

# Roundtable on Maine People and the Environment

## Excerpts from Presenters

January 20, 2011

**William Bennett, Pres. & CEO, of Oakhurst:** "Investing in the environment is not only an integral component of our corporate social responsibility program; it's an important aspect of our business... As they say, if it's good for the environment, it's good for business. After all the cows that produce Oakhurst milk literally eat drink and breathe the Maine environment so it's in everyone's best interest to keep Maine's environment clean, safe and healthy."

**Deirdre Birbeck, Unity College student:** "It seems to me that my generation's future jobs will depend on careful stewarding of our natural resources."

**Chad Coffin, Pres. of the Maine Clammers Association:** "Excellent water quality starts in the lakes, ponds, and streams hundreds of miles inland, and ends at the coast... If our coastal waters are not clean, it is impossible for all commercial fishermen, not just clammers, to market the Maine brand."

**Harry Dwyer, licensed forester and logger who owns Ghost Dance Forestry in Fayette:** "Sustainable forest management does pay, and we need to continue to improve how we protect our natural resources... Regulations are not the enemy. They are an important tool in making sure sustainability is a part of how we do business today so that our children and grandchildren also have opportunity in the future... And even though I am in business and not the biggest fan of regulation, I think we should be very careful about stepping backwards and deregulating. I deal with the impact of running a natural resource-based business in an area where development has often been done carelessly and no thought to future needs, such as how you might get a pulp truck into a back lot... I think government officials have a role like the umpires in a ball game. You're not on either team, you make sure the game is played by the rules and the playing field is level. Nothing puts a burr under my saddle more than to have to compete against people who cut corners, who don't care about the future or what the rules of the game are. I can't compete with that, and no one trying to do it right can compete with that."

**Horace "Hoddy" Hildreth, former Republican state senator and current chairman of Diversified Communications:** "Maine has some tough environmental laws, most of which were passed by Republican controlled Legislatures in the late '60s and early '70s. Prior to this time, Maine just didn't have any laws that were designed to protect the environment... These laws have generally served Maine well over the past 40 years. They have protected the one single advantage that Maine has over other states in the Northeast in attracting people and businesses: namely, our environment and our quality of life. The implementation of these laws has from time to time caused frustration and even outrage, but I submit to you that working on the regulations to make sure they are responsive to the plain intent of the statutes is a better way to go than gutting or repealing the laws."

**Corky Ellis, founder and Chairman of Kepware, a software company in Portland:** "Please bear in mind that many businesses like ours are here in Maine precisely because of the protected beauty and the conservation efforts of the past."

**Ernie Hilton, lifelong Republican, an attorney and civil engineer from Madison who previously chaired Maine's Board of Environmental Protection:** "I'm concerned when I see, as I did yesterday, a list of some of the statutes which are pending before the Legislature dealing with shoreland zoning and with LURC, and it strikes me as being a race to the bottom approach to our environment,"

**Glenn Libby, President of the Midcoast Fishermen's Cooperative:** "The future looks brighter than it has in a really long time for us, and in order for this to succeed, we have to stay the course for the fishery regulations. For the first time in my lifetime, and a long time fishing, we're actually controlling the amount of fish that are coming out of the water now, so we're leaving enough so that they will grow back."

**Patrice McCarron, Executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association:** “Consumers love Maine lobster, and they know that our lobster is the best in the world; they bought about 100 million pounds of Maine lobster last year alone. They know that it’s harvested from the pristine waters of the gulf of Maine, and we need to make sure that the rules that protect these waters remain in place.”

**Joan Benoit Samuelson, Olympic gold medalist in the marathon:** “I feel as though I’ve been a human barometer for climate change over the many miles of my career. I’ve noticed such things as changing ambient air quality, erosion, runoff, development; things that perhaps our state should look a little more carefully at and for producing. I think that we have a brand that needs to be protected, promoted, and embraced.”

**Ray “Bucky” Owen, retired professor at the University of Maine at Orono and former head of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife:** “I’d like to talk about the economic values of fish and wildlife to the state of Maine: in essence, it’s about a \$1.8 billion dollar industry, it creates thousands of jobs, over \$110 million dollars of tax revenues, hundreds of millions of dollars in retail sales, and is supported by almost no general fund money...It’s an economic engine that is spent greatly in rural Maine, places where it’s needed, and I would offer that it could be increased significantly with additional dollars, not a lot, to work on the economic development within the department... The alewife throughout the inshore ground fish fisheries [is] a major lobster bait [and is] important to the ecology of the lower rivers ...it’s so important to the economy of Maine.”

**CD Armstrong, President of Deering Lumber, Inc.:** “After listening to builders and developers often complain about environmental regulations over 25 years, I’m convinced that they don’t necessarily believe we’re over-regulated, but they often find the regulations confusing...Most of them want to do the right thing: they just don’t necessarily know how to do it”

**Chief Brenda Commander, tribal chief of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians:** “Fish are a very important food source to our community. Sadly, I must warn our members and elders about the state advisory on fish consumption currently in affect. Through our work we have learned that existing safeguards are not always sufficient to support our efforts and protect our community.”

**Father Richard Senghas, Director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Diocese:** “In the words of Pope Benedict the XVI, ‘Our earth is talking to us, and we must listen to him, and decipher its message, if we want to survive.’ This is our solemn moral obligation.”

**Garrett Conover, professional canoe and snowshoe guide for 28 years:** “Remote Recreation businesses are completely dependent on large-scale wild areas which will not exist without careful legislative attention.”

**Megan Rice, mother from China, Maine** “As the mother of two young girls, I am particularly concerned about hormone disrupting chemicals like BPA. I want my girls to grow up healthy, and be able to have children of their own some day.”

**Maroulla S. Gleaton, M.D., ophthalmologist with a practice in Augusta:** “It is well known that air pollution can trigger asthma attacks, and it is clear that Mainers with asthma and respiratory difficulties – particularly children and seniors – end up in our emergency rooms with difficulty breathing when our pollution levels are high”