics and began using roving taps instead. An FBI affidavit written by Assistant US Attorney Jonathan Kolodner refers to the roving tap in Ardito's phone as a "listening device placed in a cellular telephone." The FBI also placed a roving tap in the cell phone of Peter Peluso, an accomplice of Ardito who later turned snitch. This was the first legal use of roving taps in the US.

A "listening device" could be referring to either the cell phone's software or its hardware. A cell phone is essentially a small computer. A hardware listening device would require the feds to get physical access to the cell phone to place a bug in it, sort of like placing a bug in an office. A software device would mean that either the cell phone's operating system has a built-in back door that can be used

to activate its microphone or that the feds would install spyware on the phone, allowing the same thing. It is unclear how the FBI actually went about installing roving taps in Ardito's and Peluso's cell phones.

"Just How Secure Is Your Cellular Phone?"—a 1997 article in the National Reconnaissance Organization newsletter—has this to say: "A cellular telephone can be turned into a microphone and transmitter for the purpose of listening to conversations in the vicinity of the phone. This is done by transmitting to the cell phone a maintenance command on the control channel. This command places the cellular telephone in the 'diagnostic mode.' When this is done, conversations in the immediate area of the telephone can be monitored over the voice channel."

In addition, some cell phones can't be completely powered off without taking the batteries out. In an opinion arguing that roving taps are legal under federal wiretapping laws, US District Judge Lewis Kaplan said that roving taps "functioned whether the phone was powered on or off." Newer Nokia phones will turn themselves on if an alarm is set, and apparently they'll also turn themselves on to eavesdrop on your conversations.

How to Tell If Your Phone Has a Roving Tap

The following tips are from security expert Lauren Weinstein, who wrote about them on his blog (a video entitled, "Is Your Cell Phone Bugged?" explains these tips in detail, and is available on YouTube and Google Video).

Everything your phone does requires electricity, which it gets from its battery. Your battery runs out much faster when your phone is transmitting data than when it's not. If you notice that your phone's battery has been draining much faster than it normally does, and if you haven't been talking on it, this could be a sign that it's tapped.

Normally, when you talk on your cell phone for a long period of time, it becomes warmer. If your phone is heating up when you're not talking on it, it might mean that your microphone is recording audio to your phone's flash memory to be transmitted later on or that your phone is transmitting audio live.

There are two different types of cell phone services: Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and Code-Division Multiple Access (CDMA). The vast majority of the world's cell phones use GSM; in the US,

Not only could they know **where you sleep at night** and **where you go during the day**, but if they **map your location** along with every other cell phone user's, they will also be able to know **who you hang out with** and **who you go to meetings with**.

They're Listening...

all T-Mobile and Cingular phones use GSM. If you put a GSM phone close to speakers or other audio equipment, it will produce a buzzing noise if information is being transmitted. It's normal for your cell phone to create a brief buzzing noise in speakers every so often, but if there's continual buzzing and you're not making a phone call, this is a strong sign that your phone is transmitting audio without your consent. This will not work on Verizon and Sprint phones, however, because they use CDMA technology.

Your Cell Phone Is a Tracking Device

All new cell phones have GPS devices in them, which can be used to find the location—within feet—of a cell phone anywhere in the world. Cell phones are constantly communicating with towers to make sure the time is accurate, to check for messages and more, meaning that the exact locations of most cell phones are known at all times. The location of older phones that don't have GPS devices can also be determined with a process called triangulation, in which a reasonably accurate location can be determined by measuring the relative time delays in the signal from the phone to three different cell phone towers. The fugitive hacker Kevin Mitnick was located and arrested in 1995, when law enforcement triangulated his cell phone.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), which is like the National Lawyers Guild of digital freedoms, has been involved in a series of legal cases regarding the government's tracking of cell phone locations without warrants or probable cause. If warrants and probable cause aren't necessary to track cell phone locations, the kind of information that the feds might be collecting is frightening. If you carry your phone with you wherever you go, and if many of your friends do as well, then the feds have the ability to create a map of associations. Not only could they know where you sleep at night and where you go during the day, but if they map your location along with every other cell phone user's, they will also be able to know who you hang out with and who you go to meetings with.

And even if the EFF wins, and it becomes illegal for cops to track cell phone's without warrants or probable cause, since when has the law ever stopped the police from repressing our movement?



What's an Activist to Do?

The answer is simple. Get rid of your cell phone. The *EF! Journal* has previously published a series of articles explaining the social and environmental reasons for not using cell phones (see *EF!J* July-August 2005). These articles have since been recompiled and distributed as a zine called *Cell Phones Suck*. Those reasons, combined with the security risks associated with owning a cell phone, should be enough for any activist. It's just not worth it.

mOuntainrebel enjoys riding bicycles, climbing trees, sharing delicious food with friends, going camping with EF!ers, and designing and programming dynamic database applications using GNU/Linux and other free software tools. He finds his home in the mountains of Katuah.

Frontlines

Icelandic Elves Sabotage Alcan Aluminum

In early January, in the first-ever Earth Liberation Front (ELF) action in Iceland, the ELF targeted the Alcan aluminum smelter in Hafnarfjörður. Three pieces of machinery were heavily mangled, as the elves showed they will not tolerate the smelter and its unwanted expansion onto untouched lava fields. Iceland's wilderness has been facing ongoing industrialization, powered by large dams and geothermal power (see *EF!* May-June 2006).

Alaskan Moose Takes Down Helicopter

A moose living near Gustavus, Alaska—a settlement of about 450 humans and twice as many moose—apparently got fed up after being shot with a tranquilizer dart by a wildlife biologist hovering in a helicopter.

Instead of submitting to the drug and allowing biologist Kevin White to study it, the moose charged at the aircraft, damaging the helicopter's tail rotor and bringing it down.

Both the biologist and the pilot of the helicopter were unharmed, but the moose was injured by the spinning rotor and was euthanized.

Argentines Block Border Routes to Protest Pulp Mill

On January 31, hundreds of Argentine demonstrators blockaded all three bridges crossing into Uruguay. For five hours, they successfully halted the passage of goods and put a large dent in Uruguay's tourist-dependent economy.

The bridge blockaders are protesting two World Bank-sponsored wood-pulp mills that are slated to be built on the Uruguay River in Fray Bentos, Uruguay.

Residents of Gualeguaychú—the Argentine city across the river from Fray Bentos—say that the plant would ruin tourism in the region and cause lasting environmental

damage to the river and surrounding area.

The demonstrators, who have frequently blockaded two of the three bridges in recent years, say they will not let up until Uruguay agrees to relocate the mills (see *EF!* March-April 2006).

444 Cats Rescued from Meat Market in China

About 100 activists and volunteers for the I Love Cats Home in Tianjin, China, saved 444 cats from a cat-meat market on February 10. The rescue was met with considerable resistance from the cat butchers and police.

"The Tianjin volunteers bravely fought... with the butchers and police for more than 10 hours. Some volunteers were injured and sent to the hospital," recounted Wang Yue, one of the hospitalized volunteers.

Police eventually allowed the activists to take the cats from the shop, where the animals had been kept in small cages. The China Small Animal Protection Association, in nearby Beijing, took in 415 of the rescued cats.

Greenpeace Storms Kimberly-Clark Headquarters

In Toronto, Ontario, on February 12, Greenpeace activists stormed Kimberly-Clark's Canadian headquarters



photo courtesy: Greenpeace

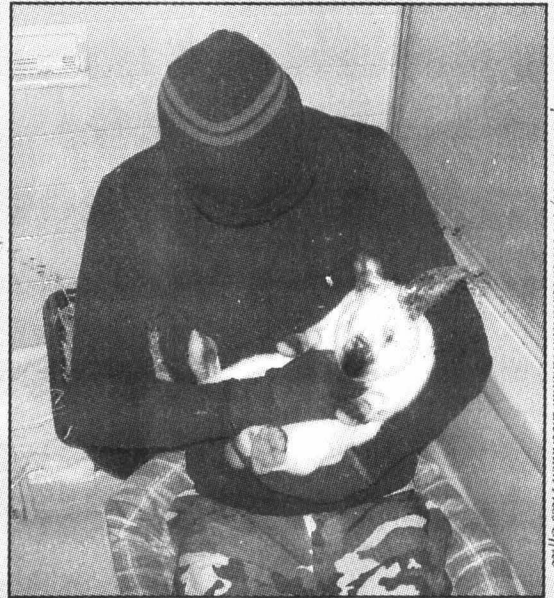


photo courtesy: the North American Animal Liberation Press Office

to protest its practice of making tissue products from clearcut ancient forests. All of the company's North American Kleenex products are made from 100 percent virgin tree pulp, much of it clearcut from Ontario's and Alberta's boreal forests.

Four activists locked down at the offices and were later arrested and charged with criminal mischief. Other Greenpeace activists played tapes of chainsaw noises and sprinkled woodchips around the corporate building.

ALF Targets Rabbit Butcher

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) freed 20 rabbits from Blue Chip Farms in Fountain Inn, South Carolina, on the night of February 19. Blue Chip Farms, which produces "America's #1 Package of Rabbit Meat," keeps rabbits in small cages until they are slaughtered at seven or eight weeks of age.

The ALF had previously given Blue Chip Farms a warning that it would face action if it didn't stop slaughtering rabbits for food and fur. In a post-mission communiqué, the ALF promised return visits if the killing continues.

EARTH FIRST!

ROUND RIVER RENDEZVOUS

Southern Indiana • July 2-8

BY EF! INDIANA

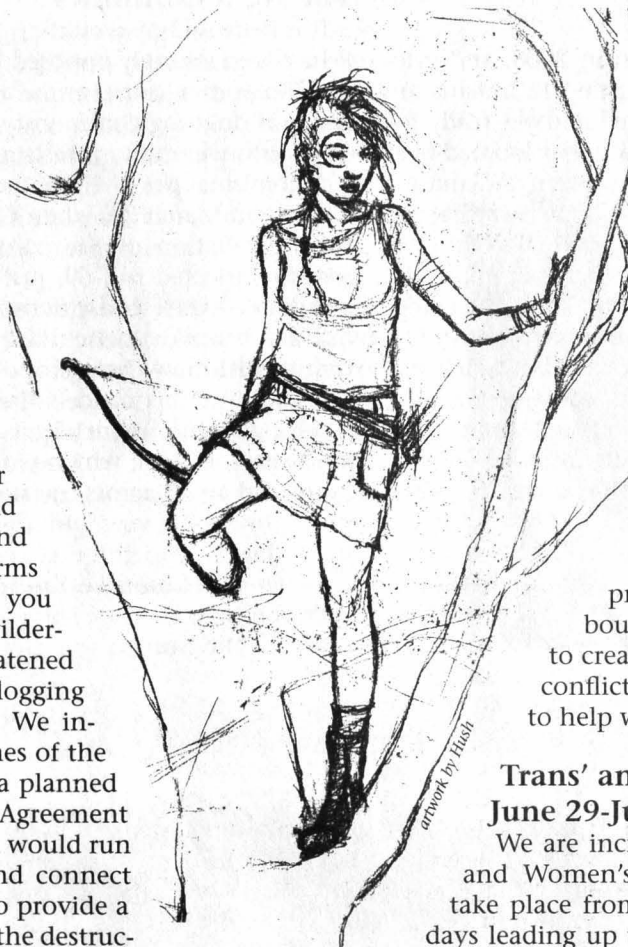
We are pleased to announce that this Summer's Round River Rendezvous will take place in beautiful southern Indiana. We invite you all to spend a week with our rolling hills, hickory, ash and oak trees, wild turkeys and fireflies, and thunderstorms and campfires. We invite you to fall in love with this wilderness, which is being threatened by development projects, logging and monocrop agriculture. We invite you to join the frontlines of the fight against Interstate 69, a planned North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) superhighway that would run from Canada to Mexico and connect with Plan Puebla-Panamá to provide a fast route for free trade and the destruction of North America. We invite you to share skills and stories, discuss tactics, make new friends and form new alliances. We invite you to challenge yourselves... and to wade in the creeks and roll in the dirt!

Workshops and Trainings

We are hoping to focus a good portion of the discussions and trainings on roadblock tactics, including past successes (internationally) as well as the current fight against I-69. We welcome everyone to teach workshops; if you want to, please contact us. Some workshops we have planned include tree climbing and blockades, mental health, Confronting Oppression Within, hide tanning, prisoner support, sexual health and histories of local struggles, as well as a medic training and native plant walks. As usual, there will be bioregional updates around the morning circle and the Warrior Poet Society's "Night to Howl."

Things You Should Know

We want everyone to be able to come to the Rondy, but we are uncompromising in saying that there are absolutely *no*



dogs allowed. We all love animals and hate rules, but nevertheless, your domesticated hounds have to stay at home for the safety of all of the living things at the rendezvous. If you think you are an exception, you can contact us; dogs that help vision-impaired folks or people with other needs are OK.

We are also asking everyone to consider the roles they play within gender, racial and other forms of privilege. Be respectful of people's boundaries and be empathetic. We want to create a safe space for everyone. Should a conflict arise, there will be a mediation group to help work it out.

Trans' and Women's Action Camp, June 29-July 1

We are incredibly pleased to announce a Trans' and Women's Action Camp (TWAC), which will take place from June 29 through July 1—the three days leading up to the rendezvous. This will be three days of skill sharing and rowdy good times with only people who identify as female or transgendered. TWAC is in the early stages of planning, and if you would like to help or have questions or comments, you can contact us at efindiana@riseup.net.

What to Bring

- Food, utensils and cooking gear (we won't be providing food)
- Clothes and protection for a hot Midwestern Summer
- Rain gear (expect thunderstorms)
- A water purification device
- Protection from mosquitoes
- A tent or something to sleep in

We are also in need of funds and help. We hope to pay travel fares for speakers from far away, so all are encouraged to organize fundraisers. Also, advice is welcome from past rendezvous organizers.

For more information, contact efindiana@riseup.net. For updates and location announcements, visit earthfirst.bee-town.com.

Earth First! in

Roadblock EF! and the Campaign Against I-69

BY ROADBLOCK EF!

With I-69's construction set to begin in 2008, and evictions beginning this Summer, Earth First!ers in Indiana are feeling anxious and excited, overworked and yet ready for the fight. The threat of this superhighway has loomed over the communities of central and southwestern Indiana for nearly 20 years, but it has become increasingly clear that the controversy will be resolved, one way or another, in the next 18 months. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) finished its final round of environmental surveying, enough money is in the state's coffers to begin (but not finish) construction, and Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels has staked his political future on beginning construction next year. At the same time, more and more people are getting involved in the fight against I-69 and are starting new, autonomous initiatives against the road. The farmers of southwestern Indiana aren't backing down.

Introduction to I-69

I-69 is a massive superhighway planned to facilitate increased trade between Canada, the US and Mexico. It has already been built from Ontario to Indianapolis via Michigan. National I-69 planners hope to extend the highway through southwest Indiana and then into Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas, where it would connect with the highways of the Plan Puebla Panamá in Mexico. Given that the existing I-69 crossing in Michigan

handles about half of all North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) traffic between Canada and the US, and that the proposed crossing in Texas would handle over half of all Mexico-US NAFTA traffic, it's obvious that I-69 is an extremely important artery for capital and globalized trade.

The Trans-Texas Corridor—a road-building project of which I-69 is a part—would gobble up hundreds of thousands of acres in Texas. In southwestern Indiana alone, I-69 would destroy and disturb much of the area's remaining wilderness and evict 400 rural families. Furthermore, I-69 is projected to add 12,000 new trucks to Indiana's daily traffic, meaning a vast increase in the air pollution and emissions of greenhouse gases in our state.

The Fight Continues

It is because I-69 would cause such vast destruction that it has been strongly opposed from the beginning. Indiana and Texas may not even be able to start construction because of ongoing community mobilizations and lawsuits, in addition to militant resistance.

A combination of these tactics helped us win a major victory on March 24, when Governor Daniels announced the cancellation of the construction of two major toll roads connected to I-69, just a few months after he had announced their construction. Daniels was forced to admit that it was overwhelming public resistance that forced him to withdraw these proposals.

Because of this cancellation, Indiana's portion of I-69 faces a growing financial crisis. It may be reconceived as a private toll road, which would lead to even more resistance and anger across the state.

Expanding Resistance

Roadblock EF! (RBEF!) is only one part of the wider anti-I-69 community. As construction approaches, a number of other organizations are continuing old anti-I-69 initiatives and starting new ones. These range from a continued campaign of home and office demonstrations against I-69 planners to the filing of a new, comprehensive lawsuit challenging INDOT's rigged environmental reports.

Local Earth First!ers are contributing to the growing momentum in a

number of ways. Besides continuing to be an antagonistic presence at INDOT-sponsored public meetings, RBEF! members are working with other local organizers to start a listening project, a concept borrowed from anti-mountaintop removal struggles. The basic idea is to create a forum for discussions between people in affected communities and eco-radicals, thereby allowing us to share their stories of resistance with a wider audience. EF!ers are also organizing bike rides and campouts along the proposed route so that as many people as possible can get to know and love the bioregion that is at risk. Other recent projects have included: restarting Bloomington's critical mass bike ride to highlight the connections between road building,



Fields, farms and forests threatened by I-69

photos courtesy RBEF!

the Heartland

car culture and global warming; creating the *Roadblock Report*, a newsletter that will help coordinate different elements of the struggle and improve communication among threatened communities; and setting up speaking and performance tours across Indiana and the proposed national I-69 route.

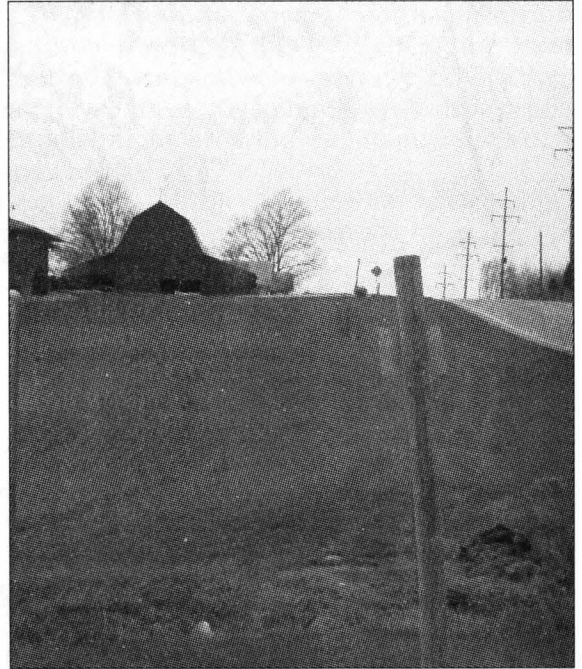
There has also been an increase in opposition to I-69 outside of Indiana. Farmers in Texas have formed a direct action network. Office demonstrations like the one at the EF! Organizers' Conference (see page 8), which target involved corporations, have spread up and down the route. There is also an ongoing "No I-69" graffiti campaign in Little Rock, Arkansas, which has received attention from both the police and the mainstream media.

We Will Never Let Them Build This Road

Over and over again, media pundits in Indiana have claimed that I-69 cannot be stopped. As it gets closer to final approval, they say it will become futile to fight it. In their worldview, ordinary people only have a voice when they calmly submit a comment to INDOT bureaucrats. But our struggle has proven them wrong again and again. Momentum against the superhighway is growing at just the time INDOT officials were hoping people would learn to accept the "inevitable." But how could it be any other way? We all know just how much is at stake: the future of our bioregion, the integrity of our communities, and the

fate of one of their most important free trade infrastructure schemes. We will never let them build this road!

For more information, contact Roadblock EF!, roadblockef@yahoo.com; i69news.bee-town.com.



I-69 and the Plan Puebla Panamá: The Global Connection

The battle against the construction of I-69 stretches from one end of North America to the other. This superhighway is a whirlwind of destruction much deeper and wider than six lanes of concrete.

With the construction of I-69 comes a new vision of development that tears through Mesoamerica, transforming it into a massive, interconnected, industrial production site. It is clear that these projects are part of a single, massive scheme that will cause irreversible ecological destruction and social dislocation. This scheme used to be called the Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP), but the planners have attempted to drop this unifying title in order to disrupt the cross-border resistance to the many facets of this project.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) states that only eight percent of Central America's hydroelectric potential has been tapped. It plans

to build several hundred more dams, which will power factories and send energy north. Each year, dams displace more people around the world than war. The impact on the land and people will be immense. Other forms of PPP development include Pacific and Atlantic highway corridors, railroads, dry canals, a biological corridor, privatized hemisphere-wide electricity grids and international airports.

The multilateral development banks have identified high transport costs as one of the biggest hurdles to competitive free trade in Mesoamerica. The PPP's essential infrastructure reveals a weakness in the free trade agenda.

In San Salvador de Atenco, Mexico, the people stood up to this kind of displacement and development. Armed with machetes, highway blockades and the fear of having to live in high-rises, they completely halted an international airport from

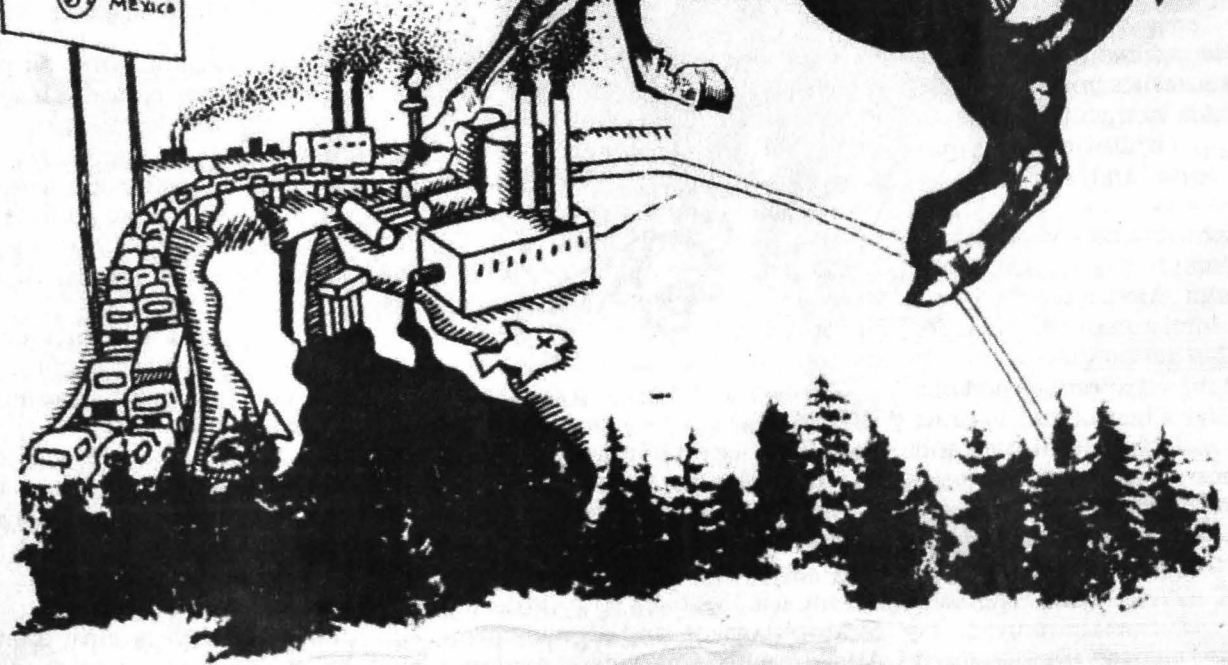
being built. Like I-69, the purpose of the airport was to steal and then transport resources from Mesoamerica to the US and Canada. The halting of the airport's construction reminds us, in Indiana, that these projects are linchpins in schemes of dispossession and export-based economies in the Western Hemisphere.

While the executives can hide in their offices behind legions of cops, making plans without consulting communities, they cannot hide the structures that represent their greedy theft and ecological destruction. And we can fight concrete and evictions in a way that ideas can't be fought. Infrastructure projects like I-69 and the PPP are weak links in an otherwise insurmountable fight against capitalism. By looking at the situation south of the US-Mexico border, we are infused with both hope and a sense of urgency toward stopping I-69.

Annual Earth First! Round
River Rendezvous 2007
July 2nd - 8th in
Southern Indiana

THIS SUMMER
COME AND FIGHT
THE APPROACHING
ROAD
MONSTER

INTERSTATE
69
CANADA
MEXICO



For questions, workshop requests, and ideas email us at efindiana@riseup.net
Website: <http://earthfirst.bee-town.com>



Environmental News of the Weird

Greenhouse Gases to Be Buried in the Ocean

Want to see pollution “disappear”? As of February 10, the UN’s London Convention on marine pollution allows greenhouse gases to be buried at the bottom of the ocean. The new rules permit industrialists to capture heat-trapping gases from big emitters, such as coal-fired power plants or steel mills, and entomb them offshore.

Prior to this amendment’s ratification last November, the international community had no clear stance on whether carbon dioxide, a central greenhouse gas, counts as a pollutant. With this agreement, carbon dioxide’s role in global warming has been given official acknowledgment.

Some warn that this process could lead to the acidification of the oceans, and make it harder for invertebrates to build shells. As of press time, there was no word from Aquaman or the Snorks—representatives of groups likely to be the first affected by the new rules.

KFC Owner Tries to Buy PETA Warehouse

Yum! Brands, the owner of the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) chain, recently offered \$1 million to buy a warehouse in Norfolk, Virginia. What Yum! didn’t realize is that the warehouse is owned by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

“PETA would be willing to give Yum! this warehouse, free and clear,” PETA responded, “if KFC requires its chicken suppliers to adopt the recommendations made by members of its own Animal Welfare Advisory Council.”

The council suggested that KFC suppliers should quit using antibiotics to expedite chicken growth, stop breeding chickens to have breasts so big that the chickens have difficulty walking and switch from electrically stunning chickens to killing them with “controlled atmosphere” gassing.

In a move that shocked nobody, Yum! Brands declined the offer.

Brazil Offers Internet Access to Forest People

Brazil’s government said it will provide free Internet access to native tribes in the Amazon, in an effort to help protect the world’s biggest rainforest.

One hundred and fifty communities are slated to receive an Internet signal by satellite. Even though many of these communities are only reachable by boat, they will soon be able to shop at sites like eBay and the ironically named Amazon.com, as well as report illegal logging and ranching to federal agencies.

Indigenous and government leaders alike remain optimistic about this new strategy.

The Grass Is Always Greener... or, at Least, It Appears That Way

Apparently thinking things could look a bit nicer, China’s Fumin County government decided to spruce up Laoshou Mountain. After undergoing extensive mining, Laoshou had become an eyesore. Rather than plant trees on its eroding slopes, authorities expedited the remodeling by ordering the mountain to be spray-painted green.

An employee with the County Forestry Department declined to comment to the US media.

If Only We’d Thought of This for the Dodo...

The gray wolf—hunted to near-extinction in the US—has joined a small but growing number of endangered species that have been cloned. Led by Byeong Chun Lee, the South Korean research team that cloned the animals is touting this as a breakthrough in animal conservation.

Peter Siminski, a zoo director in California, is not convinced. “The primary [conservation effort] has to do with reducing conflicts with humans and maintaining habitat that has sufficient prey for wolves,” he said.

On the other hand, the Audubon Nature Institute’s Center for Research of Endangered Species believes that cloning is an important tool for saving a species. Its laboratory in New Orleans, Louisiana, has cloned an African wild cat and an Arabian sand cat. Currently, scientists there are

currently attempting to clone an endangered antelope.

“The wild is becoming smaller and smaller,” said an official from the center, as she described its “frozen zoo.” “This is an opportunity for us to put together a living library of genetics.”

It is unknown if the scientists working in Korea or New Orleans have seen the motion picture blockbuster, *Jurassic Park*, or read Michael Crichton’s bestselling novel of the same name.

Despite Larger Brand Recognition, Coyotes Prefer Quiznos to Subway

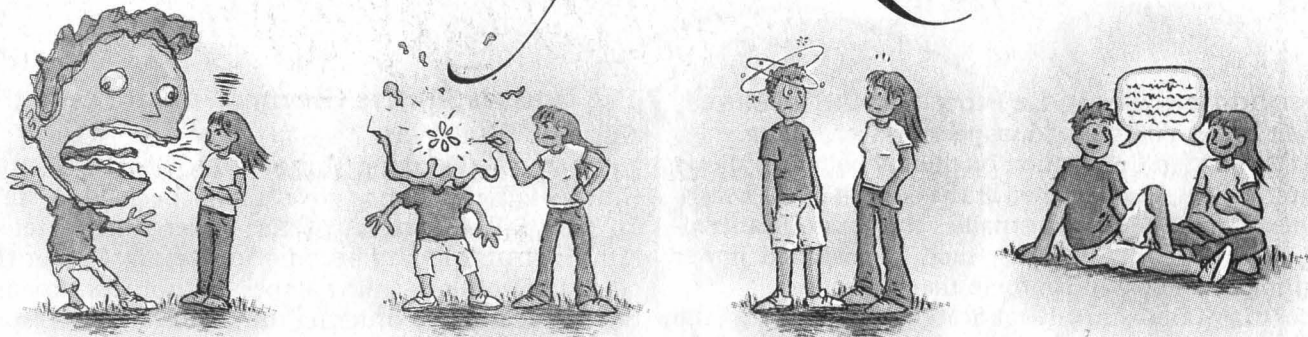
A coyote stunned employees and customers at a downtown Chicago Quiznos sandwich shop as it walked through the open door and lay down in a beverage cooler.

The coyote was refused service but remained in the restaurant for 40 minutes before being hauled away by Chicago Animal Care and Control.

In a city renowned for its local delicatessens, witnesses seemed baffled as to why the coyote would choose such a low-brow joint for lunch.



Patriarchy in Katúah



artwork by Fallyn K.

BY BECCA AND CLARE

In a recent issue of the *Earth First! Journal*, Challenging Oppression Within (COW) was introduced to the movement (see *EF!* November-December 2006). While this was important on a continental level, to truly confront sexism and patriarchy, challenging oppression within needs to be brought to the community level. And so, we want to share our experiences of dealing with patriarchy in Katúah Earth First! (KEF!).

The process began with an acknowledgment of patriarchy. During a KEF! meeting, we requested that patriarchy be put on the following week's agenda. While planning for the next week's meeting, a number of women discussed similar experiences of being talked over, interrupted, ignored and not given space to speak. We had also experienced assumptions that we didn't have experience or information. Because of that, more tangible roles had been given to men. We observed that some men had a tendency to disregard the facilitation process, therefore dominating conversations and meetings. Women have often left KEF! due to these issues. Those who have stayed feel a disconnection from EF!

We acknowledged our anger, because during the time we'd spent working with KEF!, we'd never had an opportunity to deal with our feelings of disempowerment. We acknowledged our empowerment, because patriarchy had finally become an agenda item. We were hopeful. We had developed strong bonds with many KEF!ers, and we believed that our requests would be listened to.

While we were talking, an older member of the activist community and former EF!er approached us. We told her what we were doing, and she responded by advising us to break away from KEF! and work with each other, because the KEF! men were a lost cause. Nevertheless, most of us wanted to continue working with KEF! We wanted to build a stronger community in which every participant is equally important and valid. Breaking away from KEF! would be a last resort.

Two women facilitated the big KEF! meeting. The first section—in which only women spoke—was a time to share personal experiences and discuss why it is important for the movement to deal with patriarchy. For the second section, we opened the floor to a goal-orientated dialogue about next steps. A men's and trans' group was

formed, we planned a consensus and facilitation training, and we agreed to be more aware of gender dynamics. We ended the meeting with a go-around, sharing one word that mirrored what we felt. We recognized how much support, positivity and dedication there was at the meeting. However, there was also a sense of defensiveness from some male participants. We left that evening with many mixed feelings.

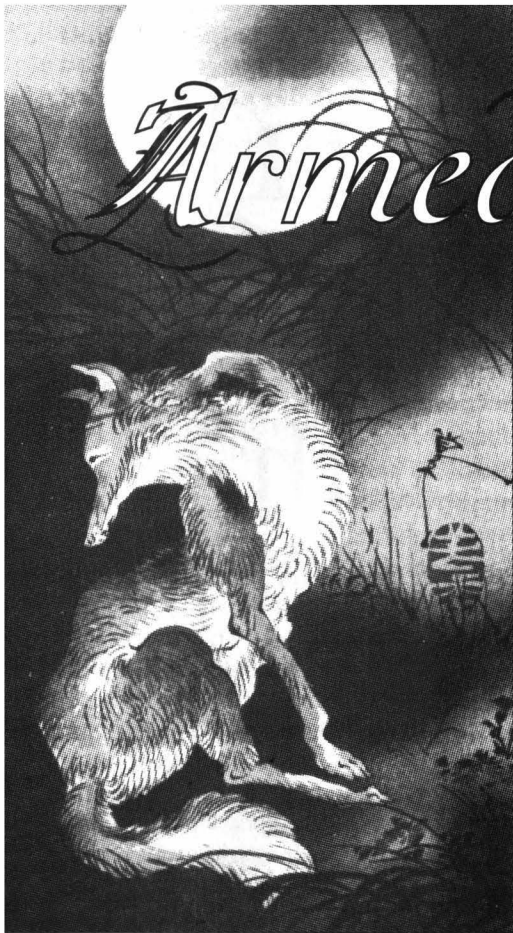
The next KEF! meeting was much more supportive and inclusive. We discussed constructive ways of calling a person out on patriarchal behavior and implemented them effectively. We used "I" statements and gave examples of more inclusive language. Women who had felt disempowered found the space to step up; women who had felt silenced before were listened to.

Although this calling-out of patriarchy was successful in many ways, it was also short-lived. Currently, KEF! is very fragmented and has recently changed to a system more dependent on working groups than weekly meetings. Communication between the working groups and gender caucuses has become very limited.

Although the fragmentation is not directly tied to patriarchy, it does stem from a lack of accountability and support between KEF!ers, and sexism has exacerbated the fractionalization. Many disrespectful and dismissive comments were made by male KEF!ers regarding the call-out. While these comments were only spoken by a minority of the men, they reinforced many of KEF! women's underlying feeling that this "community" hasn't been worth fighting for. Because this issue had been prevalent for years without effectively being addressed, many women did not feel invested in the process—even after the call-out. On the upside, forming the women's group helped us feel more comfortable with organizing by ourselves.

KEF! has a long way to go, and we must struggle to mend the dynamics of our group. Most importantly, we all need to strive for patience, understanding and better communication. We understand that forming a healthy community is an ongoing process, and we'll need to keep investing energy into this effort. We are honored to be part of a community that is taking on these issues and want to thank COW for helping to create the space for this process. Fuckrad.

Clare and Becca have been involved in KEF! for two years. They like playing in their gardens and meeting their neighbors.



artwork by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

Armed with Visions

Clear as cut glass & just as dangerous...

(all rights reserved to the authors)

sand in the crankcase

for callenbach

wire cutters are the weapons of the
future
cut the false connections
the twisted coils of energy
coagulating cancer and all its
violent and stupid and crazy friends
seeking ends which do not end

—paul wilson

*Send poems to:
Warrior Poets Society
P.O. Box 14501
Berkeley, CA 94712-5501*

A Witch's Chant

The land doesn't care
About the FBI
Lies passive under circling planes
At sunset
Takes our bombs and pesticide
Sprays
Gives us poison water and radioactive
Fruit.

The land is land is plants is you
Is earth is water is the pull of
The moon
Is dirt is life is death renewed
The land is you
Walk softly.

I dreamt a dream I was hugging a
Tree
My bared breasts the last thing
Between a chainsaw and the tree
Tears ran between my legs, mixed
With blood and became a river
I woke up determined to defend
The dawn.

—Laurel Luddite

Coastal Remains

A lot can change in twenty years
even a simple cable repair man can see that much.
My view from the top of the telephone pole used
to be refreshing. A flat sand worn landscape
brimming with sea birds and evergreens.
Now plastic condos litter my view
from my crow's nest of telephone wire.
They stand in the footprints
of stamped out copper roofed homes.
The four lane road down below hides
the old two lane "county 21."
The same road that used to carry beat up Chevys
now fills up with Mercedes and BMWs.
Hell, you can't even see the ocean
unless you're standing on the shore!

They call it "progress." I think not.
Long ago a man wrote, "the woods are lovely, dark and deep."
So, with no longer to go before I sleep
I hope to dream of creeper vines reaching over concrete
of trees to shadow the shore
and gulls to roost in the apexes
of mansions long abandoned beside the sea.

—Sean Carr

Great Bear Rainforest: The Clearcut Truth

Grassroots groups say Big Greens brokered a bad deal, and now ramped-up logging is devouring coastal old-growth.

BY ZOE BLUNT

In February 2006, Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, Rainforest Action Network and ForestEthics celebrated a historic agreement to bring an end to what has been called a "war in the woods" of coastal British Columbia (BC), Canada. But one year later, observers say the Big Greens' agreement may be unraveling. Timber companies have ratcheted up the rate of clearcut logging to unprecedented levels, and guidelines for sustainable logging are not being implemented.

Ian McAllister of the Raincoast Conservation Society says that the sudden increase in logging on the Central Coast is "unprecedented in 15 years."

"It's unbelievable," McAllister says. "It's still just cut and run."

"Talk and log," says Qwatsinas (Ed Moody), hereditary chief of the Nuxalk Nation. "It is not a victory; everyone loses."

What's at stake is the Great Bear Rainforest, the largest intact coastal rainforest in North America—home to thousand-year-old red cedars, wolves, moose, mountain goats, and grizzly, black and rare white spirit (Kermode) bears. Protected from logging and development by formidable mountains, this wild coastline stretches hundreds of miles from the tip of Vancouver Island to the Alaskan panhandle. Whales and orcas swim through the channels and inlets. First Nations communities fish, hunt and gather berries, as they have done here for thousands of years.

The Great Bear Rainforest, we were told, is a wilderness legacy for our children and our children's children. How did this success story turn sour?

Twelve Years of Campaigning

It was members of the Nuxalk Nation who first invited non-native environmentalists to their traditional territory to witness large-scale clearcut logging in 1994. The following year, Greenpeace teamed up with the Nuxalk and other environmental groups to save the place they had named the "Great Bear Rainforest."

By 1997, Nuxalk members and their allies—Greenpeace, Forest Action Network, Bear Watch and People's Action for Threatened Habitat—were blocking logging operations on Roderick Island, King Island and Ista, which is sacred to the Nuxalk as the place where the first woman came to Earth.

At dawn on June 6, 1997, workers for International Forest Products (Interfor) arrived at Ista to cut trees. Thirty protesters—including Nuxalk chiefs in full regalia—greeted the workers with a blockade and a huge tripod towering over the middle of the road. One protester was locked down to a cement anchor buried in the road, while two more were perched at the apex of the tripod.

In total, 55 people took over the road and shut down Interfor's logging operation for 19 days. Twenty-four people, including six members of the Nuxalk Nation, were arrested when police arrived to enforce a court injunction.

In the 1990s, massive industrial clearcutting was already taking place—without the permission of First Nations—under the auspices of the province, which also hosted a process called the Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan (CCLRMP). The process was widely condemned as a "talk and log" exercise, until the Sierra Club and Greenpeace set their sights on the planning committee. In 1998, the groups won a moratorium to suspend logging in intact rainforest valleys in the Central Coast, while they participated in the CCLRMP process.

Meanwhile, environmentalists organized an international market campaign to lobby buyers of BC wood products around the world. As the boycott campaign picked up steam, companies like Home Depot and Ikea dropped their BC wood contracts, and the pressure was on to find a compromise.

"Customers don't want to buy their two-by-fours or their pulp with a protester attached to it. If we don't end it, they will buy their products elsewhere," Bill Dumont, chief forester at Western Forest Products, told the *Vancouver Sun* in May 2000.

Also in 2000, Greenpeace, ForestEthics, Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club of Canada—known

collectively as the Rainforest Solutions Project (RSP)—made a decision that changed the course of the campaign. According to Qwatsinas and others close to the Great Bear Rainforest, it was a serious strategic error.

While negotiating the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement, the RSP formally agreed to end their protests, blockades and market campaigns. For the duration of the agreement, there would be no more high-profile blockades of logging operations on the BC coast, no lobbying international wood buyers and no hard-ball criticism of the process to the media.

But did the environmentalists give up their only bargaining chip?

"They made the Central Coast an environmental-protest-free zone," Qwatsinas says. They've given away too much. It takes time to get the market campaign, the boycott campaign going again. Think about those strengths that were given up—the power that they had in making demands, but it's gone now. What else can they use?"

The Science of Compromise

The RSP forged ahead with negotiations about how much land to protect and how to log the rest. With the Joint Solutions Project, the eco-groups collaborated with industry, government, labor groups and First Nations to establish interim agreements, logging moratoriums and other small victories.

In 2006, the final agreement was announced with fanfare by a provincial government eager to paint itself green after years of cutting park budgets and opening wilderness areas to development and logging. However, the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement only commits to a "conservancy" designation for 32 percent of the land—part of which is open for mining, and all of which may be open to roads, hydroelectric projects, tourism and other uses.

The parties pledged to base the agreement on the best independent science available, and the province requisitioned a scientific review of the Central and North Coast flora and fauna to make recommendations about habitat protection. In 2005, the Coast Information Team found that a minimum of 44 percent to 50 percent of the land area would have to be set aside to save ecosystems and

wildlife. The decision to protect only 32 percent may end up sacrificing the spirit bear.

Sierra Club Campaigner Lisa Matthaus admits, "The protected areas alone are not sufficient, but this is a political compromise. You need to have a lot of parties in agreement.... We wanted to meet the recommendations of the scientists [on the Coast Information Team], but we couldn't."

If one-third of the Great Bear Rainforest is protected, according to the deal, then two-thirds will be logged. How it will be logged is still the subject of debate.

Clearcuts are bad enough, but some timber companies are leveling the rainforest and then hauling out only the best trees—mostly red cedar—leaving the rest to be burned as slash or to rot on the ground. High-grading wastes millions of tons of wood each year, and it's universally deplored as wasteful and contrary to sustainable forestry. The combination of clearcuts and high-grading resembles the world's worst slash-and-burn logging.

The logging industry, environmental organizations, communities, labor unions, First Nations and the BC government agreed to phase in new ecosystem-based management logging practices by 2009. The RSP website describes "lighter touch practices" that would "protect old growth, wildlife habitat, sensitive watersheds and salmon streams."

Instead of starting to adopt gentler practices, it appears some—if not most—timber companies are stripping the land as fast as possible before the 2009 deadline.

Even spokespeople for the RSP are expressing concern. An RSP press release in September noted that "some

forest companies" still have not begun the eco-logging practices they promised three years ago.

Merran Smith of ForestEthics says, "These agreements are now at risk because a cornerstone of the agreement, ecosystem-based management, is faltering. We are tired of big talk with no action."

Division in the Ranks

Qwatsinas calls the Great Bear agreement an "empty box." Essentially, the deal is only a framework. Ecosystem-based management is one of the details left undefined.

continued on next page



Spirit bears of the Great Bear Rainforest

photos by J. Wadsworth (bearmatters.com)

continued from previous page

Even when a set of practices is eventually spelled out, the definition will be subject to change.

The David Suzuki Foundation, one of Canada's largest and most respected environmental groups, wouldn't endorse the Great Bear agreement for this reason. "There's no guarantee that acceptable ecosystem-based management practices will be adopted," the foundation's Bill Wareham said.

Other groups dedicated to the Great Bear Rainforest have walked away from the table, including the Forest Action Network (FAN), the Spirit Bear Youth Coalition, the Valhalla Wilderness Society (VWS) and Raincoast.

In the future, while logging the unprotected ecosystems, timber corporations on the Central Coast will enjoy the signed agreement of two of BC's largest groups, Greenpeace and the Sierra Club, as well as the US-based ForestEthics and Rainforest Action Network. The groups that will continue working on additional protection on the coast—such as VWS, Raincoast, FAN and the David Suzuki Foundation—will be blocked by the BC government and timber industry, using the agreement signed by the RSP groups as a "done deal."

In the last few years, some environmental groups and activists have lost patience with this. After 15 years of seeing this happen, there should have been more learning, more awareness of the crisis of what we are losing and how we are losing it. Instead we have the rhetoric and delusion of "win-win" agreements.

First Nations people are also divided in their response to the agreement. Even within the Nuxalk Nation, the band council supports the process, while traditionalists like Qwatsinas and the House of Smayusta vehemently oppose it. Their dissent is further fueled by the fact that the agreement fails to respect a protocol with the Nuxalk members who first invited Greenpeace to their territory in 1994. The protocol between Greenpeace and the House of Smayusta stated that no deals would be made without the approval of the First Nations partners.

"It was a bold move for Greenpeace Canada to ignore the protocol and make the [Great Bear] agreement without our approval," Qwatsinas notes. "The sovereignty of Nuxalk lands and rights... took a back seat."

Elsewhere on the coast, the Kitasoo Nation has signed the deal and now hopes to reap the benefits by logging Green Inlet, part of its traditional territory. Although almost half of Kitasoo land is protected, and Kitasoo Forest Products is cutting trees selectively instead of clearcutting, the project has brought the wrath of Simon Jackson, founder of the Spirit Bear Youth Coalition.

The coalition says that the agreement has protected only two-thirds of the spirit bear's crucial habitat. Now that the final third is being logged, Jackson says that the

province is back-pedaling on its commitment to protect the spirit bear population, which is estimated at about 200 animals.

"Everybody thought the white bears were protected with that announcement," says Jackson. "A lot of great steps were taken..., but it didn't protect the spirit bear."

Buying Silence?

Observers report that one of the conditions imposed on the negotiations was a ban on any public complaints or criticisms aimed at the process or any of the participants. Of course, the parties involved are not disclosing details about such restrictions.

Qwatsinas suggests that more groups should be speaking out about the agreement's shortcomings, but he adds, "I don't think they can. Some of their hands are tied, and the gag order is in place."

Besides the health and survival of the ecosystem, a substantial financial package is at stake for the Great Bear Rainforest Agreement participants. The government and various foundations have pledged \$120 million earmarked for First Nations sustainable economic development and conservation projects. The Big Greens' high-profile campaign, with the spirit bear as its mascot, has served them well by raising their public relations profiles and expanding their donor bases.

Forest campaigner Ingmar Lee says that a cost-benefit analysis of the money spent on the Great Bear Agreement comes up short.

"We've found that organized, institutional environmentalism [in BC] has failed... to accomplish anything," he complains. "The successes have come from individual grassroots

efforts that have basically bypassed the entrenched, bureaucratic environmental institutions, which have been sucking up the enviro-buck and just not getting the kind of accomplishments we need."

Lee is not surprised that the RSP groups are getting "stabbed in the back" by government and industry apparently renegeing on the spirit of the agreement.

"I just believe that we should be working together against these incorrigible forces of destruction rather than working together with them," he says. "I have always advocated a broad spectrum of environmentalist effort, but the grassroots activist community has been excluded from the project from the start."

Qwatsinas also makes a distinction between the grassroots groups and the Big Greens. "I'm glad there are some out there—groups like Raincoast—trying to make an honest effort, protecting the environment, who are not handcuffed by the process."

Zoe Blunt is an Earth First! contact in western Canada. She also writes for the Guerrilla News Network and Lowbagger, and is involved in organizing the 2007 Wild Earth Rendezvous (see page 44).



Full Tanks, Empty Stomachs

Ethanol and Eco-Colonialism

BY SKYLER SIMMONS

The buzz about ethanol has grown tremendously in the past few years as oil prices skyrocket, racist right-wingers look for a way to be independent of the Middle East, and lefties look for a quick fix to global warming that doesn't require them to reduce their level of consumption. This January, President Bush announced a plan to produce 35 billion gallons of biofuels (mostly ethanol) per year by 2017. Yet there has been little attention paid to the real social and environmental impacts of ethanol production.

In early March, Bush traveled to Brazil to secure massive imports of ethanol to the US. Bush's visit was met not with praise for supporting Brazilian agriculture but with militant protests decrying the environmental devastation and neo-colonialism perpetrated by Brazil's ethanol industry. In the region of Ribeirão Preto, 900 women took over an ethanol plant owned by the agribusiness cartel Cargill. They also decried the increased land consolidation that is occurring as wealthy landowners grab more and more land for monoculture sugarcane farms.

In São Paulo, demonstrators responded to Bush's visit by marching through the streets, carrying stalks of sugarcane and clashing with police. Protesters noted that increasing amounts of the Amazon rainforest are being cleared for monoculture farms to produce ethanol. Suzanne Pereira dos Santos of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement, who helped organize the march, remarked, "Bush and the US go to war to control oil reserves, and now Bush and his pals are trying to control the production of ethanol in Brazil, and that has to be stopped."

In February, massive protests broke out in Mexico over the price of corn, a major staple in that country. More than 75,000 people marched through the streets of Mexico City to demand an immediate reduction of corn prices.

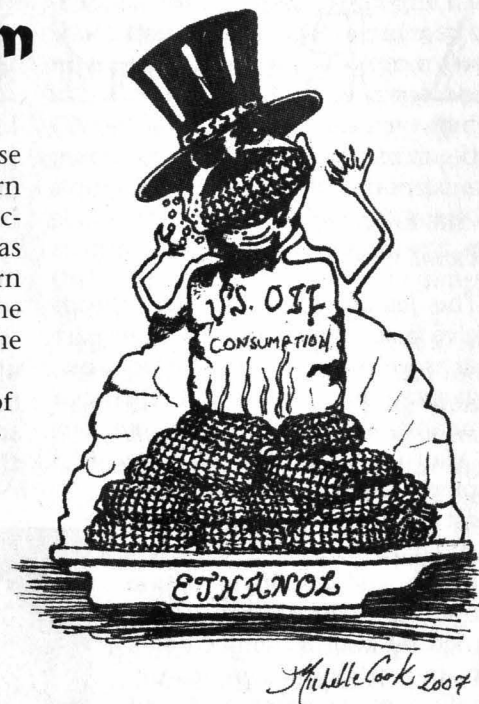
Why are corn prices so high? Because ever-increasing amounts of corn are going towards ethanol production, and this increased demand has caused corn prices to skyrocket. Corn is now going toward feeding the US's auto addiction rather than the world's poor.

The environmental impacts of ethanol production are also troubling. Growing the corn is incredibly energy intensive, in terms of fuel consumption by farm equipment and the large amounts of fossil-fuel-based fertilizers used. In addition, large quantities of toxic pesticides must be used.

Ethanol distillation also burns large amounts of fossil fuels. Most distilleries burn natural gas, though more and more are relying on coal. One plant in Goldfield, Iowa, burns 300 tons of coal every day! Overall, ethanol is incredibly inefficient, taking three units of energy to make four. Some argue that it actually takes more energy to produce ethanol than you get from burning it.

Many proponents of ethanol claim that it is "carbon neutral"; since the carbon in the ethanol was originally sucked out of the atmosphere by the plant, they say it is a closed cycle. This ludicrous claim completely ignores the massive amounts of fossil fuels used in the growth, transportation and refinement of corn ethanol. In fact, when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions, the production and burning of ethanol is only slightly better than burning gasoline!

The ethanol boom is one of many last-ditch attempts by industrial capitalism to continue its existence in a rapidly approaching post-oil world. The pursuit of ethanol is simply the continuation of an exploitative, colonial system that steals resources from the world's poor communities to maintain the consumer lifestyles of the First World.



Large-scale ethanol production can only lead to greater devastation of the Earth, as diverse ecosystems are converted to monoculture farms. Dispossession will increase as subsistence farmers and hunter-gatherers are forced off their land to make way for the US's new energy colonies.

A turn to ethanol as a fuel source also means shifting a considerable portion of farmable land from food production to energy production. As demand for ethanol grows, we will see increasing tension between First World people choosing to fuel their "green" cars and the rest of the world simply struggling to eat. The events in Mexico have no doubt foreshadowed what is to come.

There is no quick techno-fix to climate change or peak oil. We cannot accept a new wave of colonialism that offsets the problems created by our exorbitant First World lifestyles onto the Global South. The only answer to these problems is a dramatic reduction in our energy and resource consumption.

Skyler Simmons enjoys seeing liberals go into convulsions as they realize that biofuels aren't going to save the world.

Ch-ch-ch-ch-changes: A Report From Your Journal

BY THE EARTH FIRST!
JOURNAL COLLECTIVE

The *Journal* forges bravely ahead! We've faced highs and lows in the past year as we've struggled to improve our organizational abilities and financial situation, and to get the *Journal* out to y'all on a skeleton staff (see *EF!* September-October 2006). But most of all, we've been dealing with changes.

We've said goodbye to one long-term editor and been joined by another, moved to a rent-free (though significantly smaller) office space and had drastic fluctuations in financial resources and people power.

And we are preparing for more changes in the future... some of which have been brewing harder than mango wine on a Summer day.

Hello Tabloid, Bye-Bye Chain Stores

Part of why it was so important to touch base with y'all at the Organizers' Conference (OC) this February was the need to discuss two big proposals regarding the way that the *Journal* is formatted and distributed. Both were approved through formal consensus at the OC's *Journal* discussion.

The first resolution was a statement of intent to change the format of the *Journal* to something more financially sustainable—namely, back to a tabloid-style paper like the one we had during the *Journal's* first 20 years. So we are now researching possible tabloid formats and looking at the potential impacts on our dealings with the printer and the post office. Barring unforeseen obstacles, the actual format change will occur with the September-October 2007 issue.

The *Journal* changed to a "fancy" magazine format with the move to Tucson back in 2001, in part to satisfy the standards of the distributors that could get us into corporate bookstores, which often don't accept tabloids. At the time, this change was seen as providing both a

Most importantly, folks at the OC agreed that the *Journal* is, first and foremost, a tool for the movement. It's a way to do outreach and a method for us to get our words out to one another and the public. The more accessible the *Journal*, the better. We felt that it is more important to make the

Journal available when *EF!*ers are tabling at events or publicizing actions than it is for the *Journal* to be shining from a rack at a corporate bookstore. And besides making the *Journal* more financially stable, having a tabloid-style paper may enable us to provide *EF!* groups and contacts with more copies of the *Journal* to hand out and do outreach with.

This ties in with the second resolution: a statement of intent to end our business relationship with Ingram, our largest corporate distributor and the one that has exclusive contracts with Barnes & Noble and Borders. If we change to a tabloid-style paper, Ingram won't carry us anyway, and as we already explained, we don't want to prioritize corporate bookstores anymore anyway. But why the urgency?

After finally crunching endless numbers from Ingram's reports and our records, we

discovered that we're effectively losing \$5,000 per year on our deal with them! A vast majority—60 percent to 70 percent—of the copies that we send them are not sold, but are destroyed. We receive no money for these unsold copies and are actually charged by Ingram for the cost of processing and destroying them. Factor in shipping and printing costs for all those unsold copies, and it turns out we're basically paying \$5,000 each year to wage an



Collective members holding bundles of the *Journal*, back before the change to magazine format

new, aesthetically pleasing standard of quality and a way to reach out to those who only shop—by choice or circumstance—at corporate bookstores.

However, the consensus at the OC was that this format has reached its heyday and passed it. Though some people still favor the magazine format, most felt that a much cheaper, if less professional-looking, tabloid would be favorable to the more expensive magazine that we have now.

unsuccessful outreach campaign at Puke & Noble.

We could be spending that money in any number of ways: on better forms of outreach—like the old-school, grassroots, face-to-face kind; on hiring more staff; or on boosting subscriptions.

Besides, we'd rather be doing business directly with the small, independent stores that currently receive the *Journal* through Ingram, and they'd probably get a better deal from us, anyway.

Again, barring unforeseen circumstances, we're planning to drop Ingram—and possibly other corporate distributors—as soon as we've contacted as many of their smaller bookstore clients as possible and talked to them about receiving the *Journal* directly from us. We hope to have accomplished this before the Summer is over.

We will also continue our research with the post office in order to ensure that these format and distribution changes will not jeopardize our crucial status as a periodical.

So far, we've found print rates that will save us nearly \$2,000 *each issue* for comparable page counts, full color on pages one and two, soy-based inks and recycled paper. We're still trying to decide whether we want a smaller-dimensioned tabloid that may be easier to hold or an 11-inch by 17-inch paper (like the old one) that would appear better folded up next to magazines on a newsstand.

The Green Stuff and the Wild World of Radical Print Publications

At the OC, we also reported on the current state of the *Journal*. In this case, the "green stuff" refers not to pretty trees, shrubs or cacti, but to cold, hard cash. We're short. We're not folding or anything, but we aren't exactly rolling in dough.

However, after looking at the current state of other print media, we can't judge ourselves too harshly. Many print publications have been suffering, especially radical ones. Some of the causes for this downturn are more apparent than others, but analyzing them is our best chance at

cultivating the *Journal* as a healthy publication.

One of the most significant challenges to independent print media is the Internet, which has been extremely effective at absorbing people into its infinite newsroom. To cope with this trend, the *Journal* has just launched a cool, new website with an attractive design and increased functionality. And if we can make it financially feasible, we're considering an online version of the *Journal* (we already feature quite a few articles on the website).

Nevertheless, we hope that y'all will continue to favor our print publication for its unique content, as well as the fact that a paper publication is more enjoyable to read. It's also important to note that new subscriptions—which



Emmett

are the dumpstered bread, fake butter and nutritional yeast of our income—have been coming in more and more through our new website. Clearly, the web may provide an important part of our future income.

Another culprit in the decline of radical publications is financial mismanagement and bureaucratic dishonesty. This was highlighted last Fall when the Independent Press Association (IPA)—a major distributor and loan-provider for many small, indie publications—went under while still owing its member

publications (including *Clamor*, *Bitch*, *Punk Planet*, *Mother Jones* and many others) hundreds of thousands of dollars. Several, like *Clamor*, couldn't make it through this hit. *Clamor* had been in a tenuous position even before the final shock from the IPA, but it had restructured just last Spring in order to save money and become more sustainable. *Clamor* says that it would have had a much better chance of weathering the storm if the IPA had been transparent about its dismal situation instead of assuring publications that they'd get their money at some point or simply ignoring phone calls.

We had our own close call last Autumn, but we have regained our footing. Our Winter fundraising letter, personal appeals to long-time friends of the *Journal* and fundraisers organized by groups across the country helped tremendously, and we're now on steadier ground.

The *Journal* has also moved to a rent-free location. It's a quaint, funky Tucson house in the same neighborhood as before. It's no palace, but for an entire year we have the place for only the cost of utilities. This will help us out greatly as we work to build up staff.

What the current collective has learned from our own and other publications' difficulties last year is that we need to be vigilant for signs of vulnerability, and we must respond effectively and immediately. If the current setup is inefficient or unsustainable, it is worth the inconvenience and effort to move toward a more financially sensible way of functioning.

As always, we are here for you, but we need your support in seeking out subscriptions, submitting lots more articles and artwork, and coming to Tucson to volunteer or short-term (let us know if you're interested!). Through thick or thin, with your help we can continue to put out rockin' issues of the *Journal*.

The Earth First! Journal Collective would like to welcome Emmett, an incredibly charming brown and white puppy, to its gang. Emmett reminds us to be curious and excited by nature all the time, even if we are just exploring the overgrown brush and scrub of the Journal house's front yard.

A S e n s e o f V I C T O R Y

BY OUTIS

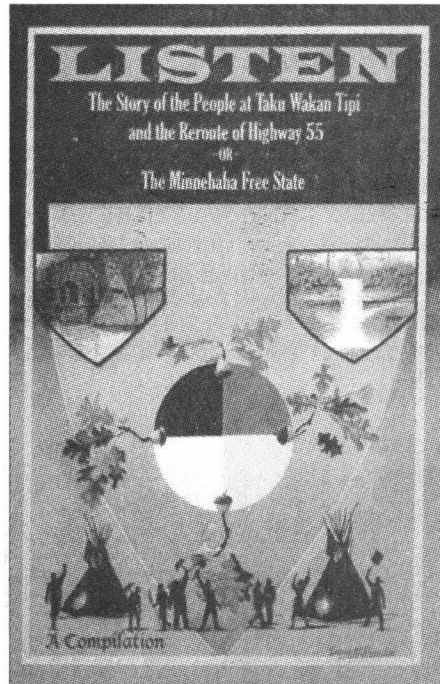
Listen: The Story of the People at Taku Wakan Tipi and the Reroute of Highway 55, or the Minnehaha Free State, compiled by Elli King, Feral Press, 2006.

One night, as I stood with a veteran Apache defender of Mount Graham atop that same mountain, watching ancient Gaan dancers around the fire, I asked about the continuing threats to that sacred place. He spoke of an elder who, when asked the same thing, said that it is vital that we continue to “use” the mountain, that we must not forget the purposes it served for our ancestors and the reasons we believe it should be protected. He said that if we were to journey there with our children—not just in its defense but to pray, gather herbs and drink of its healing waters—then everything else would come naturally.

When one learns to honor the Earth and all the blessings it gives us, protecting those sacred places becomes as second-nature as protecting ourselves. This is what we learn from the book *Listen*.

On August 10, 1998, one of the longest urban land occupations in US history began. Opposing the construction of a highway in south Minneapolis, Minnesota, citizens of all ages, races, religions and political backgrounds occupied threatened neighborhoods, Minnehaha Park and an oak savannah. They prevented their land's imminent destruction for more than 16 months.

Including more than 60 pages of photos, maps, artwork and newspaper articles, *Listen* tells the story behind a campaign that successfully brought together an unbelievable coalition of environmentalists, indigenous peoples, local residents and others.



We hear from the residents themselves, whose homes were slated for destruction by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, which was intent on building an unnecessary bypass highway. There are the voices of local historians who desperately tried to convince politicians of the history that would be destroyed. And of course, our own crusty forces of EFlers helped enlist the aid of indigenous traditionalists, who brought spiritual strength to the entire campaign. Throw in local punks, pagans and religious leaders, and the reader quickly develops a sense of hope and inspiration as all of these forces come together to create a true egalitarian community of resistance.

What I loved the most about this story was not the courageous tri-pods, lockdowns, treesits or occupations (although there were many!), but how everyday people were drawn into the struggle and their lives changed forever. Many recount

being emotionally overwhelmed and crying rivers of tears in the presence of the Four Sacred Oaks, where they glimpsed a world that modern society has led us to believe no longer exists. The restless spirits of the land reached out to the defenders, and we hear in story after story how each was touched by the ancient voices.

Listen is also a case study of the very pragmatic obstacles encountered in organizing a campaign involving people from all walks of life. But the most important lesson of the campaign might be this: No matter where we come from, the Earth and our sacred relationship with her offers a spiritual salvation not found in the plastic consumer society of the Invader. The defenders of Taku Wakan Tipi carried this seed of empowerment within their hearts as they navigated the campaign through the very real threats of infiltrators, police surveillance, infighting over tactics, lifestyle differences and political compromise. Indigenous elders were offended when a proponent of the highway expansion was pied, while others were humbled as they overcame their own prejudice toward the pierced, tattooed and dreadlocked youth risking their lives as their own ancestors did.

Nowhere in this book is there the voice of only one leader or strategy. Instead, there is a commitment toward working together, so that victory is not just in the preservation of the threatened area but in the process through which this happens. Maybe that's why, at the end of the campaign, as homes were demolished and trees fell, one still felt a sense of victory.

Listen is a must-have book for anyone who thinks that Earth First! is just about protecting huge chunks of wilderness. Rarely has a campaign's story been told so well by the very people involved.

Get Out of That Armchair, Forager!

BY MEREIAN

The Forager's Harvest: A Guide to Identifying, Harvesting and Preparing Edible Wild Plants, by Samuel Thayer, Forager's Harvest Press, 2006.

The Forager's Harvest is an edible plant field guide written for those who are interested in actually harvesting wild, edible plants. Unlike the many edible-plant guides written for the "armchair forager," this book's author writes from personal experience and has collected each plant dozens, if not hundreds, of times. Thayer believes that "most wild food guides cover way too many plants in far too little detail," leading authors to "include plants they have little or no first-hand experience with." He then goes on to cite inaccuracies in other field guides. Oftentimes, the same inaccuracy occurs in several different guides, proving that their authors have not eaten the plants themselves and simply took their information from another source.

Thayer covers 32 plants. This enables him to go into great detail about how to identify the plant and tell it apart from look-alikes, when and where the plant can be harvested, what parts should be harvested, methods for harvesting and conservation in terms of over-harvesting. It also allows him to include multiple photographs of each plant in different stages of growth, with close-up shots of the edible parts. The plants Thayer covers are not specific to a particular bioregion but are most prevalent in the Great Lakes area, the Northeast, the Midwest and southeastern Canada. He goes on to say that the book will be only somewhat less useful in the Pacific Northwest, the Rocky Mountains, the Northern Plains, and parts of northern Canada and Alaska.

In the section "The History of Foraging and Wild Food Literature," Thayer briefly explores how wild food became "beneath the dignity of real human beings." According to Thayer, "Foragers represented an entirely different socioeconomic system that threatened the very stability of oppressive, feudal agrarian civilization." Thayer also claims that today in North America, many wild edibles

are well-known *not* because they are tasty or easily collected, but because they were used by settlers. Many of these settlers held prejudice against wild food and only ate it out of necessity when crops failed or other foods were unavailable. This "farmer folk knowledge" only pertains to a certain group of plants that all share similarities in how, when and where they are gathered. Thayer stresses that these are the plants that are most prevalent in wild-edible-plant guides today, so it's no surprise that many people assume all wild, edible plants are gross or bitter when the only ones they have tried are dandelion greens and common plantains.

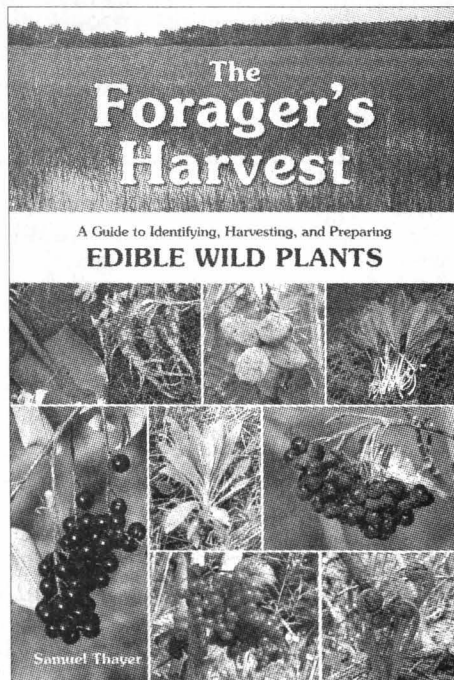
Why, one might ask, is foraging important to the EF! movement? In a world where the majority of people know more about the personal lives of celebrities than they know about wild foods growing less than 100 feet from their homes, it's no wonder that most people couldn't care less about our last wild places being destroyed. Harvesting wild food reminds us that we are not merely passive observers of nature; we are participants, and by killing the natural world, we are also killing ourselves.

The Forager's Harvest definitely challenges the standard when it comes to wild food literature. However, the book does include some language that might be better left out. Thayer is a Quaker, and he refers to God multiple times throughout his guide. What makes me uncomfortable about this is that Thayer refers to God as "he," while using other

gendered language over the course of the book.

It's obvious that foraging is not just a hobby for Samuel Thayer. I strongly recommend *The Forager's Harvest* to anyone who is interested in harvesting wild foods. It has become the newest addition to my backpack, and I am certain it will prove that its usefulness more than compensates for the amount of space it takes up. My only concern is that if this really is the first volume in a series of plant guides, I might have to think about getting a bigger backpack.

Mereian was born and raised in the Green Mountains, and although his travels have taken him elsewhere, his heart still lies on Scragg Mountain.



DiMicele's Mellow Return

BY JACK MOSS

by ebb & by flow, by Alice DiMicele, Alice Otter Music, 2007.

In the early '80s, I met Alice DiMicele at the Potato House, in New Paltz, New York. Her talent was obvious, and her generous, open-hearted nature made her many friends.

Now, 20 years later, DiMicele is kicking out quality music once again, after a hiatus of several years. In those years, we have all mellowed a bit, and I hear it in *by ebb & by flow*. Much more introspective and less controversial than prior releases, she writes about the universals of love, personal exploration and the element of water.

"Mexico" starts out the album upbeat and tightly arranged, with the most memorable tune of the album. Traveling to "some beach in Mexico" in her mind, DiMicele suggests that our inner desires for meaning and honesty can be found in nature.

DiMicele slows down with "Conjuring," in which she reaches out for those most basic of human needs: love and passionate connection. Conjuring images of a mysterious lover, it is a magic spell put to music.

"Made Out of Water" describes the variety of experiences we have with water: "I'm made out of water/water is the only thing that can quench my thirst/and I'm always trying to get back to the water/from that very first breath on my day of birth." The harmonies flesh out the chorus,

and this sounds like it would be a good sing-along at her concerts.

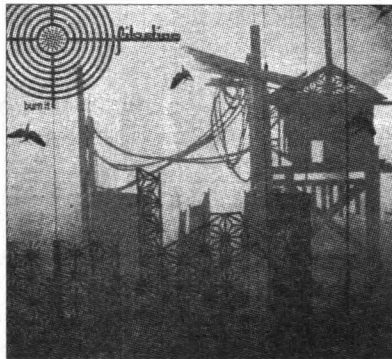
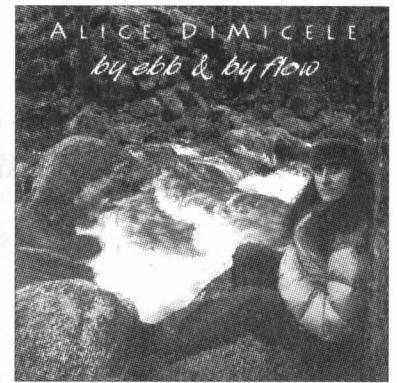
"Downstream" is a showcase for some jazzy scat with nice musical breaks and a sweet and appropriate bass lead. More water and more lovers grace the lyrics—DiMicele likes both, preferably mixed together.

"Promise of the Sun" is a prayer to the Life Force for those qualities that we all strive for—forgiveness, love and kindness—in the face of hate and injustice. The sitar-like sound comes off well, although some of the arrangement feels a bit lost at times.

In general, I'd like to have DiMicele's voice a bit more front and center in most of the songs. She has a strong and unique timbre, as well as an excellent range that should be showcased. The ensemble sometimes overwhelms and cuts across her voice and the lyrics.

Anyone who knows Alice DiMicele's music will find this effort a good addition to her previous work. If you can, see her in concert—she is a great performer. Hopefully, she'll be inspired to write and record more in the future.

For more information, visit www.alicedimicele.com.



BY SOPHIA

Burn It, by Filastine, Soot Records, 2006.

Oh snap. This album is hot. And it's got a radical message, but it's not our usual acoustic campfire folk, bright underground hip-hop or classic political punk.

Burn It, which features a diverse array of artists and meshes global sounds with the malleable medium of hip-hop, is a project to raise awareness of the Green Scare and money for the Operation Backfire defendants (\$5 per CD). Not only do the lyrics carry a message encouraging resistance, but the CD

FILASTINE PLAYS WITH FIRE

includes a 10-page booklet about government repression, the Green Scare and why solidarity is important.

Filastine, a former member of ¡TchKunG!, produced *Burn It*, creating its beats and traveling to multiple continents to record local musicians for the samples on the record. You can hear some of ¡TchKunG!'s influence in the raw sounds and flowing chants that flare up on the album.

Burn It is not overproduced, so it retains an edge that gets polished off in more commercial albums. The sounds and samples on this record—from the Middle East, India, Latin America and beyond—emphasize the importance of keeping a global view of resistance. Including both analog and digital sounds, the tracks are often mellow but make forays into higher tempos. The rhythms span hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, dub and hand drums, and there is just enough

in the way of scratching and effects to keep things moving. Vocal and instrumental hooks will get pleasantly stuck in your head, and some of the tracks are definitely danceable.

There's a refreshing presence of both male and female vocals, each with a distinctive style. Lyricists give us reggae flavors and Indian scales, as well as rapping in at least three different languages. This diversity of tongues and cultures wrapped up on a single album is unique, and besides showing off the beauty of each region, it represents that people all over the world can unite when we need to resist oppression.

Burn It has a heavy, thoughtful, urban sound. Even if you think you're not into this kind of music, you'll find *Burn It* both striking and familiar on the first listen. So check it out now, and support the Green Scare defendants and your ears!

Federal Prison 101

A Guide for Animal Liberationists

BY PETER YOUNG

Editors' note: As with all content appearing in the Journal, this article reflects the opinions and experiences of its author. We mention this only because we feel that great care must be taken when discussing prison life. A look at past Journal articles on the topic will show that prison experiences vary widely. Thus, the editorial collective views this article as one installment of an ongoing conversation about the diverse realities of prison life and the complex role that it plays in our liberation struggles.

In our endless discourse on animal liberation theory and practice, there has remained a frightful specter, kept in the closet and rarely spoken of, whose supreme power has served as a deterrent from taking the simplest of actions to correct the most horrible of crimes. This unmentionable is prison. Inaction cannot be blamed on a lack of knowledge or skill, since every target and tactic is at our disposal in this information age. We would more correctly attribute our nights at home to the exaggerated threat of prison.

What follows is a brief summary of the life that awaits an animal liberation activist convicted of federal charges. It is based on my personal experience, which extends only to the federal system. However, a look at the *Journal's* prisoner page will show that it is this system that animal liberationists in the US will likely face (see page 42). All but a few animal liberation prisoners have been prosecuted federally. As a disclaimer, I am unable to comment on life inside the maximum-security US Penitentiary (USP) system—a fate not to be ruled out for those convicted of more serious offenses. However, very few activists have ever seen the inside of a USP, even for arson.

Inaction cannot be blamed on a lack of knowledge or skill, since every target and tactic is at our disposal in this information age. We would more correctly attribute our nights at home to the exaggerated threat of prison.

If you, as I did, suffer pretrial detention without bail in a county jail, arriving in prison will mark the end of your darkest days. County jail is the worst time you will do—your least comfortable living, your greatest difficulties with food and your most frequent problems with both staff and other prisoners. When you arrive at federal prison, it's time to exhale.

Basic Details

The activist convicted of a federal crime can serve 85 percent of their sentence, with good behavior earning 54 days of time served per year. The last six months will likely be spent in a halfway house with work-release privileges.

Federal Prisoners

The reputation of federal prison playing host to primarily white-collar criminals and bank robbers is greatly antiquated. Since the 1980s, federal prosecutions have taken a sharp turn toward drug- and gun-possession crimes. Currently, large-volume drug dealers constitute more than 80 percent of federal prisoners. At my facility, I would estimate that 95 percent of the prisoners were serving time for drug, gun and immigration charges. Others were in for bank robberies and large-scale fraud.

Custody Levels

Federal prisons are divided into four custody levels: camps, lows, mediums, and USPs. The basis for the public's image of a federal prison is the minimum security camp. Although the comforts of these prisons have been greatly scaled back since the 1980s due to a backlash from "tough on crime" zealots, features such as tennis courts and movie theaters are still very much a reality. These "prisons" even lack a fence.

continued on next page

Camps are reserved for low-risk prisoners with less than seven years to serve, and they have the largest percentage of white-collar criminals. Lows are for prisoners with 20 years or less. As with camps, they have a dormitory setup in place of cells. Mediums are for those with 30 years or less, and they are much closer to the standard image of a prison. USPs are for prisoners with 30 years or more, or for those deemed a security risk due to trouble at lower-security facilities or involvement in violent crimes. It's important to note that any sentence of any length for any crime *can* result in designation to any security level. The security level of your prison will most heavily define your prison experience.

For the purpose of animal liberationists, most property crimes are likely to result in a designation of medium security or lower. With crimes involving arson, history has shown it's a coin toss, and with possible "terrorism" enhancements, maximum-security USP designation is a possibility.

Many factors contribute to one's custody level, including criminal history, severity of your crime and any history of violence. Small details can have a significant impact. A nine-year-old misdemeanor warrant from a demonstration at the University of California-Davis Primate Center raised my custody two whole levels—from minimum to medium.

The federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has an efficient system for moving violent or predatory prisoners to USPs. Often a single fight can raise one's custody to USP level. This creates a less violent climate than one might expect, even at medium security facilities.

For the purpose of animal liberationists, most property crimes are likely to result in a designation of medium security or lower. With crimes involving arson, history has shown it's a coin toss, and with possible "terrorism" enhancements, USP designation is a possibility. Numerous factors are involved. Animal liberation prisoner Josh Demmitt and SUV-torcher-turned-snitch Billy Cottrell were both convicted of arson with no criminal histories. Demmitt went to a camp and was recently released, while Cottrell sits at a medium.

The Myths

In the facilities where I spent time, I found the "survival of the fittest" reputation of prison life to be largely obsolete. Most commonly held beliefs about prison life are either echoes of a convict culture long since deceased or applicable only to USPs. These media-induced horror scenes form the basis of the public's perception of the prison experience simply because knife fights and gang rapes

make for good material. The reality of thousands of men playing cards and watching professional wrestling doesn't sell books. In my experience, sexual assault was nonexistent. If improvised weaponry existed, it was invisible to my eyes. And during my time in prison, I neither saw nor got into a fight.

Food

The BOP is surprisingly liberal with regard to food, requiring a vegetarian option at every meal and ample commissary options. However, in prison as in jail, an ethically motivated vegan diet is not recognized, and safely navigating the hazardous food landscape requires effort. What follows is an overview of veganism behind enemy lines.

Dining Hall: Food in the dining hall can be divided into two parts—the "line" and the self-serve bar. I generally skipped the line about half the week. Vegan items served at my facility included French fries, pasta, apples and potatoes. I found that the vegetarian meat substitute was vegan about half the time, and dishes served included vegan chicken patties, soy fajitas, and sweet and sour tofu. The food service manager was usually accessible to answer questions about ingredients. At my prison, the self-serve bar included an all-you-can-eat salad bar, rice and beans, as well as rotating vegetable items. It is my understanding that all federal prisons have a salad bar.

Commissary: This is the prison store, which prisoners visit once a week. Vegans will find it desirable and perhaps essential to supplement their diets through the commissary. The selection varies, but standard items include oatmeal, peanut butter and trail mix.

Common Fare: This is the name for the BOP's meal plan for people with religious diets. Generally, it is two trays of raw, sliced vegetables and whole fruits given at each meal. Prisoners are only placed on common fare if they ascribe to

Media-induced horror scenes form the basis of the public's perception of the prison experience simply because knife fights and gang rapes make for good material. The reality of thousands of men playing cards and watching professional wrestling doesn't sell books.

a faith that calls for adherence to certain dietary laws, such as Judaism or the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It should be noted that there is a curious phenomenon of newly arrived prisoners being divinely possessed by the power of the Holy Ghost and experiencing a sudden spiritual conversion shortly before filling out their intake paperwork. Many later find this to have been much to their advantage.

Black Market: The prison black market is huge, and its largest segment is food. In the prison economy, stamps are money. There is simply no food item in prison that cannot be purchased, and vegans with money will find themselves wanting for little. Well-off prisoners can quite

literally purchase cases of Boca Burgers or have vegan pumpkin pies made and delivered to their cell.

Staff

The brutal, abusive prison guard was among the staple prison images I was pleased to find mostly false. While experiences will vary according to prison, at my facility guards were so far in the background that were it not for the daily mail call, I could have gone for weeks without speaking to or thinking about a guard.

Among the realities of prison I found most frightening was being at the mercy and under the care of profoundly stupid people. My experience strongly affirms a sentiment expressed by George Jackson in *Soledad Brother*: one of the worst mistakes that prisoners can make is to assume that their jailers have hearts. Any lingering hope for a core of goodness and reason existing deep within all people will find its swift death in prison.

Convict Culture

More than the loss of freedom or friends, I found the greatest challenge of prison to be the shock of a new culture that seemed insane to its very core. Spared a constant physical battle as per the common myth, I instead faced a psychological battle of life among the customs, manners, language and priorities that characterize prison life. Most prisoners with whom I lived were loud, held women in the lowest regard, told offensive jokes and exhibited the maturity of 15-year-olds. It is the primary goal of the new prisoner to win their favor without becoming one of them.

It is important to establish tolerance of other prisoners, as well as a certain level of conformity. What is crucial during the weeks after arrival is to watch. Sit back and take in every detail, from where people sit to how beds are made. Most important is a healthy fear that things can go very wrong at any moment. The smallest transgression can sour one's reputation in a way that is impossible to reverse. Seemingly tiny infractions, such as spending too much time in one's cell, can quickly become large problems. Creating one enemy can, in effect, be creating dozens within hours, and this must be cautiously avoided. Although it takes a certain amount of effort to get beaten up, there is a much less desirable alternative that requires

no skill at all, and that is to be shunned.

While it may be the preference of some to avoid socializing in prison, it is inadvisable to keep completely to oneself. There is deep suspicion of and a subtle contempt for the withdrawn newcomer. Upon arriving, quickly becoming friendly with those in your housing unit is wise insurance. After several weeks of establishing acquaintances and allowing others to become comfortable with me, I only then felt comfortable scaling back my social time and settling into a more isolated routine of reading and

letter writing. Throughout my incarceration, I always spent about 15 minutes of each day sitting by the TV and talking with other prisoners to avoid drifting toward outcast status. This is a smart investment. But at the end of the day, you may find, as I did, that your only true friend is your radio.

The experience of the animal liberation prisoner will likely be significantly different from that of the average prisoner. Social standing in prison is based on a vague form of social capital called "respect." One thing that brings this respect is mail. An animal liberation prisoner can expect to receive an above-average volume of mail. Without any frame of reference, prisoners assume that those who receive lots of mail are "something big" on the outside, and they extend a certain amount of respect accordingly. Additionally, being in prison for something unusual appears "exotic" and gives one an immediate reputation. Being viewed as someone who is into things that are unfamiliar to most prisoners may lessen the pressure for conformity—a pressure that can otherwise be stifling. Overall, the animal liberation prisoner often enjoys a unique situation that can be exploited to his or her benefit in the convoluted world of prison.

Conclusion

Pulling the curtain away from the specter of federal prison, we find its fiercest threats to be its most hollow. While the hardships of prison should not be downplayed, its realities should not be exaggerated. And with prison demystified, we find one less thing standing between us and animal liberation.

Peter Young was recently released from federal prison after serving two years for releasing and conspiracy to release mink from several fur farms in the Midwest. He lives in Los Angeles.



artwork by Jimmy Bryant (www.bryantillustrations.com)

Prisoners in the Struggle Support Them!

The following list is a small sample of the total number of political prisoners and prisoner support groups worldwide. Regulations for mail sent to prisoners vary according to individual prisons. Before sending monetary donations, stamps, books or packages, ask prisoners what the regulations are. Assume that the authorities read everything you write to a prisoner. When prisoners are awaiting trial or sentencing, it is best not to discuss their cases or related topics with them. Although many prisoners are listed together, they must be written to separately. The EF! Journal offers discounted subscriptions for prisoners. Please contact us for more information.

Prisoner and Legal Updates

•Mumia Abu-Jamal, #AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Dr, Waynesburg, PA 15370, USA. On May 17, the Federal Court of Appeals is scheduled to hear oral arguments to decide whether Abu-Jamal will get a new trial, life in prison without parole or a new execution date. Abu-Jamal, a politically active journalist, was framed for the murder of a cop in 1981. For more information, visit www.freemumia.org.

•Dave Blenkinsop was released in March, after serving 10 years for attacking the managing director of Huntington Life Sciences (HLS), liberating 600 guinea pigs and planting incendiary devices under slaughterhouse vehicles.

•Wayne Bunch, VB7189, HMP Birmingham, Winson Green Rd, Birmingham, B18 4AS, UK. Sentenced in April to 12 months for sending threatening letters to a supplier of guinea pigs for vivisection.

•Marco Camenisch, Postfach 3143, CH-8105 Regensdorf, Switzerland. In March, the Swiss Supreme Court reduced Camenisch's 27-year sentence (for using explosives to target nuclear facility power lines and for the alleged murder of a Swiss border guard) to 18 years. Camenisch reads French, German, Spanish and Italian fluently, as well as some English.

•Rodney Coronado was released on March 23, having served eight months for his role in an EF! sabotage of a mountain lion hunt. He is awaiting trial for allegedly telling people how to construct an incendiary device during a speech at an animal rights gathering. For more information, visit www.supportrod.org.

•Joshua Demmitt has been released after serving 2.5 years for an Animal

Liberation Front (ALF) arson of an animal-testing facility.

•Garfield Gabbard was released on March 7, having served 21 months for threatening to kick a security guard during an anti-vivisection protest.

•Joseph Harris, TN5728, HMP Bullingdon, Patrick Haugh Rd, Arncott, Nr Bicester, Oxon, OX25 1WD, UK. Serving two years for damaging the property of people associated with HLS. Harris has been moved to the above address.

•Jeffrey "Free" Luers, #13797671, OSP, 2605 State St, Salem, OR 97310, USA. On February 14, the Court of Appeals reversed Luers' sentence of 22 years and eight months for arson at an SUV dealership and for attempted arson of an oil truck. He is awaiting resentencing. For more information, visit www.freefreenow.org.

•Teresa Portwine, TM7153, and Suzanne Taylor, TM7154, HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent, ME1 3LU, UK. Sentenced in March to 15 months and 2.5 years, respectively, for their roles in a number of demonstrations outside the offices of companies linked to HLS.

•Mark Taylor, TT6636, HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead, London, SE28 0UB, UK. Sentenced in March to four years for his role in a number of demonstrations outside the offices of companies linked to HLS.

•John Wade was released in January, having served three years for a series of Earth Liberation Front (ELF) actions against McDonald's, Burger King, urban sprawl, the construction industry and an SUV dealership.

Awaiting Trial or Sentencing

•Tre Arrow, CS#05850722, Vancouver Island Regional Correction

Center, 4216 Wilkinson Rd, Victoria, BC, V8Z 5B2, Canada. Appealing extradition to the US to stand trial for alleged involvement in the arsons of logging trucks and vehicles owned by a sand and gravel company. For more information, visit www.trearrow.org.

•Nathan Block, #1663667, and Joyanna Zacher, #1662550, Lane County Jail, 101 W 5th Ave, Eugene, OR 97401, USA. Scheduled to be sentenced on June 1, for involvement in a series of ALF/ELF actions.

•Sacramento Delfino Cano Hernández and Oscar Santa María Caro, CERESO, Miahuatlán de Porfirio Díaz, Oaxaca en Hall B, Cell 5, Mexico. Awaiting trial on unknown charges stemming from the popular resistance in Oaxaca. Santa María is a known member of Resistance Against Animal Torture.

•Eric McDavid, X-2972521 4E231A, Sacramento County Main Jail, 651 I St, Sacramento, CA 95814, USA. Awaiting trial for alleged conspiracy to destroy the US Forestry Service's Institute of Forest Genetics, a dam, cell-phone towers and power plants. For more information, visit www.supporteric.org.

•Daniel McGowan and Jonathan Paul are free on bail, awaiting sentencing on June 4 and 5, respectively, for a series of ALF/ELF actions. For more information, visit www.supportdaniel.org.

•Briana Waters, who is free on bail, is awaiting trial on September 17, for her alleged involvement in an ELF arson. For more information, visit www.supportbriana.org.

Animal Liberation

•Jon Ablewhite, TB4885, John Smith, TB4887, and Kerry Whitburn, TB4886,

HMP Lowdham Grange, Lowdham, Nottingham, NG14 7DA, UK. Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail a supplier of guinea pigs for vivisection.

•Madeline Buckler, PR7492, HMP Morton Hall, Swinderby, Lincoln, LN6 9PT, UK. Serving two years for sending hate mail to a supplier of guinea pigs for vivisection.

•Jacob Conroy, #93501-011, FCI Victorville Medium I, POB 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301, USA. Serving four years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty (SHAC). For more information, visit www.supportjake.org.

•Donald Currie, TN4593, HMP Whitemoor, Long Rd, March, Cambs, PR15 OPR, UK. Serving an "indefinite sentence" of at least six years—with no fixed release date or upper limit—for arson against targets linked with the vivisection industry.

•Darius Fullmer, #26397-050, FCI Fort Dix, POB 2000, Fort Dix, NJ 08640, USA. Serving one year for a conspiracy charge stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.shac7.com.

•Lauren Gazzola, #93497-011, FCI Danbury, Rte 37, Danbury, CT 06811, USA. Serving 4.3 years for conspiracy charges stemming from her work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.supportlauren.com.

•Sarah Gisborne, LT5393, HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent, ME1 3LU, UK. Serving 5.5 years for conspiracy to damage vehicles owned by people linked to HLS.

•Joshua Harper, #29429-086, FCI Sheridan, POB 5000, Sheridan, OR 97378, USA. Serving three years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.joshharper.org.

•Kevin Kjonaas, #93502-011, Unit I, FCI Sandstone, POB 1000, Sandstone, MN 55072, USA. Serving six years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.supportkevin.com.

•Josephine Mayo, PR6508, HMP Drake Hall, Eccleshall, Staffordshire, ST21 6LQ, UK. Serving four years for conspiracy to blackmail a supplier of guinea pigs for vivisection.

•Andrew Stepanian, #26399-050, FCI Butner Medium II, POB 1500, Butner, NC 27509, USA. Serving three years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC.

For more information, visit www.andystepanian.com.

Ecodefense

•Ibai Ederra, Carcel de Pamplona, C/San Roque Apdo 250, 31080 Iruñeiz, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain. Serving nearly five years for sabotaging machinery at the Itoiz dam construction site.

•Helen Woodson, #03231-045, FMC Carswell, Admin Max Unit, POB 27137, Ft. Worth, TX 76127, USA. Serving nearly nine years for violating her parole by dumping a cup of red paint over the security apparatus of a federal court and making warnings ("threats") of weapons of mass destruction. In 2004, Woodson completed 20 years for disarming a Minuteman II missile silo with a jackhammer, mailing warning letters to officials with bullets inside, robbing a bank and burning the money.

Il Silvestre

Il Silvestre is an Italian eco-anarchist group whose members have been framed for a variety of direct actions. Except for Gioia, all the defendants listed below are awaiting trial for allegedly using explosives to damage an electricity pylon. Four other Il Silvestre members—Federico Bonamici, Giuseppe Bonamici, Silvia Guerini and Alessio Perondi—are currently under house arrest.

•Benedetta Galante, Casa Circondariale, Contrada Capo di Monte, 82100 Benevento (BN), Italy. Serving 3.5 years for promoting and participating in direct action.

•Francesco Gioia, Via Maiano 10, 06049 Spoleto, Italy. Serving more than five years for promoting and participating in direct action. Gioia is also awaiting trial for escaping from house arrest.

•Costantino Ragusa, Casa Circondariale, Via Prati Nuovi 7, 27058 Voghera (PV), Italy. Serving 7.5 years for promoting and participating in direct action, and organizing an anti-genetic-engineering protest.

Indigenous Resistance

•Byron Shane of Chubbuck® Clan, #07909-051, USP Beaumont, POB 26030, Beaumont, Texas, North America. Serving 80 years for aggravated assault on federal agents, escape and bank robbery. Chubbuck funneled money that he stole from banks

to the Zapatista National Liberation Army in Mexico.

•Leonard Peltier, #89637-132, USP Lewisburg, POB 1000, Lewisburg, PA 17837, USA. Peltier, an American Indian Movement activist, is serving life in prison after being framed for the deaths of two FBI agents killed during the 1975 Pine Ridge siege. For more information, visit www.freepeltier.org.

MOVE

The MOVE 9, members of an eco-revolutionary group, were framed for the murder of a cop and sentenced to 30 years to 100 years each. For more information, visit www.onamove.com.

•Debbie Sims Africa, #OO6307, Janet Holloway Africa, #OO6308, and Janine Phillips Africa, #OO6309, SCI Cambridge Springs, 451 Fullerton Ave, Cambridge Springs, PA 16403-1238, USA.

•Michael Davis Africa, #AM4973, and Charles Sims Africa, #AM4975, SCI Graterford, POB 244, Graterford, PA 19426-0246, USA.

•Edward Goodman Africa, #AM4974, SCI Mahanoy, 301 Morea Rd, Frackville, PA 17931, USA.

•William Phillips Africa, #AM4984, and Delbert Orr Africa, #AM4985, SCI Dallas, Follies Rd, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612-0286, USA.

Political Prisoners

•José Pérez González, #21519-069, FCI Yazoo City Medium, POB 5888, Yazoo City, MS 39194-5888, USA. Serving five years for conspiracy to destroy federal property during a May 2003 celebration of the end of the US military occupation of Vieques.

•Fran Thompson, #1090915 HU 1C, WERDCC, POB 300, 1101 E Hwy 54, Vandalia, MO 63382-0300, USA. Before receiving a life sentence in the early 1990s for shooting a stalker in self-defense, Thompson was active in animal rights and environmental campaigns.

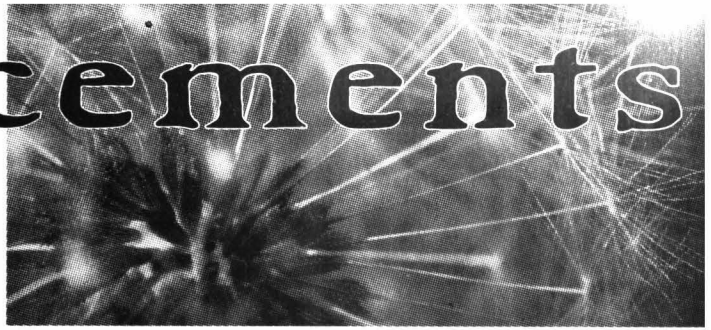
Prisoner Support Groups

•Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network, elp4321@hotmail.com; www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk.

•National Jericho Movement, POB 340084, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA; www.thejerichomovement.com.

•North American Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network, naelpsn@mutualaid.org; www.eco-prisoners.org.

announcements



Wild Earth 2007 Rendezvous

June 1-7 • British Columbia, Canada

The Wild Earth Rendezvous returns to help with training and networking for activists and community members involved in rainforest protection. The gathering is a safe space for people of all ages, classes, races and genders to work together and plan for action.

The Wild Earth Rendezvous is modeled on the Ruckus Society and Rainforest Action Network activist training camps but with a more eco-anarchist philosophy. The annual gathering is dedicated to individual and group empowerment through volunteer recruitment, skill-sharing, action planning and strategic alliances.

This year's rendezvous will focus on imminent threats to old-growth rainforests in British Columbia and on preparing participants for action.

Keynote speakers will include Mike Roselle, a co-founder of Earth First! and the Ruckus Society; Chief Qwatsinas, hereditary chief of the Nuxalk First Nation; and Joe Foy, national campaign director of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee.

The cost of the gathering is by donation; volunteers get in free. To register or for more information, contact earth_first@resist.ca; wildearth2007.blogspot.com.

International Day of Direct Action Against Climate Change and the G8

June 8

The international Rising Tide network is announcing a day of action to coincide with the Group of Eight (G8) Summit in Germany. This is a call for autonomous, decentralized actions appropriate for your area. Activists are urged to support local struggles against oil refineries, gas pipelines, strip mines and coal-fired power plants.

Rising Tide is preparing a collection of outreach materials people can use to organize locally. They can be downloaded from www.risingtide.org.uk and risingtidenorthamerica.org.

For more information or to share planned actions in your community, contact info@risingtide.org.uk or contact@risingtidenorthamerica.org.

2007 EarthSpirit Rising Conference

June 8-10 • Louisville, Kentucky

Explorations of this year's theme, "Return to Earth Wisdom," will offer hope, education, inspiration and tools for transformation.

There will be speakers, including authors Connie Barlow, Michael Dowd, Starhawk, Margaret Wheatley, Paul Rogat Loeb, Jerry Mander and Kirkpatrick Sale, as well as musical artist Jane Siberry.

For a full brochure, conference details and registration information, contact Mark Steiner at (502) 897-2721; cultivatingconnections@insightbb.com; www.earthspirit.org.

Day of Solidarity with Jeffrey "Free" Luers

June 9

June marks the seventh year that Free has been held captive by the state. Sentenced to an outrageous 22 years and eight months for burning three SUVs, Free has continued to be active in prison and fight back with his words and inspiration. Although he recently won his appeal and is expecting a reduced sentence, the case is not over.

People are encouraged to organize events for Free and other political prisoners, uniting the struggles for human, Earth and animal liberation.

For more information, contact Friends of Jeff Luers, POB 3, Eugene, OR 97440; freefreenow@mutualaid.org; www.freefreenow.org.

Gathering of International Dissent Against Heavy Industry

Begins July 6 • Iceland

The campaign to defend Europe's largest remaining wilderness continues with the creation of a new action camp on July 6. The Saving Iceland campaign is moving to bring industrialization in Iceland to a halt. New plans for dams, power plants, smelters and other heavy industry need to be stopped. Targets include Alcoa, Alcan, Century Aluminum, Hydro, Rusal, Bechtel, Barclays and Mott McDonald.

Iceland, with its vast geothermal and megahydro possibilities, is a new frontier for energy-craving industrial moguls in these times of energy scarcity and insecurity (see *EF!J* May-June 2006). Stopping industrialization and the ecological destruction of the last unspoiled country in the West would be a major strategic victory for the green and anarchist movements, and a new incentive for a global movement against industrialization and ecocide.

For more information, visit www.savingiceland.org.

Camp for Climate Action 2007

August 14-21 • United Kingdom

The Camp for Climate Action 2007 will take place near a target relating to the aviation, coal or oil industries. There will be self-managed camping, eating and living neighborhoods based around themes and geographical areas. Many workshops are being planned as well. The energy descent is going to take a hell of a lot of energy dissent!

For more information, visit www.climatecamp.org.uk.

There will also be a Camp for Climate Action held in southern Appalachia, timed to coincide with the UK camp. For more information, contact risingtide@mountainrebel.net. More details on this will be provided in the next issue of the *EF!J*.



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Find the EF! group nearest you. If you don't see one, start one!

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sabthebastards@hotmail.com

Flagstaff Activist Network

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az_earth_first@hotmail.com

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Santa Cruz EF!

cruzef@cruzio.com

Sierra Nevada EF!

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collective@sierranevadaearthfirst.org

smartMeme Strategy & Training Project

2940 16th St #216, San Francisco, CA 94103
info@smartmeme.com

COLORADO

Wilderness Study Group

University of Colorado, Campus Box 207,
Boulder, CO 80309
wsg@colorado.edu

CONNECTICUT

Environmental Library Fund

25 Newtown Tpke, Weston, CT 06883
(203) 227-2065; remyc@prodigy.net

FLORIDA

Jeaga EF!

POB 961, Lake Worth, FL 33460
(561) 588-9666; jeagaearthfirst@riseup.net

INDIANA

Boxcar Books & Community Center

310A S Washington St, Bloomington,
IN 47401
(812) 339-8710; boxcar@boxcarbooks.org

KANSAS

Solidarity! Radical Library

1109 Massachusetts St, Lawrence, KS 66044
(785) 865-1374

MAINE

Maine EF!

POB 917, Belfast, ME 04915
maineef@yahoo.com

People's Free Space

POB 4875, Portland, ME 04112

info@peoplesfreespace.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Mass Direct Action

POB 484, Somerset, MA 02726
massdirectaction@riseup.net

MINNESOTA

Church of Deep Ecology

POB 16075, St Paul, MN 55116
(800) 862-7031;

contact@churchofdeepecology.org

Forest Ecosystems Action Group

2441 Lyndale Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55405
paarise@mtn.org

MISSOURI

Confluence/Community Arts & Media Project

3022 Cherokee St, Saint Louis, MO 63118
mberry@riseup.net

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Buffalo Field Campaign

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Wild Rockies EF!

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Environmental Resource Center

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420-274-810-849; info@carbusters.org

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An Talamh Glas (Green Earth)

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Green Action Israel

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ASeed Europe

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Vrienden van GroenFront!

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netherlands2005@groenfront.nl

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Environmental Rescue International

20 Dawson Rd, by Forestry Junction, Benin
City, Nigeria

environmentalrescue@yahoo.co.uk

RUSSIA

Ecodefense!

POB 1477, Kaliningrad, 236000, Russia
0112-44-84-43

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110-740 #605 Korean Ecumenical Bldg 136-56
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82-2-747-8500; greenkorea@greenkorea.org

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Katúah EF!

POB 1485, Asheville, NC 28802

Uwharrie EF!

bison12@wildmail.com

OHIO

Hock-Hocking EF!

(740) 592-2581; info@easternforestdefense.org

The Wire: A Community Resource Center

21 Kern St, Athens, OH 45701

(740) 589-5111; thewire@riseup.net

OREGON

Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project

27803 Williams Ln, Fossil, OR 97830

Cascadia EF!

POB 10384, Eugene, OR 97440

ef@cascadiarising.org

Cascadia Rising! Ecodefense

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Wild Wasatch EF!

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(435) 866-2137

VERMONT

Save the Corporations from Themselves

169 Main St, Brattleboro, VT 05301

(802) 254-4847; corpsave@sover.net

WASHINGTON

The Evergreen State College

Environmental Resource Center

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The Last Wizards

james@lastwizards.com

WISCONSIN

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Challenging Oppression Within

earthfirstcow@yahoo.com

EF! Direct Action Fund

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(925) 376-7329

Rising Tide North America

POB 16851, Asheville, NC 28816

contact@risingtidenorthamerica.org

Root Force

POB 1302, Tucson, AZ 85702

info@rootforce.org

Warrior Poets Society

POB 14501, Berkeley, CA 94712



THE WALKING FERN

The rare walking fern (*Asplenium rhizophyllum*; also *Camptosorus rhizophyllum*) is in the common spleenwort family but is quite unlike any other fern. The Latin name, *rhizo* + *phyllum*, means "root" + "leaves," a reference to how this fern "walks." When its frond tips touch moist ground, the fern takes root at that spot, and new fronds grow there. These fascinating ferns live in moist, shady environments and grow in low clumps on moss and limestone rock.

Once widespread east of the Mississippi River, the walking fern is now listed as endangered in Rhode Island and New Hampshire, threatened in Michigan, exploitably vulnerable in New York and possibly extirpated in Maine. The walking fern pictured (left) lives in a sliver of temperate oasis among strip-mine sites in Katúah.



Congratulations.

The San Francisco Peaks Victory

BY MARY SOJOURNER

I've never experienced a victory celebration like the one I attended on February 12, at Buffalo Park in Flagstaff, Arizona. Each person I met told me, "Congratulations." I said the single word back. We did not say, "We won!" All around me, Diné and Hopi, Anglos and Apaches, artists and lawyers, grandmothers and fierce Diné kids in black were greeting each other with the same word: "Congratulations."

That morning, we had learned that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals had, in the words of activist Roxane George, "ruled for the tribes, the Sierra Club, the Center for Biological Diversity and, of course, the San Francisco Peaks today. In its opinion, the court stated: 'We reverse the decision of the district court, in part. We hold that the US Forest Service's (USFS) approval of the Snowbowl's use of recycled sewage effluent to make artificial snow on the San Francisco Peaks violates the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), and that in one respect, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) prepared in this case does not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act.

"If appellants do not have a valid RFRA claim in this case, we are unable to see how any Native American plaintiff can ever have a successful RFRA claim based on beliefs and practices tied to land that they hold sacred.

"We conclude that the FEIS does not contain a reasonably thorough discussion of the risks posed by possible human ingestion of artificial snow made from treated sewage effluent and does not articulate why such discussion is unnecessary."

"Congratulations."

The Diné know the sacred peaks as Doko'o-sliid. The Hopi know them as Nuvatukya'ovi. The Havasupai regard the peaks as one of their most sacred places.

The sacred mountains will not be defiled with fake snow made from impure wastewater by a ski corporation that many of the locals call Snowfoul, instead of Snowbowl. The creation of snow will remain the job of That which created snow long before our species dragged itself up on ancient shorelines.

The battle for the preservation of the San Francisco Peaks has gone on for decades (see *EFJ* May-June 2006). Native American and other peoples have fought with witness, song, direct action, education and legal means since

1979, when the USFS approved Northland Recreation's master plan to develop the area. The expansions and takeovers continued like the slow and steady progress of a flesh-eating disease.

In 1984, Congress designated a section of the San Francisco Peaks as the Kachina Peaks Wilderness; in 2000, the mountains were designated as a Traditional Cultural Property. And for decades, 13 tribes told the USFS and Snowbowl that the mountains were critical in the practice of their spirituality and essential for their people's health.

Now, congratulations continue to ring out. The tribes' legal representative, Howard Shanker, believes that this is the first time the RFRA has been successful in blocking a government action. During a celebration in Flagstaff's Heritage Square, Robert Tohe (Diné) of the Sierra Club, said it was more than possible that this decision will set a precedent for future sacred land battles.

And the battle is not over. One of the Snowfoul owners, Eric Borowski, has declared that he may drill a 3,000-foot-deep well into the Redwall aquifer below the mountains. He whines, "The taxpayers of our country [have been] held for ransom by a small group of activists who believe they personally own our nation's public lands." Flagstaff's Chamber of Commerce and the local ski team have created a group to "reclaim the Peaks." And of course, the owners of Snowfoul—a ski resort on a sacred mountain in the middle of high desert, a ski resort that has taken huge losses in a time of drought and little snow—can appeal the 9th Circuit Court's decision to a higher court.

When people believe money is god, they will fight themselves into degradation; when people know the land is sacred, they will fight for the holy web that contains us all—not just for weeks or months or years, but for the whole of their lives.

Save the Peaks spokeswoman Jeneda Benally speaks of that commitment: "This is just one victory in a long battle. We understand that there is still a long way to go until we have complete protection of the sacred San Francisco Peaks and the healing of these communities. There are so many sacred sites that still urgently need protection from business interests. We celebrate today as a victory, but we will continue to pray for the healing of this community, and we will continue in our struggle to protect sacred sites."

For more information, visit www.savethepeaks.org.

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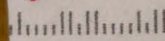


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