

## Bearpen Mountain Designated Bird Conservation Area

New York State has acquired Bearpen Mountain in the Catskill towns of Lexington, Halcott and Prattsville in Greene County. "With the acquisition of Bearpen Mountain, the State has now protected the northwesternmost high peak in the Catskills, reaching more than 3,600 feet in height," Governor Pataki said. "This wonderful new addition to the State Forest system will provide outstanding recreational opportunities for hikers, campers and hunters."

Bearpen offers some of the best outdoor activities in the Catskills and its preservation protects part of the New York City Watershed. With steep, rugged topography and forested slopes, it is the highest summit on a long north-south ridge that offers good views of the Catskills. The 1,185-acre parcel will be managed by DEC as part of the Delaware-Greene Reforestation Area.

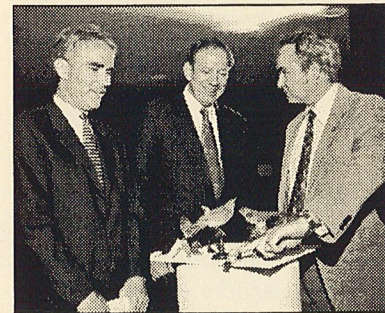
Catskill forests contain balsam fir and red spruce, which are uncommon in New York, except in northern areas or high elevations. The high peaks remain cool and moist throughout summer and support such uncommon birds as the Bicknell's thrush and blackpoll warbler.

"The high peaks of the Catskills are extremely important to some birds because of their uncommon habitat," Governor Pataki said. "Designating these sites will help people understand the role Bird Conservation Areas play in supporting the diversity of bird life in New

York State."

Bird Conservation Areas conserve birds and their habitats on State lands and waters by integrating bird conservation into agency planning, management and research projects. An advisory committee representing State agencies and environmental organizations makes recommendations to the agencies on how to benefit bird populations in designated areas.

The State purchased the property for \$940,000, using Environmental Protection Fund resources.



*Commissioner Cahill and Governor Pataki discuss mounted specimens of northern thrushes and warblers with Cornell ornithologist Dr. Jeff Wells, Director of Bird Conservation with the National Audubon Society of New York State.*

## Region Four and Capital District ReLeaf to Participate in 1999 Tour des Trees

The Tour des Trees is an annual week-long cycling event that raises money for the International Society of Arboriculture Research Trust. Since 1992, Tour des Trees has raised over \$825,000 for research and education to improve the quality of urban tree care. This year, Capital District ReLeaf is promoting and assisting with a number of kickoff events. Capital District ReLeaf is a DEC supported/sponsored partnership in Region Four that promotes urban and community forestry.

The 1999 Tour begins in Albany on July 25 and continues through all six New England states before ending the following Sunday in Stamford, Connecticut. The day before the actual tour begins, a day of educational events will be held in Albany's Washington Park. At 10:00 AM, Mayor Jennings will welcome the cyclists to Albany. The mayor's welcome will be followed by the Trail of Trees, a dynamic program, led by Tim Womick of the National Tree Trust, which educates children and adults about the importance of trees and the power of the individual to help them. The Trail of Trees

will end with the planting of a commemorative tree in the park. The basics of tree identification take the participants up to lunchtime. After lunch, a tour will be made of Washington Park's notable trees. At the same time, the Forest Service's Treetures--squirrel-costumed educators--will teach children about trees and the unique ecosystems they support. The day concludes with demonstrations of proper tree maintenance and pruning, the planting and care of young trees, vertical mulching, and tree climbing.

All events will be held or begin at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument near the corner of State Street and Henry Johnson Boulevard.

Everyone is invited and volunteers are always needed. For more information, call Region Four Forester Mike Urban at (518) 357-2157, Sara Wiest at the Albany Educationway Committee at (518) 270-8058 or Peter Donzelli at (518) 276-2075, e-mail donzep@rpi.edu. For more information on the Tour des Trees nationally, visit the website at <http://www.tourdestrees.org/cause.htm>.



## Region Four Recognizes Work of Schenectady Steward

Region Four Director Steve Schassler recently recognized the Schenectady County Conservation Council (SCCC) for adopting the Featherstonhaugh State Forest in Schenectady County. Featherstonhaugh's diverse habitats include a pond, wetlands, fields and forests.



Left to right, Jim Monroe of Schenectady County Conservation Council, Region Four Director Steve Schassler, retired Natural Resources Supervisor John Renkavinsky, and SCCC president John Storti discuss the role the Council will play in the stewardship of Featherstonehaugh State Forest.

The agreement was one of the first under DEC's new Adopt-a-Natural Resource Stewardship Program. Under the agreement, SCCC will help maintain and construct trails, remove refuse and work to improve wildlife habitat in the 697-acre State Forest. A sign bearing SCCC's name will be posted at the forest.

The Adopt-a-Natural Resource Stewardship program is open to any individual or group that wants to formally pledge to be a steward of a State-owned natural resource. Examples of natural resources include forests, water bodies, and Wildlife Management Areas. Stewardship activities include trail maintenance and construction, interpretation programs, litter removal and wildlife habitat improvement.

Established in 1927, SCCC represents a number of sporting and outdoor groups involved in conservation activities. The Council has established a conservation education program for youths and teachers in Schenectady County, initiated a youth fishing derby, and sponsored campers at DEC's Colby Environmental Education Camp.

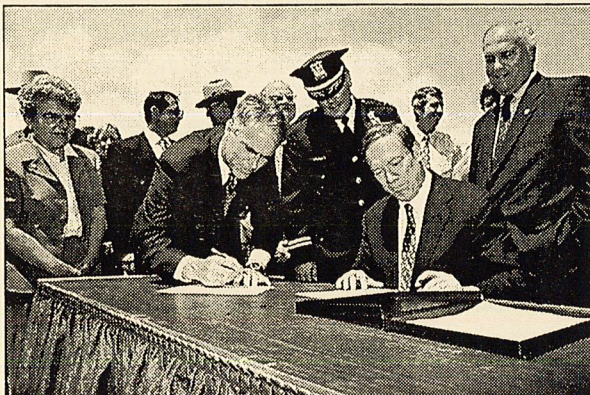
## Forest Ranger Fights House Fire

On May 31, at 1:55 AM, Forest Ranger Tom Eakin responded to a reported structure fire in the Hamlet of Lake Pleasant, Hamilton County. Eakin was just finishing a ten-hour assigned security patrol at Moffitts Beach Public Campground and heard the fire call over his county fire radio. He was familiar with the location as a family residence and, within several minutes of the call, was at the scene.

Upon arrival, Eakin saw smoke coming out of the house from the kitchen area. He knocked on the doors and windows to alert any occupants, but heard no response. He then took his fire extinguisher and entered the kitchen to attack the flames. As he did this, the family dog escaped through the door. Eakin exited the building

and was met by a resident of the house who said the rest of the family was away for the weekend. Eakin borrowed two additional fire extinguishers from neighbors and put out most of the fire in the kitchen. The Lake Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department arrived shortly afterward to find most of the fire out.

Lake Pleasant Assistant Fire Chief Arvin Aird credited Eakin with preventing serious damage to the residence. The fire was confined to the kitchen stove and cabinets, but there was smoke damage throughout the house. At considerable personal risk, Eakin saved the family dog from smoke poisoning and prevented the fire from causing significant structural damage.



## Crime Fighters Coordinate in Hudson Valley

As the mayor of Poughkeepsie and the police chief of Hudson look on, during a recent ceremony along the Poughkeepsie waterfront, Commissioner Cahill and Governor Pataki sign an agreement of cooperation among all law enforcement authorities in the Hudson Valley. DEC's environmental police will continue to offer assistance and information to their crime-fighting colleagues whenever they can.

### DEC News & Views

DEC News & Views is published by NYSDEC, Division of Public Affairs and Education.

Send articles to the Bureau of Media Services, Room 535, 50 Wolf Road, Albany, New York 12233-4500 Telephone (518) 457-2344.

GEORGE E. PATAKI, Governor JOHN P. CAHILL, Commissioner

GAVIN J. DONOHUE, Executive Deputy Commissioner JENNIFER POST, Director of Public Information

LAUREL REMUS, Division Director BEN KROUP, Editor BOB DEVILLENEUVE / KIMBERLY HAGYMAS, Production DOUG HINDLE, Printing Supervisor



## Folts Wins Region Four Achievement Award

In June, Tom Folts received Region Four's first Achievement award. He was nominated and chosen for the award by his colleagues in the Region.

Folts is a Construction Operations Supervisor III who manages a full-time staff of five and a seasonal staff exceeding fifty. His duties include managing all regional recreational services. During the past year, Folts volunteered to take on the extra duties of several other programs in the face of vacancies and a prolonged supervisory absence.

The Region Four Achievement Award was established this year to acknowledge those who make an extra effort to serve the public. It is based on the positive impact an individual or team has on the entire region. Selection is based on exemplary service in one or more of the following categories: outstanding performance or special achievement, concern for the public, colleague respect,

positive attitude, and enhancing the Department's image and mission.

The award, which will be given quarterly, consists of a personalized framed lithograph and a framed letter from the regional director. A plaque engraved with the names of all winners will be displayed in the Schenectady and Stamford offices.



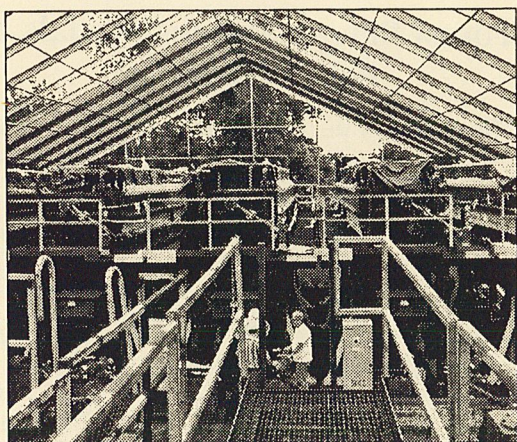
*Region Four Director Steve Schassler (left) congratulates Construction Operations Supervisor III Tom Folts upon his receipt of the Region's first Achievement Award.*

## Cumberland Bay Sludge to be Cleaned Up

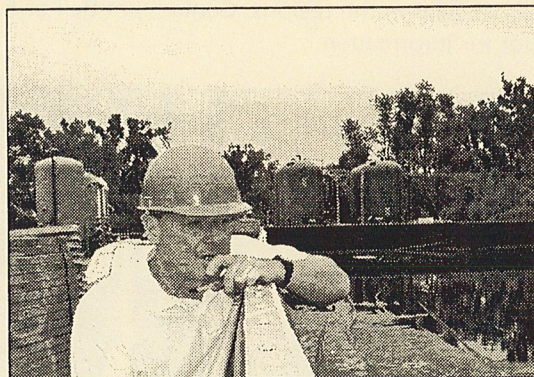
The Cumberland Bay of Lake Champlain has received waste from local industries for several decades. Some of the discharges have accumulated in a sludge bed in the northwest corner of the bay. The 34-acre bed has an estimated volume of 130,000 cubic yards and is contaminated with PCBs.

Debris from the sludge bed is currently washing up on beaches. DEC has removed more than 400 tons of PCB-

the nature and extent of the contaminated sludge. A proposed remedial action plan was issued in July 1997. After a series of public meetings, the remediation design was completed in October 1998.



*A structural frame shelters the area where the PCB contaminated sludge from Cumberland bay will be treated and dewatered.*



*DEC Construction Inspector Tom Higginbottom inspects the dewatering tank that serves the Cumberland Bay sludge bed clean up.*

contaminated materials from the shore so far. Several species of fish in the bay have elevated levels of PCBs, and there is a health advisory in effect concerning their consumption. There is also a commercial fishing ban on yellow perch from the bay.

In 1995, DEC initiated an investigation to determine

The remedial work includes isolating the sludge bed with temporary sheet piling and silt curtains, removing the sludge by hydraulic dredge, excavating shoreline contamination, constructing and operating temporary dewatering and wastewater treatment facilities, disposing dewatered materials off site, restoring wetlands, sampling and monitoring fish, and cleaning up the beach.

Part of the \$23 million cost will be paid from settlement monies provided by the responsible party. The remaining costs will be funded by the 1986 Environmental Quality Bond Act. The work is scheduled for completion by early 2001.



## Car Poolers CEASE the Day Every Day

The Department recognizes that car pools are a benefit to the environment—and the busy parking lot at 50 Wolf Road.

Last year, a section of the lot was reserved for employees who car-pool with three or more colleagues. To qualify, each car pool submitted a list of its drivers and car license numbers to the Division of Management and Budget. Qualified drivers received a permit to display in their car.

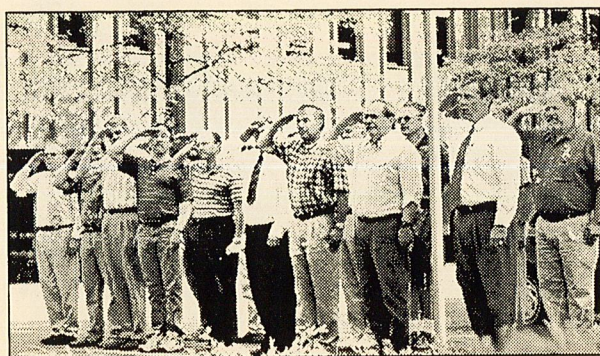
If you wish to qualify for a reserved parking spot, just get together with at least two of your colleagues and form a car pool. If you don't qualify, please don't occupy parking slots reserved for car poolers.

## POW/MIA Flag Raised at Wolf Road

US military service veterans at DEC's Albany office raised the POW/MIA flag on Flag Day, June 14. The black and white banner is now a permanent part of the flag display at 50 Wolf Road. Our hopes and hearts are with the POW/MIAs and their families.

"We've been remiss in not doing this sooner," said Assistant Commissioner Susan Taluto as she arranged for the flag to be flown in front of the building.

Main office veterans are working with veterans from the regional offices to procure and display more POW/MIA flags in the regions. Contact Jim Beil or Bill Wurster for information.



*A group of DEC's military veterans salute the POW/MIA flag as it is raised in front of DEC headquarters at 50 Wolf Road for the first time.*

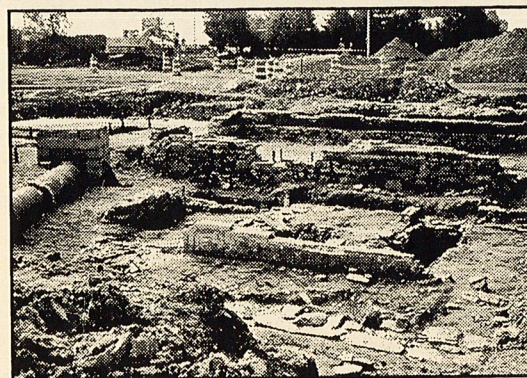
## P2 Conference to be Held In August

The twelfth annual Pollution Prevention Conference will be held on August 24-26 at the Four Points Hotel-Sheraton Rochester Riverside.

The Pollution Prevention Unit invites its colleagues to join them to hear more about new pollution prevention technologies, products and case studies from the winners of the Governor's Award for pollution prevention. There will be P2 tours at both Kodak and Xerox, workshops and up-to-date information about exhibitors' products and services.

A Solvent Alternatives Exposition is also being held in conjunction with the P2 Conference at the Rochester Institute of Technology on August 24. Buses will be available at RIT for transportation to the conference.

## Archaeological Excavation Completed at Site of New DEC Headquarters



*The remains of walls and foundations from early Albany lie exposed at the site of DEC's new central office building on Broadway. Archaeological fieldwork is now complete and the site is ready for construction to begin.*

## GPS Used to Map Hart's Tongue Fern

The endangered Hart's tongue fern is known from scattered limestone plunge basins—hollows excavated by falling water—in the Syracuse area. The rugged landscape and the absence of the basins from USGS topographic maps, made locating their position difficult. So Scott Crocoll, DEC Habitat Inventory Unit, and Troy Weldy, Heritage Associate Botanist, used GPS technology to map the precise location of ferns at a State park near Syracuse. Other Hart's tongue populations on State parkland will likely be mapped in the near future.

## Forest Ranger Sweeps Medals at Police Olympics

Lt. Tim Taylor of Region Seven earned five medals competing in the annual New York Law Enforcement Games, held in Albany June 14-18.

Tim competed in the Masters (35-39 year old) age group, and won medals in each of the five track and field events: 1500-meter run, silver (5:14.2); 200-meter dash, silver (:26.1); long jump, silver (14' 5.5"); high jump (4' 4"), gold; and discus, bronze (90' 5"). He also ran the second leg of the 400-meter relay (:47.7) in the senior division with the Department of Corrections Team, earning a team gold medal in addition to the ones he individually earned.

Tim uses his exemplary physical skills to benefit the Forest Ranger force and the Academy recruits. He is a Division of Criminal Justice Services certified defensive tactics instructor and firearms instructor for the Forest Rangers and the Division of Law Enforcement. In addition, he sits on the advisory board for the Office of Public Protection's Use of Force Program, overseeing the defensive tactics and firearms programs for both divisions statewide.

This was Tim's second Police Olympics and he looks forward to competing in many more. He is moving to Region Seven after a recent promotion from his Forest Ranger position in Region Nine.