

Michigan Forest Association – *Leaves* Newsletter

1558 Barrington, Ann Arbor MI 48103-5603

Phone & Fax 734-665-8279

Email miforest@sbcglobal.net

Web site www.michiganforests.com

Volume XXV

January 2007

Number 3

Reminder: Please note the new email address above. The old email address (mfa@istar.com) will be phased out in February.

The only constant thing in our world is **change**. It is true of our forests. It is true of our society. It is true of our weather. When was the last time you heard someone say, “Isn’t it usual weather we are having this month?”

You may laugh at me for saying this, but I am not shaken by the predictions of doom and gloom in regards to global warming. I will agree that this fall and winter, so far, are the warmest I can remember in Ann Arbor. What has this to do with forestry and the Michigan Forest Association? Well, one of the not so good things I deal with as Executive Director is the fact that I get large quantities of unwanted mail and email that take my time to dispose of them. The flip side of that is that I get a few things in my mail and email that are very interesting and thought provoking. I would like to share with you a few thoughts reported in *Environment & Climate News* for February 2007, published by The Heartland Institute. The subtitle of the publication is “The Monthly Newspaper for Common Sense Environmentalists.”

An article on page 3 of the newspaper sort of sets the tone for this month’s publication. Entitled “Presenting Science Without Bias,” It lauds Robert Ferguson, who quit his job working for Congress to set up the Center for Science and Public Policy (CSPP) with the goal of providing “congressional staffers with unbiased scientific information on environmental issues that Congressmen need to make sound public policy decisions.” He says “It is my experience which guides my firm support of the proposition that skeptics and those who have the courage to support them are actually helpful in getting the science right... They do not, as some improperly suggest, ‘obfuscate’ the issue: They assist in clarifying it by challenging weaknesses in the ‘consensus’ argument, and they compel necessary corrections.”

The page 1 headline is “U.S. Proposes to List Polar Bears as Threatened Species.” This action was taken by U.S. Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne in response to a lawsuit by environmental groups against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The action was taken, not because bear populations are declining but because global warming may threaten them in the future. Bear populations are actually increasing in warming regions. If you think the evidence does not support the action taken, we agree.

While most people in our vicinity agree that the last few years have been warmer than they were 30 or 40 years ago, it has been widely reported that there is consensus among environmental scientists that global warming is human caused and that it will cause untold disasters. An article on page 7 reports dissent to this proposition. The nonpartisan National Registry of Environmental Professionals (NREP) polled 793 environmental professionals about human effects on climate variance. “According to the survey:

- 34 percent of environmental scientists and practitioners disagree that global warming is a serious problem for the planet.
- 41 percent disagree that the planet’s recent warmth can be, in large part, attributed to human activity.

- 71 percent disagree that recent hurricane activity is significantly attributable to human activity.
- 33 percent disagree that the U.S. government is not doing enough to address global warming.
- 47 percent disagree that international agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol provide a solid framework for combating global climate change.

The article quotes Marlo Lewis, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute: “It just shows you how phony the alleged scientific consensus is that we hear so much about.”

Science is not determined by popular vote, nor is the truth determined by reports that exclude facts not consistent with preconceived assumptions. Another article on page 8 of the newspaper goes to bat for people presenting minority ideas. It hasn't been too long since the church condemned scholars for proclaiming that the world is round; sailors were expected to fall off the earth if they sailed too far west or east.

Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma is quoted on page 12: “The ‘Copenhagen Consensus’ found that the most important priorities of our planet included combating disease, stopping malaria, securing clean water, and building infrastructure to help lift the developing nations out of poverty.” He added, “I firmly believe that when the history of our era is written, future generations will look back with puzzlement and wonder why we spent so much time and effort on global warming fears and pointless solutions like the Kyoto Protocol.”

I don't claim any expertise on global warming. I have tried to present some of “the other side of the story” for members to think about, as I have, in the past, tried to provide a different option to the views that nature should manage our forests without man's intervention. What do you think?

Mac Smith (734-665-8279)

Leaves newsletter by email – After a bumpy start, this new program seems to be on track. Over 2/3 of the people who have paid their dues since the end of October, opted for email to get Leaves. Over 100 people, whose dues are due now, have not yet paid for 2007. Please pay as soon as possible so that it won't be necessary to bill you again. If your dues are not currently due or you are sponsored by Industry, and you have email capability, please send me an email address. It saves considerable money and time. We will email you that Leaves is available and all you have to do is click on the link to get it from our website. Our thanks to everyone for your cooperation.

The next **meeting of the MFA Board** will be at 9:00 am, Friday, February 9 at the MUCC office at 2101 Wood Street in Lansing. Visitors are welcome as always. We hope to have present the new State Forester, Donna M. Perison, and her boss, Lynne Boyd, Head of the Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division of the DNR and perhaps other DNR personnel.