


**Nipon** (*It is Summer*)  
June 2001

Brenda Commander - Tribal Chief  
Susan Young - Editor

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### TELEPHONE LISTING

(207) 532-4273

1-800-564-8524 (ME)

1-800-545-8524

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

Sharri Venno - ext. 215

#### FORESTRY

David Lombard - ext 220

#### REAL ESTATE

Tony Tomah - ext 221

#### WATER RESOURCES

Dave Joseph - ext 216

Scott Krzanik - ext 212

#### ADMIN. ASST.

Sue Young - ext 202

## HBMI Natural Resources Department



### Tribal Environmental Conference

The New England Tribal Environmental Conference, hosted by the Passamaquoddy Tribe was held at the Samoset Resort in Rockland, Maine April 15-18, 2001.

This event, brought a number of New England tribes together to address the connection between tribal culture and the environment.

Dave Joseph and Scott Krzanik of the Water Resources Department, put up a display to share the work they are doing here in the Meduxnekeag River Watershed. Scott also did a presentation on the water resources program.

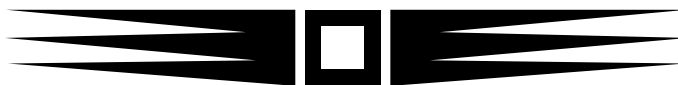
Natural Resources Department members Tony Tomah, David Lombard and Sharri Venno also



*Scott Krzanik, Water Resource Specialist examines a sample of aquatic insects with young conference participants. Insects are used as an indicators to study water quality. (HBMI photo)*

attended this conference, as did Chief Brenda Commander, Phil Quint HIP-Lead, and Sue Tortello, HBMI Nutritionist.

We would also like to extend a special  
*(continued Page 3)*



### NRCS Earth Team Awards Announced

Twenty years ago the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) began a program to honor individuals and organizations for "volunteer service in support of soil and water conservation efforts".



We are pleased to announce that the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians; Sharri Venno, HBMI Environmental Planner and Sue Young, Administrative Assistant to the Natural Resources Department were each honored for their efforts during fiscal year 2000.

## Water Resources Dept. Begins 7th Season

By Scott Krzanik

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Water Resources Department began collecting and analyzing water samples from the Meduxnekeag River Watershed. There are 11 more sampling sites this year for a total of 23. The sites are located along the mainstem, North Branch, South Branch, and 6 tributaries. The water is being analyzed for 8 parameters: dissolved oxygen, temperature, E. coli bacteria, conductivity, turbidity, pH, alkalinity, and total suspended solids. These are general indicators of water quality and will be used to document conditions and changes throughout the watershed over time.



Dave Joseph measuring dissolved oxygen (DO) from the Livery Br.

In the past, there has been much concern regarding low dissolved oxygen levels, high E. coli numbers, and extensive algae blooms along the river. During rain storms there is a lot of sediment transported from fields and drained into the river. The work we do is intended to focus our efforts, and those of other organizations concerned about the Meduxnekeag River, on locating problem areas and working together to remediate those problem areas. By doing this we can only improve the quality of the water for every living thing in the watershed.

It has been a long two weeks since we started our early mornings, but everything seems to be working out well. We would like to invite anyone interested to join us on our sample collection trips on Tuesdays or Wednesdays each week. We leave the office at 4:00 a.m. and return to the lab around 7:00 a.m. If this sounds early to you – **IT IS !!!** If you can manage to drag yourself out of bed on time and gulp enough coffee, it's not so bad. We have many opportunities to see wildlife that most folks never catch a glimpse of. We love our work and want to share those experiences with you all. Just contact the Water Resources Department at 532-4273 ext 212 if you wish to join us.

## Maliseet Summer

The Maliseet language is full of words describing Summer. Here's just a few, how many do you know?

- Pocetes* - Potatoes
- Pskihqimins* - Strawberry
- Saht* - Blueberry
- Minsoss* - Raspberry
- Eskotassok* - Cucumber
- Akolus* - Cabbage
- Sqasis* - Squash
- Skonimin* - Seed
- Kihkan* - A garden
- Sispsis* - A bird
- Wososs* - A nest
- Sipuhsis* - A brook
- Piyeskomon* - Corn
- Wenuhcuwimin* - Pea
- Sak* - Lobster



## Word Search

B	A	H	P	W	P	R	U	S	U	N	O	W	N
A	L	N	F	A	S	S	S	M	D	A	D	F	A
G	B	A	S	K	E	T	C	O	M	P	O	S	T
K	T	N	C	I	W	E	I	C	K	L	F	K	F
L	M	M	I	K	H	A	W	K	I	I	G	L	O
B	O	I	O	O	F	G	D	I	O	S	A	Q	S
M	O	O	M	S	I	L	L	Y	S	E	S	E	C
J	N	G	E	E	S	E	Y	A	B	R	O	F	O
I	T	P	C	D	M	M	L	T	E	N	L	B	R
P	S	S	L	R	U	N	O	S	A	L	M	O	N
V	L	W	I	T	D	O	P	C	V	F	F	C	R
D	P	R	P	Q	G	A	A	V	E	S	G	K	D
O	I	Q	S	W	E	E	T	G	R	A	S	S	A
T	Y	P	E	T	R	G	I	N	Z	L	A	F	V
O	U	A	T	U	A	F	S	J	X	Y	D	A	N

Basket  
Beaver  
Black Fly  
Canoe  
Compost

Corn  
Eagle  
Eclipse  
Geese  
Hawk

Moon  
Salmon  
Smudge  
Sun  
Sweetgrass

## *Tribal Environmental Conference (cont'd)*

thank you to Joyce Tompkins who attended the conference on behalf of the HBMI elders.

The elders described changes in the environment that they have seen throughout their lifetimes and called for all ages and races to join together to protect and restore the natural world. Another theme throughout the conference was the connection between environmental health and cultural survival including traditional cultural practices such as moose hunting and fishing.

Also on display were baskets of many designs from many basket makers including those of HBMI tribal member Fred Tomah.

This event was co-sponsored by the Narragansett Tribe of Rhode Island, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribe, both of Connecticut, the Wapanoag Tribe of Gay Head in Massachusetts, the Penobscot Nation, the Aroostook Band of MicMacs, the Houlton Band of Maliseets and the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Pleasant Point and Indian Township.



## *Wildlife Success Story*

With the assistance of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) the tribe has been working to reduce the amount of runoff from fields into the nearby Meduxnekeag River. A number of Nutrient Sediment Control Structures (NSCS or collection basins) have been constructed on tribal land. These structures collect melt water, rainwater (runoff) that would normally flow directly into the river, carrying sediment and other debris along with it. These structures have not only reduced the amount of sediment introduced into the river, it has helped create some wildlife habitat for migrating waterfowl and shore birds.

The small ponds, sometimes referred to as vernal pools provide open water for the migrating birds before the areas lakes and rivers open up. This Spring, the vernal pools on tribal property have been host to a wide variety of ducks, geese and other birds. Wood ducks, Mallards, Black ducks, Green Winged Teals, Common Pintail, American Wigeon, Canada Geese and Killdeer have all been spotted in or near the pools on the Lowery Road.

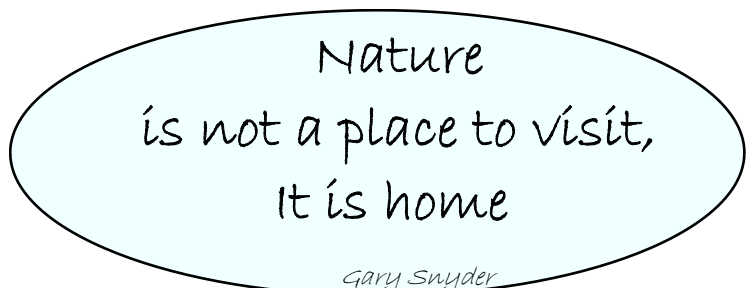


*This white throated Canada goose was seen many times along the Lowery Road*

## *Envirothon 2001*

On May 23, 2001 Dave Joseph, David Lombard and Sue Young traveled to the University of Maine at Fort Kent to participate as judges in the Northern Maine Regional Envirothon hosted by the St. John Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.

Twelve teams of students representing area high schools competed against one another to test their knowledge of their environment. Teams were tested in the areas of Forestry, Wildlife, Soils, Aquatics and Non-Point Source Pollution.



*Gary Snyder*

## Christmas in July

With warm temperatures complete with blue skies and sunshine the last thing anyone wants to think about is winter. But before we know it it'll be time to close up the house and wait for all that winter will throw at us. But winter means more than snow and ice. Winter is the perfect time to test your home for Radon.

Radon is a naturally occurring gas found in the soil. It can collect inside your home to unhealthy levels, especially during the winter months when your windows and doors are kept closed. You can't see or smell radon but prolonged exposure to this gas increases your risk of lung cancer. ***You won't know whether you have a radon problem unless you test!***

Since we began testing tribal homes for this gas in 1995, we've found elevated radon levels in three houses in the greater Houlton area. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends taking action to reduce radon in your home if it is 4 pCi/L or greater. We've helped one family reduce their radon levels below this level, one family has since moved away (NOT because of radon), and we expect to help our third family reduce their radon levels this year.



*To request one of these publications or if you have any questions about Radon or Radon testing, simply write or call Sharri Venno at 532-4273 ext 215 and she will be happy to answer your questions or have the materials sent out to you.*

If your home has not yet been tested contact Sharri Venno at 532-4273 ext. 215 to arrange for testing. Testing is really quite painless, all you do is place the test kit in your home as instructed, leave it alone for at least 3 months, bring the kit in to the office or ask us to collect it. ***That's all there is to it!*** Once your kit is collected we send it off for analysis. If a problem is detected, we will work with you to reduce the radon level in your home.

We have a lot of information available to anyone requesting it. Some of the publications we can provide you include:

- Radon Facts for Tribal Communities
- Home Buyers and Sellers Guide to Radon
- Reducing Radon Risks
- How to Reduce Radon Levels in Your Home
- A Citizen's Guide to Radon
- Learning About Radon: a part of nature

***Remember, it's never too late to take action against Radon.***

## National Arbor Day Foundation Announces National Tree

The Arbor Day Foundation recently conducted a poll to find America's favorite tree. From the beginning, the oak was the most popular choice, capturing over 100,000 votes. Nearly half a million Americans voted for their favorite tree.

The top 5 trees were: Oak - Redwood - Dogwood - Maple - Pine

For more information about the selection of our new national emblem or trees in general contact The National Arbor Day Foundation at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org) or call (402) 474-5655 or write - 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE 68410 or contact David Lombard HBMI Forester at ext 220



## Summer Technicians Have Arrived

June has arrived and that means one thing, no, not school's out, it means our summer techs have joined us.

This year the Water Resources Department is joined by Brittney London and Danielle Fitzpatrick. They will be assisting Scott Krzanik and Dave Joseph with their work in the watershed. For more information about the Water Resources Program, see Scott's article on page 2.

David Lombard, Environmental/Forestry Specialist is joined by Christina Desiderio and Ryan Greenlaw. The Environmental/Forestry techs will be working with David to plant trees on tribal lands and in riparian buffers along the river. They will also be taking part in a study to help measure mercury levels in the fish in the Meduxnekeag River and other waters in the Meduxnekeag Watershed. See article below for more information on this project.

### Mercury Study

Through a project funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), employees in the Natural Resources Department are collecting fish to determine the presence and concentration of mercury in fish caught in the Meduxnekeag Watershed.

This information will be used to estimate the levels of mercury contamination in fish populations within the watershed and the potential risk that these levels pose to humans and wildlife. Since statistics show that Native American's eat more wild caught fish than the general population, the study of the Meduxnekeag is especially important.

HBMI employees are trained to properly collect, store and transport fish samples for analysis. They are sampling fish from the main stem, North and South Branches of the Meduxnekeag River, the Lt. Gordon Manuel Wildlife Management area on the south branch, Green Pond, Meduxnekeag (Drews) Lake, Nickerson Lake, B Lake and Number 9 Lake. Species that may be collected for analysis include lake, brook, and brown trout; landlocked salmon, burbot, large and small mouth bass, chain pickerel, yellow and white perch, suckers and brown bullhead. Catching the numbers and sizes of fish required for the study has proved to be quite a challenge. In the case of lake trout, the fish must measure between 19 - 22 inches, brown trout must measure between 15 - 18 inches.



If you'd like more information about the study or fish consumption advisories please don't hesitate to contact us at 532-4273.



*Brittney London - WR tech fishing the main stem of the Meduxnekeag*

#### **Environmental Youth Practicum**

We're pleased to announce tribal member **Kylie Pedersen** has been accepted to attend the national Native American Fish & Wildlife Society's Environmental Youth Practicum held in Evergreen Colorado this July



# Water Saving Tips

Water conservation is a good idea any time by doing so you can save money on your water and electric bills while protecting water quality. Now is a good time to start conserving water by adopting some of the following practices.

- Water lawns, trees and shrubs in the early morning or early evening to avoid excess evaporation.
- Water the lawn only, watch for water on roads, sidewalks or driveways.
- Run dishwashers and clothes washers only when full.
- Take shorter showers.
- Turn the water faucet off while shaving or brushing your teeth.
- Make sure faucets and hoses are turned off completely so they don't drip and waste water.
- Collect rainwater to water plants & flowers.

Beginning  
July 1, 2001

Our address will change to  
88 Bell Road  
Littleton, ME 04730

## Word Search Answers

B	A	H	P	W	P	R	U	S	U	N	O	W	N
A	L	N	F	A	S	S	S	M	D	A	D	F	A
G	B	A	S	K	E	T	C	O	M	P	O	S	T
K	T	N	C	I	W	E	I	C	K	L	F	K	F
L	M	M	I	K	H	A	W	K	I	I	G	L	O
B	O	I	O	O	T	O	D	I	O	S	A	Q	S
M	C	O	M	S	I	L	L	Y	S	E	S	E	C
J	N	G	E	E	S	E	Y	A	B	R	O	F	O
I	T	P	C	D	M	M	L	T	E	N	L	B	R
P	S	S	R	J	N	O	P	C	Y	F	F	C	R
V	L	W	H	T	D	O	P	C	Y	F	F	C	R
D	P	R	Q	W	E	F	T	G	D	A	S	S	D
O	I	Q	S	W	E	F	T	G	D	A	S	S	D
T	Y	P	E	T	R	G	I	N	Z	L	A	F	V
O	U	A	T	U	A	F	S	J	X	Y	D	A	N

### HBMI Natural Resources Department

*Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians*  
 88 Bell Road  
 Littleton, ME 04730  
 Phone: 207-532-4273  
 Fax: 207-532-2660

