

USLTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Environmental and Consumer
Affairs Committee

DATE: April 15, 1996

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

PLACE: Sixth Floor Library, Ulster
County Office Building

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman J. Naccarato and Legis-
lators Dunn, Calabrese, Aiello,
Tantillo, Gordon and Feldmann

LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: Legislator P. Naccarato

OTHERS ATTENDING: Rick Fritschler; Bill Smith;
Bob Conklin; Glenn Hoagland,
Executive Director, Mohonk
Reserve, Inc.; Michael Batcher,
Director of Science; Peg Olsen,
Executive Director, Nature
Conservancy; Andy Jacobs, DEC

Michael Batcher, Glenn Hoagland and Peg Olsen gave a slide presentation of Shawangunk Mountains and Shawangunk Ridges. They talked about the protection of Mohonk and preserving what we have. More than 10,000 visitors each year visit the Mohonk Preserve. They have 6,000 members of the Mohonk Preserve. Many walkers, hikers and children visit the area. There are hundreds of miles of cliffs. There are over 500,000 people that visit the ice caves each year. They estimated that over \$3 million a year is generated by the visitors.

Legislator Calabrese talked about how the ice caves were going to be sold to a private business but it never happened.

Rick Fritschler of EMC brought the Committee up to date on a \$25,000 grant. He was also getting a request for funding from the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency for \$30,000

under its Environmental Credit required by New York City DEC order to develop and implement an Ulster County Environmental Management Council Local Environmental Information Data Base.

Mr. Fritschler also talked about logging in Ulster County. Most of our logs that are cut are being sold outside of the United States and we are not receiving any tax money or fees for this. At the same time, we are depleting our forests. The loggers are taking the best trees and are selective cutting.

A motion was made by Legislator Tantillo, seconded by Legislator Gordon, to check with County Attorney Frank Murray regarding the licensing of these people who are logging or charge a stump fee for the logs leaving the country.

Andy Jacobs of DEC gave the Committee a report on New York forests since the 1800's through the present. Most of the land was used for agriculture and about 25% was only left for forest. Presently there is 62% forest land. There are 500,000 private landowners who own timberland in New York State which consist of about 14.4 million acres.

He also spoke about gypsy moths and tent caterpillars and how they are affecting our sugar maples. We had three years of defoliation. Hemlocks were the hardest hit, but no forest was lost. The American Chestnut is coming back about 10% each year.

Robert Conklin of Federated Sportsmen talked about teaching youths not to play with guns. This should be in our educational program. Also, he would like the County to give permission to bass fishermen to drive into the Ulster County Park in the Town of Ulster to launch their boats. Night time is the best time to fish.

Mr. Conklin also talked about a bass show for next year to be held at the Armory in Kingston or the New Paltz Fairgrounds.

There being no further business, on motion made by Legislator Tantillo and seconded by Legislator Aiello, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John Naccarato, Chairman
Environmental and Consumer
Affairs Committee