ANTI-COAL MOVEMENT STRIKES BACK

Coal Protestors Fighting “Dirty”

BY SCOTT PARKE

The anti-coal movement is on the rise. Plans for coal-fired plants are being stopped left and right. Mountaintop removal is becoming a dirty phrase. Coal financiers like Citi and Bank of America, are not only feeling the sting of the credit crisis, but the climate crisis, as well. Blockades and occupations have occurred from the coalfields of Appalachia to the steel and concrete canyons of New York City and San Francisco.

All over the world, thousands are taking on the mining companies, the utility companies and Wall Street. They have been using a variety of creative tactics, including direct action. More and more people are taking risks and putting their bodies, livelihoods and reputations on the line.

A decentralized network—less about nonprofits and political parties, and more about people power—is emerging to face down King Coal. Radical grassroots groups like Mountain Justice, Earth First! and Rising Tide have allied with frontline community groups in the affected regions. National groups like Rainforest Action Network (RAN) and Greenpeace are also working in these coalitions to continue putting pressure on the coal sector.

Despite promises of “change” and “hope,” people continue to vote with their actions to put an end to dirty coal and the bankers who love it. On November 14 and 15, people in more than 60 cities utilized street theater, ATM shutdowns, banner drops, occupations, flyering, tabling and various other tactics for the National Day of Action Against Coal and Coal Finance.

Our goals with days of action are to mobilize a new generation of activists into existing work (usually, 50-75 percent of people hitting the street on days of action are first timers), get local media (as opposed to national media) and send a message to our targets that a large, formidable, creative movement of people is confronting their destructive ways.

Days of action also contribute to the framework of radical networks acting autonomously and independently of more centralized organizations. This is a growing and effective strategy that bewilders our targets.

Recently, Bank of America executives were startled to find out that many of the actions taken against them were not organized by RAN, but other groups—often without RAN’s knowledge. That scares them.

Reportbacks from the Day of Action: Miami: RAN and Everglades Earth First! activists disrupted Bank of America’s energy conference continued on page 5

GREEK PRISONER HUNGER STRIKE ENDS

BY JAMES JAMESON

Political prisoner or not, inmates are widely known to be some of the most horribly treated and forgotten people, abused as though they are not human. In a nationwide act of solidarity, more than 7,000 prisoners throughout Greece went on hunger strike on November 3, to finally fight back for their own rights. A dedicated 19 prisoners went so far as to sew their own mouths shut. The move to boycott food ended after 18 days when the inmates won their protest as the Ministry of Justice conceded to a series of requests. This is notable for prisoners all over the world. There is hope that more inmates will take cue and demand humane treatment for themselves, and it’s important that those of us in radical, active movements who aren’t in prison do what we can to assist in this cause.

The hunger strike was enacted to highlight a 45-point list of demands. Involving 21 prisons across Greece, inmates protested unreasonable living conditions, such as poor access to basic hygiene and sanitation, a reduction of exacerbated sentences, improper medical care and severe overcrowding. Greece has the most overcrowded prisons in Europe, with nearly 11,000 inmates crammed into jails designed to hold slightly more than 7,000 people. Many of these prisoners are drug addicts and offenders with no opportunity for rehabilitation services. Detainees wait an average of 12 months in pre-trial detention before they are able to have their cases heard.

During the hunger strike, many solidarity actions were carried out by anarchists, humanitarians and other sympathizers. Greek embassies in many countries were targeted, as several mass protest marches added to the solidarity movement.

In response to the prisoners’ demands, the Ministry agreed to the following:

1) All persons convicted to a sentence of up to five years for any offense, including drug related crimes, can transform their sentence into a monetary penalty. This will not be allowed in the case that the jury decides that the payment is not enough to deter the convict from committing punishable acts in the future.

2) The minimum sum for transforming one day of prison sentence to monetary penalty is reduced from around 4.50 US $ to 4.00 US $. 

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Brigit January-February 2009

Earth First!

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Earth First! is a forum for the non-compromise environmental movement. Responsibility rests with the individual authors and correspondents. The contents do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of this magazine, the Earth First! movement, local Earth First! groups or individual Earth First! activists.

We welcome submissions of articles, letters, poetry and news material put forth by the Earth First! movement to help foster the diversity, importance and potentiation of the creation of a worldwide movement for peace, liberty, democracy, culture, livability, freedom, health, sustainability, social justice and the environment.

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PREPARING OUR FLAMING ARROW FOR THE FIRST STIRRINGS OF SPRING

In winter, it’s natural for many of us to retreat from the cold into the relative warmth of our homes. While some hunker down, too, this is a perfect time to reflect on the experiences of the previous seasons while we regroup and re-strategize. Soon enough, we'll burst back into this world with a renewed zeal and new projects, as our surroundings begin to thaw and Spring reveals itself.

Similarly, this winter looks like it will be just that sort of opportunity for Earth First! Here in Tucson, activists are busy preparing for a grand Orgamizers’ Conference (OC) and Winter Rendezvous that will be held in southern Arizona from February 12-16 (see page 10). Likewise, Earth Firsters all around the US are preparing for the first movement-wide Earth First! roadshow in decades (see page 29). Launching from the OC, the roadshow will make its way around the US until it reaches the Round River Rendezvous in Canada in late June.

The Earth First! Journal is also taking this time to come out stronger as the weather warms up. We are in the process of expanding our collective to reach a position we haven’t seen in years. New long-term editors are being trained over these winter months, allowing us to follow through with more projects—like the always crucial, never satisfiable fundraising, for instance—to ensure the Journal has a long and effective life. (Please consider donating by mailing checks or cash to POB 3023, Tucson, AZ 85702, or by visiting www.earthfirstjournal.org.) We’re also bringing to you the question of whether the Earth First Journal should move in 2009 (see page 3).

Earth Firsters in Asheville, North Carolina, have submitted a proposal to bring the journal to the heart of the southern Appalachians in an effort to revitalize the energy of this publication and make it more accessible to the movement. Come be the OC in February to help make that decision.

Also in this issue, you’ll find us looking back at some of 2008's trees, the anti-69 campaign, the life of a wild and beloved Earth Firster who has left our circle, and a slew of actions that have occurred over the last two months. It is the Journal collective’s hope that our reflection on all of this as a movement will put us in a better perspective to realize what we need to do to make 2009 a truly special year. These years pop up from time-to-time, where actions happen like nobody’s business and results that we never could have dreamed of are realized. Let's make this coming year one to be celebrated.

So, from the Earth First! Journal to the Earth First! movement, here’s to a productive Winter and an unbridled Spring!

—The Earth First! Journal Collective

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1 EARTH FIRST!
A Proposal to Move the Earth First! Journal to Asheville, North Carolina

BY THE ASHEVILLE COLLECTIVE TO MOVE THE JOURNAL TO ASHEVILLE

The Earth First! Journal needs help. We’ve heard it at the Round River Rendezvous (RRR), at the Organizers’ Conference, on email lists. We’ve received the letters. We’ve been hearing—and making our own—ideas of how and what the journal can change in order to survive. Many of these changes are being made, and the collective is growing and becoming stronger.

However, can the journal make the necessary changes in the atmosphere they are in now? The collective has been in Tucson, Arizona, for nearly eight years. A new location can breathe in some new and fulfilled energy, which would reflect into the pages of the journal and onto a movement that is searching for positive changes.

A collective has formed in Asheville, North Carolina, that is proposing to host the journal, rather than take over the journal. The collective in Tucson has done a great job of recruiting current and prospective long-term editors from all over the US. It would be silly to throw away the results of a few years’ worth of recruiting, just so an Asheville collective can begin recruiting from the same places. Instead, this Asheville collective is proposing to move the journal, current journal collective intact, and host it—i.e., find a cheap and suitable house, an affordable and quality printer, a group of volunteers to assist with all of the tasks that need assistance and basically provide all of the things that the journal collective would need in any location. Additionally, we are committed to orienting the collective to their new home and helping make the connection that will ensure that the journal is in a good position as possible.

With this in mind, since the RRR, a group of Asheville activists—experienced Earth First! organizers, environmental studies students and folks who care a whole lot about these mountains—have been researching what Asheville could offer the journal and what the journal could offer Asheville. Here is what we’ve come up with.

These mountains are the oldest mountains in the world. The Appalachian Mountain system is also one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park alone harbors more than 1400 varieties of flowering plants and 100 species of trees; Shenandoah National Park trails lead to groves of 300-year-old chestnuts and 400-year-old white oaks. These forests provide habitat for an equally impressive display of wildlife, including black bears, northern flying squirrels, and many uncommon varieties of salamanders. People have survived in these hollows (We pronounce them “holters” here!) for hundreds of generations, living off of the food, medicine and shelter that the mountains alone provide. Even in the shadow of mountaintop removal, clearcuts and multi-million-dollar gated communities, there are still springs that we can drink clean water from, Bloodroot leaves 12 inches across and slopes too steep for any motorized equipment to conquer. These ridges and hollows will leave us questioning what we are fighting for.

Asheville is a destination. It is a transient town, but people pile into this city for a reason. Even more than the rumored giant crystal that lies beneath the city, turning people into town, the mountains are truly what call to people, and the city itself holds a radical history defending these mountains. There were points where the name “Katahdin Earth First!” had so much power behind it, just the threat of an action would be effective. That energy has diffused and been re-focused into other projects, like an infoshop and a very active Rising Tide group. Bringing in a new long-term project with decades of history and experience will encourage a new group of folks with a new set of skills to become involved in radical projects, as well as get some old-timers back into action.

It’s amazing how folks who have been here for years still meet other people who were prominent EFers years ago. Even one of our city councilmen was a well known Earth First’er back in the day.

Having the journal come to Asheville would (and already has) brought some of those folks out of the woodwork. People who haven’t talked to each other in years are taking out their Journals from 10 years ago and laughing about old campaigns. These folks have offered to help with fundraisers and peripheral support. The movement needs their experience, history, stories and legacy.

Being a very transient city, it sometimes feels like the same projects get started every few years just to die as different folks keep making the same mistakes and start at the beginning each time. In contrast, the journal already has a set collective, a set way it works, and it knows what it needs to exist. This will help comfort the folks who have seen our community centers get evicted, as well as give newer activists strong handholds to becoming organizers and radicals.

Many folks in North Carolina have previously put out an issue or two of the journal as a member of the collective since it’s been in Tucson, and have a general idea of how the collective runs and what publishing a newspaper entails.

One of the longest-standing radical projects in Asheville was the Ashevile Global Report (AGR), a free weekly newspaper that was nationally distributed and had a large volunteer and working base. Although after seven years the AGR went under due to lack of funding, it is regaining strength and some of the people who were integral parts of that publication have offered to help with the journal, should it move here.

Geographically, Asheville is more accessible than Tucson. It is very much the East Coast, but it is closer to St. Louis than Philadelphia, and folks from central and eastern North Carolina consider it the West. It is northern enough for thousands of Floridians to come up to see the leaves change, but it is de-fiantly the South. We have four very different seasons. It snows enough to remind us that the beauty in Winter does exist, but Spring comes quickly, so we don’t forget what sunshine feels like.

Additionally, Asheville is very much on the activist traveling circuit. A large volume of travelers pass through our streets, each one a potential journal volunteer. Tucson only experiences that for a few months over the Winter—and even then, it’s not at the same magnitude that Asheville sees.

Asheville is active. The campaign to get Bank of America to divest in Massey Coal has actions at least once a month. There are constant blockades against the Cliffside and Dominion power plants. The thick wallets of developers keep getting threatened. It would be good for the journal to be closer to an action-packed region. The journal should be the media that is publishing these actions. Think of it as inspiration for those coop-ed up in front of the computer. Beyond actions like blockades, banner drops and a bit of sabotage, Asheville recently opened its first worker-owned collective bookstore/co-op called Firestorm Café. It has been extremely successful, and has proven that many folks in Asheville are willing to commit hard work to long term projects. Having the journal here would mirror Firestorm well as a radical space that is more project-oriented.

Housing in Asheville is no less cheap as Tucson, but it is manageable. We are dedicated to finding housing that fits the journal’s needs for equal or less than what the journal is paying now. This is a local printing company that will print the journal for exactly the same price as it is currently being printed. Asheville is a small city, and it’s easy to navigate by foot or bike. It is very manageable to live here without a car. With the balance of the small-town feel and the huge percentage of folks with a radical history, both short- and long-termers will easily find their niche in this city.

Like the collective that brought the journal to Tucson in 2001, we cannot guarantee that the journal will do better in Asheville, but we can promise a dedicated group of folks who have the time, energy and experience to organize fundraisers and lay the necessary groundwork to support the journal. We invite you to let us show you what southern hospitality is all about, and what our mountain folk fight so dirty for.
Dear Shit Fer Brains,

Reading the November-December Earth First! I just learned of this wonderful woman warrior, "Sah," who she really was, and how she tried looking at her pictures. And I cried more. In Cherokee, I prayed. Then, I cried more.

She had power. Her spirit still does! She was 100 times the warrior I am. So, I honor her memory.

Let her inspire us all! Also, to stay please, be careful working in Mexico. But "get busy" there, too! There is so little time to do that... Do not back down.

—Oscar Blanco de Aztlán

Dear Shit Fer Brains,

Collective, got the postcard. Thanks. Some unrequested feedback here below:

I stopped reading EFJ so much when so many anonymous names were used. To me, this has no credibility and should be stopped or minimized. I know you have to deal with what you are sent, but I encourage writers to use real names, and, if they won't, then perhaps tell them you won't print it. There are reasons to be careful, but too much paranoia is a problem.

I also was somewhat put off by the transgen-der discussion, etc. I am a strong supporter of equal rights for all, but not sure how this should be such a big deal or appropriate topic in the EFJ.

Perhaps, I am missing something here, but that's how I feel based on the info I have.

Furthermore, EFJ should try to find a way to go fully to the web, if possible.

—David Patterson

Dear Shit Fer Brains,

I don't really know how to say this, so I'm just going to be blunt: Based on its website and last issue's article, I'm forced to conclude that the Northeast Climate Confluence fell into the trap of propagating dangerous and destructive anti-Jewish ideas (historically called "anti-Semitism"). Organizers consider yourselves "called on your shit." This is a word to write, because so many people don't know what serious problems with real-world Zionism, that's still what the word means to most Jews.

So, Lightning is basically saying that Palestinians should have self-determination (which, of course, they should), but that Jews should not. (This assertion sketches me out.)

Then, Lightning references a workshop on "confronting Zionism in social movements." Note that the title is not "addressing"—that is, challenging Zionism's distortions and destructive currents, grappling with its deeply held station, etc.—but "confronting," as if Zionism is just as valueless as white supremacy or patriarchy, and just as pervasive. Here, we see the old, anti-Semitic canard that Jews (here, labeled "Zionists") are a corrupting influence within leftist movements, with tentacles that reach to all aspects of society.

Think I'm exaggerating? I would, too, except that I looked up who gave this workshop, and it was none other than the New England Committee to Defend Palestine (NEDC), a group whose literature is awash with Jewish conspiracy theories and other anti-Semitic tropes, and that endorses the murder of any Jew within the areas referred to as Israel and Palestine.

What the fuck, people? A little research on this sketchy-ass group would have made it clear who you were dealing with.

And so, all your back-patting aside, you successfully created a space where I, as a Jew, would have feared for my safety if I'd known who was presenting there. I believe a sarcastic "Mazal Tov" is in order.

Now, there's no space here for me to go into what anti-Semitism looks like, the ways it sometimes disguises itself as Palestinian solidarity, or how this all plays out in regard to NEDC—and the EFJ isn't really the forum for that, anyway. So, instead, let me encourage everyone to look into this on their own, just as they hopefully would with any other oppression they're not particularly familiar with.

There are some good resources floating around the Internet.

And before someone writes in saying that the confulence couldn't have engaged in anti-Semitism, because it didn't serve pork, let me point out that there's a vast difference between avoiding any single food and actually observing Jewish or Muslim dietary laws. I mean, props for making such an effort with the kitchen—really. But saying that it was for those who kept kosher? Don't be committing genocide.

—Ben Pagano

Dear Shit Fer Brains,

Please "save the planet some carbon emissions and stop sending me the Earth First Journal."

Although I do admit to co-founding a group called "Earth First!" in April of 1980, that outfit had little resemblance to the current bunch that goes by the same name. Although I do agree with some of your dogmas, life is short and I don't have the time to read about all of the injustice heaped upon the noble indigenous people by greedy capitalists. And besides, it's burning season in Montana. Time to stalk the wiley wapiti.

Good luck and happy trails.

—Howie Wolke

(co-founder)

Dear Shit Fer Brains,

I have to say I'm a bit dismayed at the length of the article "FBI Wants Scoop on Vegan Potlucks." In the first paragraph, when the officer asks the activist to return his call because he needed his help, the author should have ended the article with the sentence, "I never called him back." End of story.

Why in the world would you ever call him back, then spend 30 minutes chuckling with him and his partner over coffee? You are under no obligation to speak with an officer or an agent, un- less subpoenaed, and even that is open to debate.

By sitting down for coffee and a chat, you are opening up the door for further phone calls and harassment. You are letting them know you are willing to do so in the future. And you can be sure that any and every word you say can and will be manipulated and misconstrued your original intention.

My hat is off to the activist for finally making the right decision, but he should have known their offer to begin with.

We hear and read too many reports of "I was paid a visit today by so-and-so" and they wanted to know about x and y. And we hear too much of "I was paid a visit today by so-and-so, but I have no idea what they wanted, because I shut the door." Remember, without a warrant or subpoena, you are under no legal obligation to speak to anyone.

Keep fighting and stay strong.

—Jake Conroy
Coal Proesters Fight “Dirty”

Continued from page 1 at the Key Biscayne Ritz-Carlton. Inside an exclusive cocktail event, the party crashers used a megaphone to make a presentation that outlined the reasons that the dirty bank needs to move towards better energy solutions. Before security arrived to kick the activists out, the group of energy executives assembled into two groups, the first curiously watching and listening to the activists’ presentation, and the second group angrily and aggressively attacking the protesters. While holding a banner that read, “Captains of Industry: Rise Above Dirty Energy!,” the group found themselves under attack. The drunken protesters charged one banner holder, while another had a beer poured over his head. Obviously, the pressure of forecasting on people’s homes and destroying the climate was getting to these guys. Charlotte, North Carolina: Activists with Rising Tide penetrated Bank of America’s headquarter, blew the drums, and unfurled a banner inside the lobby that read, “Stop Banking on Climate Change. No New Coal.” Tied to dozens of helium balloons, the banner floated to the ceiling of the headquarters.

New York City: The New York Action Network and friends “apologized” on behalf of Citi at their headquarters in midtown Manhattan for their role in coal finance, the climate crisis and the bailout. Activists got into the headquarters and attempted to ask CEO Vikram Pandit to sign a pledge committing to change. They then convened out front to hand out a letter from the “Citi family” outlining their new policies (or, how we might write them, at least).

Austin, Texas: A solid crowd of no less than 40 marched from the state capital building to a downtown Bank of America branch, taking over a lane of traffic as they went along. Once they arrived at the bank, they performed street theater and folks closed bank accounts totaling more than $6600.

College Park, Maryland: More than 25 students, mostly with Students for a Democratic Society, formed a blockade outside the Bank of America on Route 1, laying down on the wet sidewalk and obstructing the entrance to protest the bank lending money to coal-mining companies.

Beckley, West Virginia: Coalfield residents distributed flyers outside a Citi Financial office, informed Citi employees that their employer had a major role in destroying their communities and handed flyers to customers entering the office.

Washington, DC: Around 30 activists organized into eight teams. Three teams took Bank of America and the rest took Citi. More than 40 ATMs in DC, mostly in the heart of downtown were shut down with “out of order” signs and caution tape. As expected, some bystanders got pissed at some of the groups. Much of this was done in the middle of the lunch rush, so there were opportunities to discuss the reasons for the actions with people who had their money in Bank of America and Citi.

San Francisco: More than 30 RAN, Greenpeace and Rising Tide activists marched through San Francisco’s Financial District on the “No Coal Tour of Shame,” occupying Bank of America and Citi branches while chanting, singing and coughing in. The tour ended with a protest at California-based utility company Pacific Gas and Energy, the owner of six coal-fired power plants.

Bristol: Rising Tide Bristol set up “green coal” marketing tables outside branches of Bank of America and Citi to highlight the banks’ high-risk investments in coal power and mining. Emulating the coal industry’s marketing pitch of “clean coal,” activists handed out samples of “green coal” while informing fellow citizens to expect green coal to be clean, safe or affordable.

Baltimore: Members of Baltimore Rising Tide and Towson University students rallied outside a Bank of America branch to educate customers and employees about the bank’s dirty practices.

For more information on the National Day of Action Against Coal and Coal Finance, visit www.dirtymoney.org.
On Patrol With The Buffalo

BY STEPHANIE SEAY

"[The buffalo are] the dark force of the plain—the living muscle of our history. Perhaps no other animal represents so well that richness which we once had, and which we so savagely squandered and mutilated."—RICK BASS

In the frigid morning darkness of February 8, 2008, my partner, Arlo, and I awoke for patrol. Donning our warmest clothes, we gathered with others in the cabin for breakfast, loaded our skis, grabbed cameras, and headed out into the field. Dropping off the Horse Butte ski patrol, I noticed frostists gathered in Helena, Montana's capital, to highlight the massive of European settlers. Cattle producers, which we once had, and which we so savagely squandered and mutilated. While, which we once had, and which we so savagely squandered and mutilated.

As the number of dead bison mounted, our hearts sank. We did everything in our power to stop the kill, but neither a national news story nor a flood of citizen letters, emails and phone calls would change the course. But neither a national news story nor a flood of citizen letters, emails and phone calls would change the course. Yet, with every passing Winter, this wildness is eroded, as they find themselves confined within a political fence. If current management practices continue, the genetic viability and evolutionary potential of the wild buffalo could be lost forever.

Perhaps the pendulum can only swing so far before it swings back. Buffalo show us what restoration looks like every time they migrate from the park: one foot in front of the other. The voices for wild buffalo are growing locally, nationally and globally. Residents of Horse Butte, Montana, are petitioning the government to demand that wild bison be given sanctuary on the cattle-free peninsula. The voices of First Nations are rising again for the buffalo. More scientific evidence is pointing towards the need to protect the buffalo and their historic range. The selfish acts of the livestock industry are being shown for what they are. The tides are changing.

Back at camp on the night the slaughter started, we gathered in the main cabin for dinner and our nightly meeting. The fire crackled, as wet and frosty clothes hung to dry around the woodstove's perimeter. The room was full, the energy heavy. At the beginning of the meeting, Clarence shared a thought about the captured buffalo in the trap and how it felt like having family members sentenced to death. I looked at the stressful question on Jessie's face; she didn't know yet. "Wait, Clarence," I said. "Not everyone knows." I looked around the room at other bewildered expressions. But with all of the work around our camp, everyone hadn't heard the news. Slowly, we explained. The looks on peoples' faces were enough to break your heart. And yet, somehow, we were fortunate. We were together, going through this as a family. We suffer with the buffalo, yet it is happening to them. Together, we console one another and resolve to never give up—and we won't until the buffalo roar free.

Buffalo Field Campaign runs daily field patrols and stands with the buffalo on the ground to choose to be on. We document every action made against them and share our footage, photos and experiences with the world. Please join us on the front lines. Our greatest need for volunteers is between March and May. Room, board, gear and training are provided. For more information, contact (406)-646-0070; buffalo@wildrocks.org. www.buffalofieldcampaign.org.
Another Act of Resistance to Plum Creek by Maine Earth First!

By Team Fiasco

In a daring act of civil disobedience, four women locked their necks together at the Land Use Regulatory Commission (LURC) office in Augusta, Maine. In mid-September, LURC signed approval for the controversial Concept Plan put forth by Plum Creek to rezone a large tract of the Moosehead Lake region (see EPJ September-October). This plan would turn the area, rich in biodiversity, into sites for gravel mining, water extraction, commercial logging and development for resortification. "This is the fourth Native Forest Network and courses, swimming pools, gated communities—all already at the Land tract of the Moosehead Lake region (see forth by commercial logging and development for office until LURC staff could explain why they had recommended the approval of the plan. LURC approved the plan revisions that their staff had recommended in a move that surprised many who have been watching the process closely. Critics noted that LURC received more than 1,700 comments opposing a resort development at Lily Bay as part of the Concept Plan. LURC received only six comments in favor of the plan. Despite this overwhelming public statement against the Plum Creek plan, the commission refused to amend their recommendations by removing the Lily Bay resort. "The public has spoken on this issue, and LURC refuses to listen. We want to know why they are selling our future," said one of the four locked together. Many of the groups that intervened in the formal Concept Plan review process are expected to file appeals to LURC's decision in the Maine Superior Court.

Some of the grounds for these appeals are likely to revolve around the flawed process that has LURC staff writing changes to Plum Creek's plan so that it can be rubber stamped by LURC. The staff that worked on tailoring the Concept Plan for Plum Creek worked in the office occupied by the four women. "We aren't leaving until the LURC staff who made the recommendations can adequately justify their actions," said another of the women who locked down.

"Many Mainers believe their process has been undemocratic and corrupt... LURC's decision flies in the face of thousands of Mainers who have expressed serious concerns about the Concept Plan."

Maine Activists Target Portland Law Firm for Role in Commodifying Maine's Groundwater

By STORM and Creek

People from across Maine brought trash bags full of empty plastic water bottles to the Pierce Atwood law firm's office in Portland, Maine on Tuesday, November 14 to demonstrate the physical ramifications of the corporate bottling industry on Maine's landfills. The law firm represents both Nestlé Waters North America and the Nature Conservancy and has been involved in multiple litigation projects throughout Maine. Nestlé, the Nature Conservancy, and Pierce Atwood share board members and leadership in order to pursue an agenda of commodifying Maine's groundwater.

Young Maine residents and their allies gathered in Portland to protest against Pierce Atwood's role as the legal liaison in the corporate theft of Maine's water. In particular, those gathered were concerned about Nestlé's continued interest in the Plum Creek plan. Team Fiasco is two women from rural Maine who made the recommendations can adequately justify their actions," said another of the women who locked down.

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Moving out of the streets and back into the trees, we look at the 20-year-plus campaign in Humboldt County, California, for the redwoods. In August, the president and chief forester of Humboldt Redwood Company paid a face-to-face visit to treesitters to announce a promise to protect all old-growth trees that are 250 years old or more. This is the same forest that EF’er David “Gypsy” Chain lost his life in 10 years ago.

This is an amazing victory for us all. The Humboldt redwood forests are a part of the California Floral Province (CFP). Home to many of the long-standing trees in Berkeley, California, get evicted. This brought sadness to many of us. In the long run, this sit meant a lot to us. It inspired folks to strive for radical ecological defense in urban areas in a way that we hadn’t thought of before. Since the transition of Earth First in the mid-1990s into more of a “green anarchist” trend that focused more on urban issues, we’ve seen the lingering effects of that mani- flagpoles outside of the county. For radical ecological defense, the community permeated to get us started for more important action of national interest. This is an amazing victory for us all. The County, Humboldt redwood forests are a part of the nitely thrown off by this action.

To many of the climbers had a lengthy sound bite on the evening news! The climbing action coincided with an in-office demonstration and we know that there were things escalated into a mini-riot that day. More often than not, people complain about how little action there is within the current Earth First! movement. While compared to some past eras, that is true. However, overall, there is a fair amount of action occurring in our movement. This year in review of climbing actions clearly shows us that! For insight on the Indiana treesit village, see “The Low Down on What Was Up With the Anti-I-69 Treést” on the following page.

With that being said, we do need to step it up. The scumbags we’re fighting are not let- ting up in the slightest. The climbing actions we perform are merely one tactic in the toolbox that’s at the disposal of each campaign. Com- bined with other actions and an increase in the frequency of action in general, we will undoubtedly move closer to realizing our goals.

At this Winter’s OC, we hope to have a climber’s caucus to discuss the ins and outs (or, should we say “ups and downs”) of incorporating climbing skills into our actions more frequently and successfully. If this sounds like your fancy, climb abroad! 

BY JESSABELL

To form a platform (no pun intended) for a climbing discussion at the Organizers’ Conference (OC), we threw together this “year in review” of climbing actions. While we know this is not a complete list, this serves as a tasty appe- tizer to get us started for more action in 2009. Much has hap- pened in 2008, as far as climbing goes; we hope for even more in the upcoming year. At the end of Summer, we saw the long-standing treesit in Berkeley, California, get evicted. This brought sadness to many of us. In the long run, this sit meant a lot to us. It inspired folks to strive for radical ecological defense in urban areas in a way that we hadn’t thought of before. Since the transition of Earth First! in the mid-1990s into more of a “green anarchist” trend that focused more on urban issues, we’ve seen the lingering effects of that manifesting itself across the US.

What began as an action by a couple of folks against unnecessary development, grew into a wide-scale action of national interest that affected the community in a phenom- enal way. The climbers would tower the trees and flee up to them to evade arrest. Many of the sitters loved how solidarity and a sense of community permeated the usual environment. As the sitter played around them, comrades still found ways to con-gregate and send supplies up. As the cops cracked down with increased surveillance, folks would organize getaway cars for those coming down.

The tactic of urban treesitting was also part of the tools used in Santa Cruz, California. Activists there erected four tree houses as a big “fuck you” to those who want to build an animal research laboratory and destroy a pristine forest at the University of California, Santa Cruz campus. One of the notable points with this treesit is the combination of objecting to animal research while fighting for the land. It gives us a true sense of a di- versity of tactics. In November, community members celebrated the sit’s one-year anni- versary.

We also saw a last-minute urban sit erected at the state capitol in Salem, Oregon, to raise awareness of the attempts to stop the imple- mentation of the Western Oregon Plan Revi- sions (WOPR). The WOPR would allow the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to increase logging of Oregon lands by 463 percent. Here, urban treesitting was used in conjunction with a public rally to sway local politics.

Debris


FROM THE CLIMB LINE TO THE PLATFORM

A YEAR IN REVIEW OF 2008’S CLIMBING ACTIONS

Page 8: Earth First! Brigade 2009
The Low Down
on What was Up
With the Anti-I-69 Treesit

BY NIGHTTIME CLIMBERS

In May, some of the folks re-
sisting Interstate-69 (I-69) put
top a treesit in the way of the
construction of an onramp at
the east end of Bloomington's
projected construction zone. The
effort wasn't necessarily based
on consensus. While there was a
long-term discussion within
Roadblock Earth First! around
building a new land defense,
the treesit happened because
a specific affinity group
decided to make it happen.
From late May until late June,
the treesit was a major focus of
the campaign. Dozens of peo-
ple stayed there, either in one
of the three platforms or
supporting on the ground. The
eviction, which led to eight ar-
estas, catal-
yzed maybe a dozen separate
solidarity actions, ranging from
small-group retaliatory attack
to a 100-person emergency torch
march in Bloomington, Indiana,
with quite a few outbursts in be-
tween. In fact, the repression
against the treesit was, for many
people, more empowering than
the treesit itself (keeping in mind
the high costs, emotionally and
otherwise, of the eight arrests
during the eviction).
At the same time, the treesit
raised a number of problems
and questions that were never
resolved. These included issues
of power and decision-making,
the inability to push beyond a
narrow civil disobedience frame-
work, and doubts about whether
treesetting was genu-
ine strategy for our campaign.
As if it was simply a desire to
preserve an EF tradition.

Technical Notes and
Dunk'em Donuts

The treesit in Indiana consisted
of two "dunk'em" platforms and
a donut, with a steady stream of
people staying there. Dunk'em
was waged on too many fronts.
Not enough emphasis was put on
questioning one approach.
One point that our recent ex-
periences have emphasized
to and again is the importance
of concretizing and acting in our
home locality. All of the litera-
ture and consultas put together
by the campaign didn't do nearly
enough to empower and educate
group of people from distant places to
undertake their own projects—land
defense or otherwise. In Indi-
ana, So, it's important to have
a strong, local (or, dare we say, bi-
oregional) base for your thoughts
and activities.
While the fact that the treesit
was initially set up on an affinity-
group model illustrated the kind
of movement we were going to
have, many people feel empowered
to act and contribute to a wider
effort in their own way. It also
undermined wider strategic dis-
cussions. One easy fix would
have been to place a stronger
emphasis on the treesit-righting
affinity group of absolutely guar-
teed the minimum logistics of
the treesit. While a lot of plan-
ing went into the longer-term
support for the occupation, oth-
er had separate projects and
had been involved in wider
discussions of other tactics were
invariably drawn into the day-
to-day maintenance of the sit.
Beyond questions of tactics,
needs everyone involved seemed
to have much bigger dreams
than a simple treesit. The two or three platforms were
intended as a starting point for
autonomous zones and as a tool
for generalizing the campaign
in multiple ways: to create a space
for interactions between local
residents opposed to the high-
way and eco-anarchists for
defenders, as a foundation for
creating a larger liberated space
in the way of the on-ramp, and
as a jumping-off point for the
spread of direct-action camps up
and down I-69's route as a model
that others could copy.
In any case, none of these
dreams fully came through.
While some local folks came
to hang-out, the subcultural
elements of B-Rad Camp re-
mained at the core, not neces-
arily a terrible thing. In fact,
the strong and sometimes ex-
clusive culture that develops
treesits might be a natural con-
sequence of the terrain. It can
sometimes quite positive. Think
of the many long-time bonds
formed within our movements
by people who've lived together
in the trees to defend them.
At the same time, though, not too
many people ever ended up liv-
ing together in these "northern
Indiana trees, since the larger
tree village failed to materialize.
Part of the reason for this might
be a lack of sufficient num-
bers. Another might be that the
climbing methods used were
too exclusive, and that many
ground-support people never
ever felt empowered enough to
leave the ground and start living
in the trees. Resources for this were
lacking, as well.
Finally, other camps were set
up during the Summer, though
none were directly in the route.
A huge obstacle to the spread
of the camps was the fact that
sympathetic local landowners
who might have lent land to
us faced systematic threats by
the FBI. Also, we obviously had
unrealistic expectations of the
larger movement. Unfortunate-
ly, there aren't that many affin-
ity groups just hanging around
the Midwest waiting to set up
additional treesits and camps.
On the other hand, if we can
rebuild momentum in the fu-
ture, there are now dozens more
people who had a first taste of
land defense or otherwise in
2008, and who might be itching
to take their own initiatives in
the future.
This Repression is Whack.

BY STILL POPPIN'

SHACivists have been very busy. The "No- violence Day of Action and Solidarity Science Week were both hits for Stop Hunt- ingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). House raids have been steady for some SHAC'ers. Still, despite the raid, solidarity actions from more clandestine groups are still poppin'. On October 14, two activists had their information taken while doing a banner drop in Hampshire. They were just outside the exclusion zone of Ciba Vision, a subsidiary of Novartis. Later that week, on October 17, 25 cops arrived at the home where the two activists lived. Information from were from the raid. The two were arrested and charged with criminal damage and conspiracy to blackmail.

Cops are attempting to link these activists to prior acts of vandalism against the manager of a Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS) client. They are claiming that the activists had used spray paint to make the banner, and that spray paint had been used in other actions of HLS targets previously. Their clothes were also confiscated for forensic testing. This was the third time that the house had been raided in the past year.

Late in October, the managing director of Goldman Sachs was paid a special visit. Members of the Animal Rights Militia tricked him out a little bit. Some new graphics were added with paint stripper and, instead of condoms, folk decided to just slash all of his tires.

An important scumbag at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) Euronext was included in the activities. His two motorcycles received a paint touch up and tire slashing, and his walls and doors were splattered with a special blood-colored paint. Since so many friends came to visit, his garden was also rearranged—just a special hook-up action. Numerous Barclays banks across the UK were visited by Animal Liberation Front and friends. Many had their ATMs glued and altered in different ways. Some select locations received a free, blood-red paint job.

SHAC took place in the week leading up to Halloween. Actions sprung up on three continents in more than eight countries, leading to more than 50 protests. The Philadelphia Animal De- fense League made its debut during the week, holding an action at GlaxoSmithKline. Other actions were taken against HLS in the UK, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Chile and Israel. Additional HLS supporters that received visits were Abbott Labs, Arizona Night Biociences, AstraZenica, Barclays, Bristol Myers Squibb, Ciba Vision, HLS, No- varits, NYSE Euronext, Phenomonex, Propath, Sandoz, SanofiAventis, Syngenta and Teva. One supplier that deserves special recogni- tion is Novartis. They were special enough to receive their own event, "Novartis Knock- down." Nine groups paid visits to Novartis. There was even a double-baner drop—at 8:30 a.m. and at 5 p.m.—in Hampshire, out- side of Ciba Vision, despite house raids ear- lier in the month directly related to banner drop in the same area.

SHAC has been the target of repression for many government campaigns, such as Operation Backfire, the SHAC 7 case in the US (see EFJ November-December 2006) and Operation Achelies in the UK (see EFJ July-August 2007). The disturbing commonality in all of this is the internationally growing trend of putting the heat on legal animal rights protectors.

The heightened repression in California has been one of the most appalling examples of them all. In late September, Bill 2296 was passed, aimed at diminishing the efforts of animal rights groups in order to secure resources to stop them.

The bill calls for professors’ "academic misconduct" to defined as the protection of "the lawful performance, dissemination or publication of academic research or instruction." The bill creates new misdemeanor prohibiting any person from publishing information describing or depicting an aca- demic researcher, their immediate family or the location of an academic researcher. The intention is not to give protection to action to professors who make a living off of exploiting animals through useless animal experimentation. The bill also creates a new misdemeanor trespass law, making it illegal for anyone to enter the residential prop- erty of an academic researcher for the pur- pose of disturbing or attempting, or interfere with, the researcher's aca- demic freedom.

In the fight against University of Cali- fornia vivisection, one woman, Pamela Ferdin, was recently convicted of contempt of court for violating an injunction against University of Los Angeles research- er's homes.

Many say that this increased repression against above-ground actions does nothing to deter actions. In response to the third house raid in the UK, activists followed a Ciba Vision employee home, stripped the paint from her car and slashed its tires. In California, a vivisectionist had his home and vehicle windows smashed, and the paint scratched, mobilizing Assembly Bill 2296.

"None of these laws are new. Repression always hits above-ground organizers first. Besides, laws don’t affect outlaws who work underground," one activist said. "We have sent numerous strong messages, stat- ing, ‘No justice, just, Smash HLS!’ As re- pression against activists continues, so does vivisection. We must fight the name of research ends, activists will continue to fight dirty!

Submit or They'll Git Yo'

BY VERONICA

Philosopher Thomas Hobbes posed two starkly different options for society: submit to an unaccountable sovereign, or we will de- scend into our “natural” state—which is civil war (more or less), where all we can expect is chaos and violent deaths.

This governance would ostensibly save us from ourselves. This “sovereign” would, among other things, have the unquestioning obesiance of its subjects in order to maintain order and a civi- lized society.

But what we might not be conscious of this treatise more than 300 years after it was written, but most western societies’ conscience, anger and sense of self-value have shriveled under similar claims from the mass media.

Vote. Participate in the one familiar way you know. Cower under your living-room furniture while, night after night, broadcasts of street crimes, “domestic terrorism” and plagues of meth-addict per- vents who stalk your children work their way into a near reverie for stronger government: More police. More riot gear. They will pro- tect us from us.

But what happens when the Leviathan is the one inviting chaos and disorder—when the man, the machine or the monster brings violence to the peaceful and the righteous?

What happens when the powers protect the killers and punish the just?

The British government's attempts to smash the animal rights movement, the anarchists and the eco-warriors have been well documented.

Another day spent in a laboratory is too long.

On October 14, activists staged a legal demonstration against Ciba Vision, a subsidiary of Novartis, from an overpass near Ciba's compound near Southampton, Hampshire, England. Ciba is a client of Huntington Life Sciences (HLS), the contract laboratory that punishes and kills 500 animals daily in its institutions. The activists were not arrested. They were only questioned by police for a possible court summons.

Shit turned ugly, however, days later when the cops kicked down the door at the activists’ home. Twenty-five police showed up to arrest two activists for criminal damage and conspiracy to blackmail because—get this—spray paint had been used in the banner, and spray paint had been used in other actions against HLS.

An activist who was involved said, “It’s as though police think we’re the only ones in Hampshire with spray cans.”

This was the third time this same household had been raided in the past year. A total of six computers, three printers and two mobile phones have been taken from this household during these raids.

State and internationally, these examples illustrate how govern- mental force is being used to try to upset the balance and rights of peaceful activists.

Last year, a private animal sanctuary in Kent, England, was raided during an animal rights gathering. Police were not admitted onto the property and stormed off to go gather warrants.

The Freshfields Animal Rescue Center, in Ince Blundell, Mersey- side, England, was among the addresses across England that were targeted in a raid of almost 30 United Kingdom addresses by a police force of 20. Freshfields has been taking in unwanted animals from across the region for more than 25 years.

This is not news. The familiar sentiment has been echoing through the hallways of history for decades.

For an illustration, let’s look at a historical account. Webster Thayer was not a famous man. He was the judge presiding over the unpopular murder trial of two anarchists, Ferruccio Sanco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Of the trial, Thayer said this: "This trial, though he may not have actually committed the crime attributed to him, is nev- ertheless morally culpable, because he is the enemy of our existing institutions."

That’s right. If you don’t like their ways, you go to prison.
even before he went to prison, jailed while awaiting sentencing, animal rights activist Barry Horne was on hunger strike. In 1997, during the first year of his 18-year sentence, Horne—who passed away in 2001—committed himself to two intense hunger strikes. The second began in January 1997 and lasted 35 days.

The second began in August of the same year and lasted 46 days. Each time that Horne was willing to starve himself to demand the British Government’s withdrawal of support for animal testing, there was an increase in animal-rights activism to support him and the whole movement. Horne had gone to prison for planting incendiary devices in stores that sold animal products, as he had been given the longest sentence to date for an animal liberationist.

Horne became interested in animal rights in 1987 at the age of 35, after watching videos of animal testing. Soon after, he became active in animal raids and release actions. In 1988, he was a part of a campaign to rescue a dolphin named Rocky, who had been held captive for 20 years in a small concrete pool. Due to the amount of money that had to be raised to free Rocky from his prison pool (a whopping $240,000), it seems understandable that Horne’s next rescue was an illegal raid.

On March 17, 1990, Horne’s 37th birthday, he helped 82 beagles and 26 rabbits to a new life void of torture and laboratory testing. “He had a kind and gentle heart, but also a burning sense of rage towards bullies—be they racists or animal abusers,” stated a friend of Barry’s who was with him the night of the St. Patrick’s Day raid.

Regarding the militant as the years went by, eventually working as a one-person operation. “Few activists were willing to plant incendiary devices, and Horne was known to be one of the hardcore who would,” said Keith Mann, a fellow animal rights activist. He and author of From Dusk till Dawn, An Insider’s View of the Growth of the Animal Liberation Movement.

With each hunger strike, Horne committed himself to specific demands, such as calling for an end to vivisection research in the UK. The second-longest strike ended when the British government agreed to formally talk with the animal rights activists in 1997. The longest strike began on October 6, 1998, and lasted for more than two months. After 68 days without eating, Horne’s body was severely affected by the combined toll of his strikes. Horne’s actions brought the issue of animal testing to the forefront of British politics, as images of his fasting health made headlines and activists around the world made threats to act more defiantly. The British government made some effort to communicate with Horne and his supporters throughout the hunger strikes and hospitalizations, making it appear that changes would be made. However, after numerous negotiations, the government officials involved never followed through with anything tangible.

Horne died of liver failure on November 5, 2001, 15 days into his final hunger strike. Over the course of his three major hunger strikes, Horne’s body became increasingly affected and unable to recover. Mann noted that at the end of Horne’s 68-day strike, Horne was “never the same again.”

His actions generated worldwide publicity and instigated a huge upsurge in animal liberation activity, the effects of which are still being felt today, states a website attributed to Horne (www.barryhorne.org). Seven years after Horne’s death, actions continue to be made in his honor. On November 5, a wild boar was released from a hunter’s ‘life’ on the anniversary of the date that Horne “gave his life” for animal rights. The Frente Liberación Animal de Mexico (FLAM) also released statements about actions done in honor of Horne.

Various autonomous animal liberation groups in Mexico committed a series of actions, such as releasing eight hens back to freedom. FLAM acted in their usual fashion, attacking fast food companies and painting slogans. The campaign from a November 6 action stated that Molotov cocktails were launched at “strategic points” of a Burger King franchise. The same commentator read, “Fighters like Barry are remembered as they would like to be, remembered, bringing war without mercy to the explorers and capitalists.”

Other groups around Mexico City and in other places around the world carried out actions this November 5 in Horne’s honor. They sent a message that strong animal liberation solidarity will be coupled with the destruction of property belonging to those who are to be held responsible.

HUNGER STRIKE ENDS

Continued from page 1

$13 to around $4, with the provision of being reduced to around $1.50 by decision of the jury.

3) All people who have served one-fifth of their prison sentence for two-year sentences and one-third for sentences longer than two years are to be released, with no exceptions.

4) The minimum limit of served sentence is reduced to three-fifths for conditional release and for convictions of drug related crimes. Those condemned under conditions of certain laws are exempted.

5) The maximum limit of pre-trial imprisonment is reduced from 18 to 12 months, with the exception of crimes punished by life or 20-year sentences.

6) The annual time of days-off prison is increased by one day.

7) Disciplinary penalties are to be integrated.

8) Integration after four years into national law of European council decision of drug trafficking.

9) Expansion of implementation of conditional release of convicts suffering from AIDS, kidney failure, persistent Tuberculosis and tetraplegics.

“The amendment submitted to the Parliament by the Ministry of Justice tackles but a few of our demands,” said the Prisoner’s Committee in a press release. “The ministers were unable to materialize his promises for the immediate release of the suggested number of prisoners announced, and, at the same time, implement concrete measures regarding the totality of the demands. We, the prisoners, treat this amendment as the first step, a result of our struggle and of the solidarity shown by society. Yet, it fails to cover us, it fails to solve our problem. With our struggle, we have first-of-all fought for our dignity—and this dignity we cannot offer as a present to any minister.”

The strike was enacted to highlight a 45-point list of demands.

The strike was enacted to highlight a 45-point list of demands.
Supreme Court to Whales: Drop Dead

On November 12, the Supreme Court lifted restrictions on the Navy's use of sonar in training exercises off the California coast. Studies by environmental groups had persuaded lower federal courts to impose the restrictions. Sonar has been linked to beached whales, internal bleeding around marine mammals' brains and ears, and other physical damage.

Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the majority opinion, which was joined by Justices Samuel Alito, Anthony Kennedy, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

In the dissenting opinion, Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and David Souter said that the prospect of harm to marine animals was enough to justify the limits on sonar use. Ginsburg said that "this likely harm... cannot be lightly dismissed, even in the face of alleged risk to the effectiveness of the Navy's 14 training exercises."

Politics Overrules Biologists in Wolverine Decision

A recent federal decision refusing to protect wolverines was reached in September, despite scientific findings by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service experts. Documents obtained using the Freedom of Information Act revealed that Washington officials reversed a decision protecting the wolverine, a wide-ranging and rare member of the weasel family, that is associated with wild, remote alpine areas.

According to experts, wolverines are at direct risk from climate change because they depend on areas that maintain deep snow from February through May, when females dig their dens to birth and raise young.

Wolverines are also threatened by trapping, human disturbance and fragmentation of their habitat.

We Hold Its Value to Be Self-Evident

Ecuador approved a new constitution on September 28 that, among other things, grants inalienable rights to nature and will grant legal standing to any person to defend those rights in court. It is the first such inclusion in any nation's constitution.

The document reads, "Nature, ... where life is reproduced and exists, has the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cybernetic structure and its processes of evolution. Every person, people, community or nationality will be able to demand the recognition of rights for nature before the public bodies."

It remains unclear what this law will mean in practice.

Proposition Two Passes in California

Proposition Two, a landmark measure that bans three of the cruellest factory-farm confinement methods—battery cages, veal crates, and gestation crates—passed on November 4 in California by a vote of more than 60 percent. All three will be illegal in the state by 2015.

California is the first state to ban battery cages for laying hens, who, by 2015, will finally have enough room to spread a wing. However, the debate continues about this historic vote. This new law will alleviate some of the suffering of millions of animals, though much remains to be done. The animal protection community feel that it may simply lead to Californians feeling better about eating animals.

ELF Press Office Releases Challenge to the New Obama Administration

The North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office (NAELFPO) has returned as the public face and voice of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) movement. In one of their first acts, they released an ultimatum from the ELF to the incoming president.

"The United States government has refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol, refused to permanently protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, refused to stop the logging of national forests.... We have one message for the Obama administration: Act to protect the environment, or the ELF will...," a NAELFPO press officer stated.

Raccoon Dogs Used for “Faux Fur”

An investigation shows that 80 percent of jackets labeled as "faux fur" contain the pelt of the raccoon dog. According to a report released by the Humane Society of the United States and CNN, law prohibits the import or sale of dog and cat fur, though dog and cat fur come into the US through illegal channels. A legal loophole does not protect raccoon dogs, though they are members of the canine family.

The dogs are beaten and often skinned alive for their fur, according to investigations and video obtained by animal rights groups. Recently, 1,500 dogs who were bred for their fur died after eating feed tainted with the chemical, melamine.

US law does not require products that contain fur to be labeled if they are valued at less than $150.

Whalers and Protesters at Risk in New Zealand

New Zealand will not be able to quickly rescue anyone who gets lost or hurt if or when clashes erupt between animal rights activists and Japanese whalers off of the north Antarctic coast, Foreign Minister Murray McCully reported. He stated that, "New Zealand will not be able to deal quickly with incidents where someone is required to be rescued."

The whaling fleet left Japan in November and is expected to focus its hunt for around 1,000 whales in the Ross Sea, where New Zealand is responsible for search-and-rescue missions.

In response, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society has vowed to disrupt the hunt.

In February, 2007, a Japanese whaling ship and a vessel owned by Sea Shepherd collided twice in Antarctic waters.

Arizona Representative Releases Report on the Bush Administration’s Assaults on Public Lands


The report includes the following articles. (This list is a summary and does not reflect the order in the original document or imply order of importance.)

1) The Environmental Protection Agency is seeking to weaken regulations protecting air quality in some national parks. If adopted, additional power plants and factories could be built near national parks, leading to increased air pollution in "areas of special natural, recreational, scenic or historic value."

2) The administration has presided over the largest slaughter of bison since the 19th century. More than 1,000 bison were killed this year, formerly residing in Yellowstone National Park where their survival should have been protected.

3) The Bush Administration permitted a company to begin commercial uranium mining on public lands, dangerously close to the Grand Canyon. Another proposed rule exempts "small" mines from any public environmental review.

4) The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) formalized a policy that makes cleanup at oil and gas drilling sites purely voluntary for corporations that drill on public lands. The Government Accountability Office noted in a report that, due to increased oil and gas development, various environmental effects—ranging from vegetation depletion to habitat destruction—were occurring at a rapid pace.

5) In June, the BLM, at the direction of the Bush Administration, officially put undeveloped public lands atop the Roan Plateau in Colorado on the auction block—with more than 55,000 acres of oil and natural gas parcels—despite an overwhelming public outcry against the move.

6) In the last days of the administration, the Interior Department put forth a "no wilderness" policy, which prohibits the BLM from ever designating Wilderness Study Areas and stripping almost three million acres of land in Utah alone from consideration as wilderness. Bushies also discarded the 2001 Wilderness Handbook, which laid out procedures used in identifying wilderness-quality lands. Additionally, according to Bloomberg News, with just weeks left in Bush’s tenure, directives coming from the White House have been pushing through a series of last-minute regulations (so-called "midnight rules") catering to special interests. The flurry of new rules includes legislation allowing factory farms to decide whether or not they need permits to release waste into streams and rivers, and allowing federal agencies to decide for themselves whether projects like new highways or dams pose a threat to wildlife and the environment.

Meet the “Green Berets”

"Green Militias" are forming in several central African countries where rangers perish while defending local wildlife. The new "eco-police" force will be armed, trained and well-funded. In the 1980s, a team of eco-defenders attacked and reportedly killed more than 30 ivory poachers in their early operations, burning dozens of poachers' camps and recovering stockpiles of ivory. Soon after, elephants began to return to the region.

Karl Ammann, a Swiss conservationist-turned-journalist, has been effective in carrying out several wildlife-protection and enforcement initiatives.

"You’re in countries where poachers are coming in, heavily armed. There’s no jails.... They’re massacring the country’s wildlife. I’ve been involved in the region for many years, and in these circumstances, I agree absolutely with the use of force."
Green Mountain Earth First! Takes Action Against Nuclear Energy

BY SLUG
Demanding the closure of the Vermont Yankee (VT Yankee) nuclear power plant in Vernon, Vermont, Green Mountain Earth First! challenged the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) at their State Street office in Montpelier on November 3. Dressed as Santa Claus and, clearly, Entergy Nuclear has been up to no good," said one of the elves entering the office.

The group brought photographs of VT Yankee’s 2007 cooling tower collapse and 2004 transformer fire, as well as a giant banner that read, “Do the public a service, close VT Yankee!” While the PSB considers granting Entergy Nuclear a certificate to operate the 30-year-old Vernon reactor until 2032, many Vermonters question the reliability, safety and costs associated with cleaning up.

“Due to accidents, leaks and decay, Entergy is regularly having to power down, decontaminating and preparing to keep a clean image in the media. They want to keep this kind of behavior going for another 25 years! We say no way!” exclaimed Bill Smith, an impassioned Vermont resident at the demonstration.

In an effort to receive a 20-year license extension, Entergy is claiming that it will not have the money to pay for decommissioning the plant until 2026. According to Green Mountain Earth First!er Erik Gillard, “Entergy is leading us on. They haven’t given a penny to the decommissioning fund since they bought the place, yet they’re promising $60 million 20 years down the road. They’re trying to bribe the state to renew the license.”

In early November, Entergy said the decommissioning fund was valued at $197 million. That’s $43 million short of where the fund stood before the stock market fell in October. “The bribe isn’t guaranteed!” Gillard added.

The PSB refused to sign the group’s “certificate of public need and convenience” and was met with a billboard, “Styrofoam snow,” which exuded an extreme stench. “Bad decisions around this issue have brought the PSB an early and cold nuclear Winter,” said one demonstrator. Concerned about possible toxicity the PSB called the fire department and temporarily evacuated two floors.

“If they are worried about potentially hazardous substances, they ought to close VT Yankee,” continued Gillard. “That place dumps radioactive waste on Vermont land daily.”

When asked about the event, the man posing as Santa Claus responded, “Entergy Nuclear’s Vermont Yankee [plant] is dangerous, dirty and out of control. They’ve been lying and cheating Vermont for years. They’re on the bad list and deserve a certificate of the public no-good. The PSB needs to know-ho-ho this.”

The PSB reported that clean up after the action cost them $800. No protesters were arrested, and Montpelier Police Chief Anthony Gillard continued Gillard. “That place looks like a dumping ground full of waste and garbage. They’re trying to bribe the state to renew the license.”

The action came on the heels of a major Earth First! gathering in southern Vermont on November 30 to November 3. The gathering drew supporters from across the Northeast and included activist workshops and plenty of beer.

BY KEYOTE
I hope it’s become obvious that civilization is ravaging the planet—and has been since its demonic spawning. Dead zones, caused by fertilizer runoff from industrial agriculture, are spreading across the world’s oceans. There are currently more than 400 documented examples. One, at the decayed mouth of the Mississippi River, is called the Gulf of Mexico, is approximately the size of New Jersey. Fertilizer doesn’t stop fertilizing when it leaves a farm; it creates blooms of algae that exude an extreme stench. Coral reefs—biodiversity hotspots and “the rainforests of the ocean”—are dying and declining at alarming rates. We all know what’s happening to forests worldwide. We’re in the throes of the sixth mass extinction of plants and animals in Earth’s history. Not since the time of the dinosaurs, 65 million years ago, have species disappeared this fast. Earth went through numerous ice ages, as well as periods of tremendous fluctuation of temperature and topography, without such a plethora of extinction. To say, as a recent article in the Earth First! Journal did, that capitalism is the root of our ecological crisis is a massive understatement.

While capitalism is awful, it is hardly the root cause. Ask yourself: To house this ever-expanding, overbloated human population, wouldn’t we need open spaces—spaces to be or for the environment? If food were still being grown to feed billions of humans (and domesticated animals) we’d have less of a food crisis. If we had enough to eat, wouldn’t we be able to reduce our carbon footprint? We have to have industrial—petroleum-based fertilizers to feed this many mouths. And fertilizers equal dead zones.

Let me make it absolutely clear that it is not my intention to disparage the fantastic work being done by those trying to reform aspects of the system. Gays do deserve equal rights. Forests do need to be saved from the chainsaw’s violence. Animals shouldn’t be tortured and killed in laboratories (or anywhere else). But the enormity of the situation we face requires steadfast honesty with others and ourselves. To be honest, now is really not the time to be fighting for table scraps on the deck of the Titanic. The fact is that life on Earth doesn’t have time for us to educate and convince the masses. Civilization needs to come down as soon as possible.

It sounds impossible—monolithic. The enormity of the task may threaten to crush us into submitting to the allure of reform, but we must resist. No compromise, right? Luck­ly, there are rays of life-giving sunlight shining through the dark clouds that envelop us all. The first is that the collapse is already happening on its own, and has been for a long time through climate change, overexploitation, peak oil, and so on ad infinitum. To use a Derrick Jensen phrase, civilization is indeed collapsing under the weight of its own ecological excesses. Earth is deliriously dug out from beneath the concrete and its ilk of her skin, to say nothing of the global financial meltdown! The second wave of good news is that civiliza­tion’s armor is by no means impenetrable. It is like a steel rhinoceros standing on flailing legs. Monolithic, but extremely vulnerable. Disrupt or destroy the cheap and smooth flow of just a few key resources—like ammonia and other necessities for industrial agriculture, electricity for computers and therefore the functioning of the global economy, oil for everything—and it crumbles apart ever more rapidly.

The full-on collapse is imminent. The critical questions are how many species and how much biodiversity will be left when this happens? How painful and prolonged will the recovery process be? How poisoned will the water, the air, the soil be? The key is in asking ourselves the unpleasant answers will be. Many environmental­ists and anarchists seem unwilling to consider an anti-civilization praxis. Whether this stems from ecological naivete or some kind of cultural ahistorical mindset (whereby we identify more with our industrial captors than with our land base and our communities) is irrelevant. Let’s start to think and, more importantly, act in ways that truly address the full gravity of the situation. The future of all life is at stake.

keyote is working on a book about industrial collapse. For more information, visit www.mypace.com/anti_civ.

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Greenpeace Prevents Palm Oil Shipment From Leaving Indonesia

On November 10, Greenpeace tagged the hull of three palm oil tankers and a large full of rainforest timber while another activist chained himself to the anchor of a tanker, preventing it from leaving the port. Indonesia is the world's third-largest greenhouse gas emitter, due in large part to the heavy amount of deforestation associated with the palm oil industry.

Welcome Back, Liberated Mink and Salmon!

Early on October 16, approximately 3,000 mink were released from La Visonnière Labonté de Thetford Mines, the largest fur farm in Quebec.

Farm director Pierre Labonte told a local newspaper, "Not only did they open the cages and release mink, but they also destroyed their pedigreed cards, which is the trademark of anti-fur militants." With the loss of genetic information, Labonte said, the escaped mink are no longer useful for breeding. He added that economic losses were estimated at $200,000.

During the night of November 21, more than 100,000 salmon were given freedom from two fish farms in northern Sweden. These farms are a part of the huge Swedish fish farming industry that kills more than five billion fish every year.

The mink and salmon were not the only animals to benefit from the actions. In the last week of November, Students for the Liberation of Primes claim to have burned a truck belonging to Pilgrim's Pride in California, destroying and exploiting the cages of mink as well.

Operation Bite Back II Still Kicking

As trees grew closer to releasing their leaves on a cool autumn night in Astoria, Oregon, the cages of 1,500 mink also became empty. The third mink farm raid in Oregon this year went down amongst the darkness of the night on October 16. This makes it the seventh mink liberation in North America this Autumn. What began in the early 1990s as Operation Bite Back is now whirl-winding into a brand new blitz on the fur industry.

Swedish Peace Activists Repeatedly Trash Weapons Factories

On October 16, the culmination of more than a year's worth of planning spread out destruction to Swedish weapons factories. The nuclear-free demilitarization group, OFOG/Avrusta (OFOG loosely translating to mischief), used bolt cutters to bypass the (un)secure fence that separated them from their targets.

Leaving a banner outside the factory that read, "The door is open. You are free to start disarmting," the activists began attacking machines with hammers. A Howitzer 77 (a gun capable of firing six rounds every second) alone was playing with the unproven system. It's involvement with Gohmann Asphalt Construction of the first 1.7 miles of the I-69 in Oregon, Colombia and British Columbia and its "Sprint Train.

We want to actually dismantle the whole system!" said the attackers.

In response to a lack of interest to no longer be demented speciesists and to cease torturing primates and other animals, the University of California (UC) system continues to feel the heat. Here is another example of the actions that have happened recently:

Dear UC System, Stop the Vivisection or Watch Yer Back!

In mid-October, 12 University of California (UC) commuter vans were sabotaged when shotgun shells were placed in their mufflers.

A communiqué was left that stated, "The security cammerad, too easily titled night sight patrols and the new laws don't mean a thing to us. We will keep coming up with new ways to keep the primate torturers wondering. Leave the primates alone, and we leave you alone."

On October 31 a trick was delivered to a new UCamaha television in San Francisco. Stephen Lisberger, as tubes of super-glue were used to fill his front door locks.

UC-Berkeley bird murderer Frederic Thumissen had red paint thrown on his door, windows and windows on November 5. His front door locks were also super-glued.

Around the same time, a couple of UCLA football players had shotguns shells inserted into their mufflers. The shells' explosions startled the cars' occupants, but they are ultimately harmless.

In the last week of November, Students and Workers for the Liberation of UCLA Primes claim to have burned an auto-mobile belonging to primate vivisector Goran Lacin.

In response to California bill 2296, which aimed to increase the protection of UC vivisectors, action at Berkeley smashed three windows at cat-killer Ralph Freeman's Vine Street home. Theunissen's Vine Street home. The attacks and saboteurs were claimed by Feminists for Animal Liberation.

Lastly, around the same time, three cars were painted white, a sign of the overthrow of UCLA vivisector Baldwin Way.
An Interview with Grant Barnes

BY JEFF "FREE" LUERS

Two eco-defenders talk shop in an interview through prison bars. In 2001, Jeff "Free" Luers was handed a 23-year sentence, the longest term ever given in the US for environmentally motivated dam-

age. (It has since been reduced.) In an interview with fellow advocate, Grant Barnes, Luers asks questions that reflect on their experiences and invite us to get to know Barnes, a passionate defender of the wild.

Jeff "Free" Luers: You are currently serving a long prison sentence for arsons claimed on behalf of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF). What compelled you to take such actions?

Barnes: I had been aware of the ELF for some time, and as I became more aware of the severity of the most likely consequences of climate change, I decided it was time for me to do my part and take responsibility. I believe property destruction is a useful component in a united front of tactics toward the goal of Earth liberation in the long term. I had been corresponding, ultimately, toward the cultivation of a biocentric culture. It raises the economic and psychological costs of Earth destruction, and when there is media coverage (as there usually is), it shows people on all sides of the struggle that the destroyers are vulnerable. I believe that property destruction is one of the things that the other species of the planet would do in their defense against extinction if they had the knowledge and ability to do so.

Those who destroy the property of unaccountable, irresponsible people act on behalf of these other species, which are our cousins.

Luers: How did you first get into activism?

Barnes: I helped with an infoshop in Denver (now closed) and Food Not Bombs, and I worked for the Rape Assistance and Awareness Program.

Luers: You are serving your sentence in maximum security. What has that been like?

Barnes: One challenge has been racism. I'm white, and most of the people I talk to are not, and this has led to some confrontations with racists. My friends back me up, though. So, when problems arise, we respond, and that keeps me safe enough. They deserve the better part of the credit for that.

Other than that, the thing that is the most difficult is the isolation; I'm a social person, and community is very important to me. So, everyday, it takes a conscious effort to adapt to spending most of my time alone. (Most of the time, I'm not allowed to leave the cell.) However, I stay productive by studying for my degree and working out, and I've made strong progress in both areas. I occasionally have the opportunity to correspond with former students, and that is one of my favorite things to do.

Luers: When you first decided to get involved in eco-defense, did you think you would end up in prison? If so, how did you prepare yourself for that possibility?

Barnes: I knew I could go down, and I strove not to make any mistakes. At various times in prison, I had listed prison memoirs like Soul On Ice by Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver and Soledad Brother by George Jackson, as well as some more recent accounts of prison life, including web film entries, "How To Survive In Prison." It contains some good information—for instance, on the importance of respect—but I think I would have picked up on that sort of thing whether or not I had read anything on it. Probably, the best way somebody could prepare would be to stay in good physical shape.

Luers: How has your support been? How can people get involved?

Barnes: The Lucy Parsons Project sent two books last year, which are outstanding to have, as good reading material is hard to get here. The Earth First! journal kindly gave me a free prisoner subscription, and I also got an issue a piece from Green Anarchy and Bite Back, all of which I considered notable on the outside and appreciate having in here. I am especially thankful that the Earth First! Journal and Green Anarchy have listed my address. I've gotten several letters and cards wishing me well, and recently, I've begun corresponding with several people. It would be outstanding to hear from others.

The best thing people can do is send information on intentional communities, mutual-aid networks and similar formations that I might contribute to when I am released. One of the most frustrating things about being inside is having few outlets to give to others, but I want to lay a solid foundation for such community that I can build on when my time here is done. Creating community takes a great deal of work, and I know it's necessary to spend time to understand, among other things, a potential member's level of commitment and the extent of the common ground shared with existing members.

I want to start that dialogue, because the kind of life I want to live on the outside is one spent as much as possible in spaces of liberation from patriarchy, exploitation, anthropocentrism, racism and all other symptoms of alienation from the earth. To that end, I am most interested in more primitive groups.

Also, I find that, in general, pictures are more natural expressions than words, and it means a lot to me to see photographs, along with people's writings. Regardless, it is always special to receive a letter or postcard from anyone who feels concern for the Earth and joy for life.

Luers: Are you working on projects while locked up?

Barnes: I'm finishing my degree in cultural anthropology; I was a student when I was arrested. Reading about a range of cultures has been provocative. It has shown me, to some extent, how much is being lost with the extinction of so many sustainable, primitive ways of life—knowledge we need now more than ever. I also keep up with reports on climate change, and I am reading some books I had not made time for on the outside, like Derek Jensen's Endgame.

Luers: And now, here's your chance for a shameless wish list. Would you like people to do anything in particular for you?

Barnes: I don't listen to the radio, watch television or buy snacks, and money is qualitatively less valuable to me than heartfelt correspondence, but I would certainly appreciate funds for mailing supplies, and for beans and oats, as the vegan food here is very limited. One luxury I do love is music, and receiving some of that would be a treat.

One of the subjects I most want to better understand is the difference between primitive and complex cultures. I would be very grateful for any well-researched reading material at the undergraduate level on this topic. Much of what is listed in Green Anarchy is of interest, for instance.

Luers: How has life in prison since 2001 for the arson of three SUVs. He is expected to be released in June.

Barnes: I served a 12-year prison sentence that began in 2007 for the arson of seven SUVs. From his prison cell, he watches the birds that have made their nest within the razor wire, a reflection of what is happening to our world.

Write to Barnes at #137563, San Carlos Correctional Facility, P.O. Box 3, Pueblo, CO 81002. Visit his new website or blogs grantbarnes.wordpress.com.

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An Invitation to Join Chuk'shon EF! at the 2009 Organizers Conference

BY CHUK'SHON EF!

The Earth First! Organizers’ Conference (OC) and Winter Rendezvous will be held in the beautiful mountains of southern Arizona. Traditionally, this conference is a time for members of radical environmental campaigns to come together to discuss ideas and strategies, ideally creating a stronger, more unified front. We expect this year’s gathering to help connect and strengthen existing campaigns within the movement, as well as look at how current social and political trends impact the environment in increasingly devastating ways. We hope the conference will inform and inspire new comrades to join the struggle in defense of the Earth—along with eating good food and doing a bunch of hootin' and hollerin'!

Rewinding Chuk'shon EF!

There are endless reasons why “the people at the bottom of Black Mountain” (a loose translation of “Chuk’shon”) have been fighting tooth and claw for the chimneic land of the Sonoran Desert! For anyone familiar with the hotspot theory, welcome to part of the Madrean Pine-Oak Woodlands hotspot. Our Madrean sky islands, are home to numerous endemic amphibia, reptiles, birds, bats and rodents, as well as threatened flora. Nowhere else will you see so much of the magical, towering saguaro cactus other than in good ol’ Sonora. Don’t be surprised if you’ll get sunk to sleep by howling coyotes either. In the past, Chuk'shon EF! has worked on numerous campaigns, ranging from disrupting mountain lion and sandhill crane murders to shutting down copper mining projects. We are using the time preparing for the OC to rebuild Chuk'shon EF! as a group to reckon with.

Content/Schedule

We are encouraging folks to show up on Wednesday, February 11, to help get things started on time. Thursday and Friday, February 12 and 13, will be the OC section of this year’s gathering. Workshops and discussions on current campaigns will be conducted, and ideas for future projects will be discussed throughout these two days. All EFiers are welcome to come in on some good ol’ fashioned critical analysis of our radical environmental movement.

Here is a glimpse at some of the already-proposed discussion points for the Winter Rendezvous: strategy sessions on attacking infrastructure, discussions on integrating climbing into our actions, radical approaches to climate change, thoughts on combating fear from the Green Scare, actualizing support for Earth and animal liberation prisoners, and overviews on anti-oppression work within EF!

The Winter Rendezvous will take place on Saturday and Sunday, February 14 and 15, with the Night to Howl kicking up the desert dust on Saturday night. This will be a time for folks to show off their skills, musical numbers, poetry and other creative acts.

The weekend will bring us multiple workshops on a variety of current subjects and will provide opportunities to learn about the magnificent Sonoran desert from resident rangers.

Some of the current proposed workshops are: challenging oppression within the EF! movement, raising awareness on border and immigration issues, confronting copper mining, sharing techniques on how to sabotage hunts, conducting bioregional roundups, doing direct action trainings, learning acupressure techniques and discussing consent and accountability.

Anyone interested in heading up a workshop or who has certain workshops they would like to see should contact us at chukshoncon2009@yahoo.com. There is still time to make this gathering what you want it to be.

Among things you should consider bringing are clothing for very warm and very cold temperatures, food and water for the communal kitchen and yourself, friends, sleeping bags, an appetite for action, tarps if you got them and musical instruments.

The desert gets relatively hot during the day, and temperatures can drop to freezing at night. It’s also very dry here. So, staying hydrated is extremely important. In addition, the conference is intended to be a safe space for everyone, so please do not bring drugs—and leave your dogs at home.

A Few Strategic Discussion Topics

Many within the EF! movement desire more action now, but how are we going to reach that point? Conversations on how to get there must happen. At this Summer’s Round River Rendezvous (RRR), we heard an assortment of action stories from new and old groups during the bioregional roundup. Let’s try to keep this happening!

Confronting the Green Scare

Another lasting concern of the movement is the chilling effect of the Green Scare. From asking ourselves how to support all of those who are now imprisoned to how to stop the snitching, we need to talk and strategize. The government is slowly stealing our friends away from us. More and more people are becoming targets of the escalating government repression. Let’s all sit down and try to formulate new approaches to this.

The Mexican/US Border’s Influence on Earth First!

The border is definitely an issue for both the Chuk’shon and international EF! communities. Throughout EF!’s existence, its opinion on the border has varied, but over the years, an overall stance of opposition to the border has developed.

Due to the intensified militarization of the border, it has become increasingly harder to enforce environmental standards. This leads directly to more drastic attacks on the wild ecosystems around the border. EF! groups have increased the amount of coordination between organizing north and south of the border. No Borders Camp, to solidarity actions that attack infrastructure projects that would affect Central and South America, to being active in the popular uprisings in the Mexican state of Oaxaca, EF! has been working hard to smash the border.

Conflict Mediation and a Safe Place for All

At the RRR this Summer, the mediation team discussed how having a special chill space for folks would be beneficial for everyone’s mental health. So, we are planning on having a special area devoted to that at the OC.

The space will include an assortment of tools and resources to help EFiers relax and regain focus. There will be books available on the border, from a strong presence at the 2007 No Borders Camp, to solidarity actions that attack infrastructure projects that would affect Central and South America, to being active in the popular uprisings in the Mexican state of Oaxaca, EF! has been working hard to smash the border.

Anti-Oppression Check-in

Everyone coming should know that any form of mental or physical abuse will not be tolerated at this gathering. We also do not welcome any form of oppression and encourage others to call folk on their shit when they mess up. If anyone is currently going through a process for these types of things, we encourage you to check in with our mediation team and let us know. We expect everyone to practice consent with each other and to be conscious of how much space they are taking up.

While we have a mediation team available to help with things, we ask everyone to talk about concerns that arise with one another and reach creative positive solutions.

As the OC draws near, there will be a link for separate popular groups to be posted at www.earthfirstjournal.org. If you haven’t been to an OC before and would like to see what they’re like, check out past Beltane issues of the Earth First! Journal for reportbacks.

The OC website will include a ride board to help folks figure out travel plans. We hope to see a bunch of old friends and a gang of new ones! The 250 is one of the hottest deserts in North America for a reason! So, come on down and see why!
Eventually, the mass demos left Brum demanding better results and desiring further action towards a fairer and less-destructive world. By his early 20s, Brum became restless with the seeming to be a catalyst for change. He began hitchhiking through Europe, and into England and Scotland.

His adventures lead him to London, a city where environmental uprisings have taken place at the hands of the poor, the working class, the militant suffragettes and the anarchists. Brum found refuge among the squatters who, for the most part, were active in the struggle against the government and corporate giants responsible for so much of the Earth's devastation and suffering. When the grime of London's metropolis began to dig its sharp claws into him, Brum hit the road again, looking for more alternative communities and lifestyles. Outside of Edinburgh, Scotland, he found a treest community in the woods. The Bilston Glen Anti-Bypass Protest Site is a complete village in the trees where folks from all over Britain—and some from further away—live communally to protect this area from destruction. For several years Brum spent much of his time at the tree village, helping with chores that kept the site functioning, building shelters and occasionally walking the 12 miles to Edinburgh to educate others about the woods where he lived. While living on the site, Brum found green-anarchist resources which helped strengthen the commitments he was making with the feral world.

Brum is an individual many can identify with. He desires to live the life so often glamorized in articles and discussions among green anarchists. He has attended and organized green-anarchist gatherings, but to his disappointment, he sometimes found himself camping on land where these were not permitted (or more often than not sitting in discussion workshops with fellow enthusiasts who seem fixated on ecological collapse, but weren't as interested in learning survival skills.

These sorts of frustrations lead Brum back to his native lands to understand what type of consciousness exists there. Once again, many folks were interested in discussions, but seemed frightened to take any real initiative toward a more primitive lifestyle.

As a close friend of Brum, I have spent almost a year living in the woods and traveling through Europe with him, visiting alternative communities and living off the land. However, my desire to live a completely primitive lifestyle was not as strong as his. For me, the living process feels like an intricate web. While I can manage in my whole life, to learn new skills every constant and make steps toward a more sustainable lifestyle. For Brum, there was no long and winding road. There was only a bleak canvas that needed to transform into a patchwork of knowledge immediately—or he would not only die in the wilderness, but possibly kill himself before Mother Nature could.

The next chapter in Brum's path to rewilding brought him to the US, a country he regarded as a place of great ecological direct-action—such as numerous treefalls, the presence of the Earth Liberation Front and a strong green-anarchist culture (as a theory and a magazine). Brum traveled to the states to attend a year-long program at Teaching Drum. Surprisingly, Teaching Drum, an outdoor program for high school kids in Wisconsin, is nearly one of the only places in the western world where individuals can continue on the path of rewilding without being arrested for living.

Brum traveled to the states to attend a year-long program at Teaching Drum. Surprisingly, Teaching Drum, an outdoor program for high school kids in Wisconsin, is nearly one of the only places in the western world where individuals can continue on the path of rewilding without being arrested for living. Brum spent two years at Teaching Drum, living in the woods, learning survival skills and developing a strong personal relationship with nature that can potentially live off the land year-round. Living in a group is very important to Brum, as is having the skills to “heal the wounds of civilization.” He feels that our children and elders are vital in creating a land-based community. He recently experienced a very positive gathering in Idaho where folks from various ages, political backgrounds, skills levels and religious views came together under a banner unified by primitive outdoor living.

With the possibility of the collapse of civilization all around us, from ecosystems to economies, a reliance on primitive-based knowledge and skills will be at the heart of our communities’ survival. While Brum feels that it is very difficult to live without a dependency on civilization all together, his new perspective seeks to find a balance between alternative urban living and a primitive clan-based community. He continues to teach skills and to educate people about land-based living and is considering forming a school similar to Teaching Drum.

Praiselives living in the tree-tops. Brum remains her good friend and inspiration in the quest to find balance in a world flipped upside-down.
Sequoia Greenfield, 1944-2008

by Karen Pickett

A wild woman warrior, witch, pagan juju conjurer, biker owl, office queen, Mardi Gras frog priestess... Sequoia, we will miss you! You are one of the few who named yourself after a mighty rough-barked tree and lived up to the moniker, big red mane and all. You have gone to the other side. We will miss you!

Sequoia left this physical plane on October 20, two months after being diagnosed with myelomic leukemia.

Hailing from Greenfield Ranch in northern California, Sequoia had been away from Earth First! activism for a while, but she left her mark. She burst onto the EFi scene in the mid-1980s, coming to a gathering in the Big Basin redwoods, and then to her first national Round River Rendezvous (RRR) on the north rim of the Grand Canyon in 1987. During the rally, we were fellow Spikettes, doing a choreography routine to the Song of the Lonesome Tree-Spiker, sung by a couple of “men with guitars,” as we called them. Few people knew who she was at that point, and this is how she introduced herself to Earth First!: At the end of the song, she turned around and flipped up her leather skirt, mooning the audience with her bare butt.

She loved grand entrances, roaring up on her motorcycle to the doorstep of the Pacific Lumber office—or into a crowd of several thousand people at a Headwaters Forest rally—in full spotted owl get-up, wings on the handlebars and huge clawed feet on the pegs. Grand exits worked for her, too. One of the most hilarious Sequoia stories involved an incident following a successful civil disobedience action atop Mount Graham following the 1992 RRR at the telescope sites being imposed on the mountain. Somewhere, after we’d occupied the site all day, Sequoia managed to hitch a ride down the mountain (bad knee, you know)—but not in a vehicle. (We were beyond vehicle access.) Rather, she rode down on the shoulders of the deputy sheriff! She cackled and reveled in riding the deputy the entire two miles down the mountain. To this day, I don’t know what possessed that deputy to say yes (Kali magic, I think).

Mischief and magic were her calling cards, whether sneaking around in the dark to yank down the drawers of Dana Lyons from behind as he sang a slow and sensitive song at the RRR campfire, or suddenly appearing as the goddess Kali in full juju regalia as we prepared to march into the uranium mine site at the Grand Canyon to shut it down. She also gave a Kattiahwan (now Mountain Justice activist) who will go unamed a body shot he will never forget, rolling on the ground laughing as steam came out his ears.

Sequoia was an amazing seamstress and tailor. She fashioned costumes, floats and wicked finery for Mardi Gras and Samhain. Her favorites guises for cloaking herself were spotted owls, mountain lions, leopards and trees. She confronted then-Secretary of the Interior, Don Hodel, as a redwood tree in Yosemite during a call to take down Hetch Hetchy dam. Her black fringed leather jacket with the full size mountain lion face sewn on the back was part of her alter at her memorial. However, she didn’t just dress up. She became those wild species. They were her totems. She was a wild animal and a wild human.

Those close to her knew she had an especially intense childhood and adolescence that made her very tough and gave her an ability to defend herself as passionately as she defended the wild.

Around 1987, we all went to hearings in the redneck city of Redding, California, when we were fighting against trophy hunting of mountain lions in the state. Even we were surprised when Sequoia leaned into the microphone at the lectern and said to the assembled Fish and Game officials and scores of hunters in the audience, “I have a gun. I know how to use it. I’ve used it successfully to defend myself, and I’m a very good shot. I live in Mendocino County, and if I ever see any of you hunting mountain lions where I live, you’ll be in my sights.” There was a thundering ovation from our side, and a collection of gasps from the opposition and mainstream groups.

She embraced biocentrism as passionately as she embraced her motorcycle, and brought lessons learned from her earlier life experiences—her witchiness, her tough biker persona, and her organizational skills that made her the excellent office maven in Cove/Mallard and an amazing base camp mama during treestis on Georgia-Pacific land. She was also a key person in the women’s movement in Los Angeles, and one of the first members of the Susan B. Anthony Coven #1, founded by Z. Budapest in 1971.

It was too soon for this wild woman with the big red hair and outrageous, open-mouthed cackle to pass over to the other side. She showed remarkable wisdom, love of life, calm and even humor when she explained to me that she felt settled and felt that a lot of her life goals had been achieved. She was an accomplished potter, had a pilot’s license, and even jumped out airplanes numerous times. She traveled the world, biked thousands of miles, could fix almost anything on two or four wheels, and was caring for the land she loved in Greenfield Ranch as it was cared for.

She noted in an interview published years ago that she was always lived by was “tits to the wind.” So to you, Sequoia, may your tits always be to the wind. Viva Sequoia!

Long-time EFer kp was a fellow woman warrior, collaborator and close friend of Sequoia’s.
Aaron Ellringer Cooperates in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, ELF Case

Aaron Ellringer was convicted in the Rhinelander, Wisconsin, Earth Liberation Front (ELF) attack on a Forest Service genetic engineering project because of the testimony of snitch Ian Wolff. Wolff, an ELF member (September-October 2006). Now, Ellringer, himself has turned snitch and taken a cooperating plea agreement. The agreement, viewable at westgreenpeace.com, reduces his charge to a misdemeanor to put away in this case, go to trial. It is clear that Ellringer's level of cooperation in this trial will be a deciding factor in his sentencing. Ellringer is expected to receive a six-month sentence for his role as the driver in the action.

Aoteaora Activists Face Charges

Eighteen indigenous and anarchist activists in Aoteaora/New Zealand were arrested on October 15, 2007 (see EFJ January-February 2008). They were charged with hundreds of counts under the Terrorism Suppression Act, Aoteaora's counterpart to the USA PATRIOT Act.

On October 30 of this year, the Crown issued an indictment against the 18 people. Five are now charged with “participation in a criminal gang.” These charges are a desperate attempt by the government to save face after there was found to be insufficient evidence to bring charges under the Terrorism Suppression Act. The Crown seeks to characterize political activists who support Tino Rangatiratanga (sovereignty for indigenous Maori people) as criminals. All 18 face charges under the Arms Act for the possession of restricted weapons. Although charges relating to three of the accused had been dismissed outright due to lack of evidence following a month-long deposition hearing, the Crown has also chosen to re-charge these charges.

For more information visit, www. october15thsolidarity.info.

A Silver Lining in Economic Crisis

A supporting aroids-based housing rights direct-action group, Take Back the Land, is still in full swing thanks to the current financial crisis (see EFJ January-February 2007).

The recent 40,342 foreclosed properties in Miami comes as good news to this bunch. Thanks to Take Back the Land, some of Miami's homeless will soon be squatting it up in a brand new home. That's right, activists can say "debt," squatters in Miami are liberating foreclosed homes and reclaiming public space.

The group has been in solidarity with community members for years. This year alone, Take Back the Land risked significant legal trouble to reclaim empty homes and parks. The group has even supported community members who were previously homeless.

"We could virtually empty the streets and shelters simply by filling them with folks coming from the lands on which they are built," said director Max Rameau. "Homes should go to people, not kept empty so banks can cash in."

Concerning the only 10 members, Take Back the Land first gained national media attention two years ago after erecting a shantytown called Umoja Village in the impoverished Liberty City area of Miami. The village consisted of 21 shanties on public land that were constructed of wooden pallets and tarps.

After a continuous buildup of house foreclosures, on October 22, Take Back the land helped its first family move into their brand new home. The group has since been involved in opening dozens more homes across Miami.

The Miami City Council recently passed a law giving police and zoning authorities more power to interfere with Take Back the Land, yet the law hasn't gone into effect yet. "We're putting a priority on it because [vacant houses] are places for criminal activity, for drug dealing and drug use," said Loret de Mola, the city code enforcement director.

"It's a quality-of-life problem."

Black Mesa Threatened by Peabody Coal, Again

The permitting process for massive coal mining expansion plans on Black Mesa, in northeastern Arizona, has been re-opened. Peabody Coal, the world's largest coal company, is once again pushing through plans to massively expand coal strip-mining operations that target the Diné and Hopi people's sacred ancestral homelands on Black Mesa (see EFJ March-April 2007). The Black Mesa Project, funded by Peabody Coal, outlines harmful impacts to every level of the ecological and cultural systems on Black Mesa.

Thousands of acres of pristine canyon lands, animal and plant ecology, and cultural sites would be destroyed, thus preventing religious practices. The increased daily denotation of coal would affect the air quality and health of miners, local residents and their livestock. These plans can deplete the already scarce water tables and the regional aquifer that is essential to residential survival, as well as uproot and relocate more families from their homelands. More than 14,000 Diné and 100 Hopi have already been forcibly removed under the guise of the so-called "Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute."

A record of decision—which would enable the expanded mine permit to take effect—will almost certainly be issued before the December holidays, according to Rick Hopkinson, of the Office of Surface Mining's Denver office.

Oaxacan Activists Framed for Brad Will's Murder

Mexican federal police arrested five Oaxacan activists on October 16. At least two were charged with having a role in the murder of Earth First!er Brad Will on October 27, 2006 (see EFJ January-February 2007). Brad was assassinated while working as an Indymedia journalist, filming the uprising in Oaxaca. Multiple witnesses say Brad was shot by paramilitaries who are seen in photographs shooting toward him.

Contrasting what the medical examiner who performed Brad's autopsy said, the Mexican government claims that the autopsy found powder burns on Brad's body, consistent with a close-range shooting. The medical examiner conducting the autopsy said that this was not the case. He actually specifically reported not finding powder on the body. Additionally, Brad was filming when he was shot. His video clearly shows that the shots were not from close range.

The activist that the government is accusing of murdering Brad is Juan Manuel Martínez Moreno. Martínez Moreno is a supporter of the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO), in its Spanish initials.

Martínez Moreno was kidnapped, along with two other APPO members, while performing election observations in Santa Lucia del Camino in 2007. The kidnappers beat the three in the face and abdomen before dumping them in a community 23 miles from Oaxaca City.

Octavio Perer, another participant in the 2006 uprisings, was also taken into custody and accused of covering up the crime. APPO activists and members of the Indigenous Popular Council of Oaxaca say the government is blaming activists for Brad's murder in order to cover up its own involvement in the crime. Three of the four men caught on film shooting in Brad's direction were from the lowest levels of the Mexican government.

Grand Jury Subpoenas Withdrawn

Grand jury subpoenas of six Texas-based activists in connection with actions at this Summer's Republican National Convention (RNC) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, have all been withdrawn. This means that the "People's Fishing Expedition" is being postponed until the next time that the state tries to get up in our business (see EFJ November-December 2008).

While the official reason behind the retractions is not known at this point, some have speculated that—from the perspective of the state—the strong resistance on the part of the Texans who were subpoenaed, as well as the immediate show of solidarity from folks all over, made the whole affair too much trouble for too few returns.

For information on the continuing federal case against Bradley Crowder and David Bolles (the "Texas Two"), as well as information on other RNC-related cases, visit nc8arrestees.wordpress.com.
Hey, EFI, where's the deep ecology in cozying up with liberals?

by ROOT FORCE

Over the past couple of years, it's been great to see climate change finally enter the general consciousness, as well as the insidious spike in direct action against fossil fuels and nuclear energy. Whether climate change is just the sexy issue of the moment or we've finally reached that kind of deep enough nerve, it seems that radicals and the mainstream have finally come to agree that climate action is needed—however, much of the otherwise great work happening these days suffers from one major flaw: the articles, communiqués, banners and messages from these climate-related actions either throw their support behind "clean energy" (usually meaning wind and solar power) or remain silent on the subject.

This is the kind of thing we might expect from mainstream environmental nonprofits, but from radicals? Have we gone from "No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth" to "Any Compromise in Defense of Civilization"?

Nothing Clean About It

One fundamental problem with wind, solar and the rest is that they aren't "clean" by any sane definition. All require massive amounts of industrial materials for their construction, including plastics, copper and steel. As a result, these mines come out of mines, just like coal. Ripping open the Earth for copper-heavy solar panels or steel wind turbines isn't any more eco-friendly than ripping it open for coal. Mines are devastating to local ecologies and communities, poisoning the water as thoroughly as they strip the land. More often than not, these mines are forced on poor and indigenous communities at the barrel of a gun.

Some people have suggested that we could get around this problem by taking old cars and remaking them into wind turbines without mining any new iron, but this wouldn't be any cleaner. The steel would still have to be extracted through intensive industrial processes—including transporting the cars, melting them down, reforming them and transporting the resulting turbines to the site of the wind "farm." This brings up another point: Once the metals, plastics, semiconductors and other bits of solar panels or wind turbines are made, it still takes a heavily intensive (and yes, fossil-fuel intensive) process to make them into these supposedly clean energy generators.

It's called embedded pollution, and it's the same problem that gives the lie to "clean" cars and nuke plants. No matter how "low" their emissions might be during use, the emissions during manufacture, transport and eventual disposal are still through the roof. So, next time you hear someone talking about how clean windmills and solar panels are, challenge them to visit their local steel smelting plant or an open pit copper mine in the Southwest, Latin America or elsewhere) before they say that again.

Propping Up the System

As if all of that weren't bad enough, both wind and solar "farms" require huge amounts of land—mostly indigenous lands and wild lands. In short, this is land that those in power have written off as useless.

We're not just talking about land for the "farms" themselves. We're also talking about the massive swaths needed for the construction of new electrical transmission grids across the country. A recent New York Times article notes that the US electric grid is not capable of handling a large influx of wind and solar energy: "The dirty secret of clean energy is that, while generating it is getting easier, moving it to market is not." That's because the current grid is constructed primarily for local power generation, while wind and solar energy need to be generated in very specific areas. So, while half of the country's electricity could be generated from wind in North and South Dakota, half of the population would have to move there in order to use it.

That's why government and industry are gearing up to build an "interstate transmission superhighway system," a "high-voltage backbone spanning the country." This means "electric [transmission] interstate" for wind, solar and geothermal power. Obama and the Democrats are calling for massive investments in new infrastructure to "rebuild" the electricity grid of the future. The efforts to save the system in the age of declining oil are well underway.

When radicals call for new electric infrastructure, all we do is legitimize the greenwashing efforts of industries that will ultimately stab us in the back. Does anyone really think that Shell and BP will become better companies now, just because they make solar panels? We're letting a genie out of its bottle—whipping up public support for new technology is far easier than turning sentiment against it later.

Throwing our support behind the capitalists and their wind and sun "farms" is selling out the next generation; it ensures that, just as we spend our days fighting the fossil fuel industry, our kids will spend theirs fighting the wind and solar industries. This is just another version of the mentality that we've all complained about: "I'll be dead when [insert ecological calamity] happens, so I don't care." Sure, replacing coal with wind will still kill the planet—but at least I won't have to adapt to a radically new world in my lifetime.

It's easy to say that wind and solar power is worth it, it's politically fashionable, after all, and it's a nice safe answer for when you inevitably get asked why you aren't fighting fossil fuels. However, this is just another version of the mentality that we've all complained about: "I'll be dead when [insert ecological calamity] happens, so I don't care." Sure, replacing coal with wind will still kill the planet—but at least I won't have to adapt to a radically new world in my lifetime.

When the oceans are one big dead zone, when the last forest falls, when all the water is poisoned and undrinkable, when the last wild and free creature dies, when the last spot of Earth is covered with concrete, then we'll all be dead. Wind and solar power will do nothing to change our breakneck trajectory toward that fate.

So, by all means, fight fossil fuels and nukes—there's no question that those industries need to be shut down. However, please stop saying that "clean" energy can replace them—that we can have a modern way of life and a living planet. Too bad, we simply can't—and the sooner we admit that, the better.

Root Force works to take down the system by facilitating action against the expansion of global trade infrastructure. For more information, visit www.rootforce.org.
Climate change is on everybody’s mind. Whether you work for the Sierra Club, Kyoto Protocol lawyers, or corporate PR directors, the call to “fight climate change” is becoming the new norm. With each dire report comes yet another unseasonably severe storm that devastates some corner of the Earth, the reality that humans are altering the climate at an unprecedented rate.

In 1992 the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro declared that the “green initiatives are tottering on the edge of extinction” and that “the focus is more on global elitism and less on people.” The next major climate talks scheduled for Copenhagen, Denmark, on November 30, 2009, will be the Earth Summit for the twenty-first century. Indeed, the popular sense of what is “politically feasible” has changed. The demands of professional environmentalists are not driven by what we need to ensure that the Earth can survive, but by what sort of “request” can gain political traction in the streets. The question must step can we get them to agree to? “No real change can happen without industry,” they say. “How can we get the corporations on board? How can we convince them that they can make just as much money off of the green initiatives, and up about buying carbon offsets and energy-efficient light bulbs, because these are the only solutions being offered to them. No one is telling them how to realistically make a dent in the massive amount of greenhouse gases we spew into the atmosphere every day. We all have to get serious about localizing our lives, getting to know our communities and looking to the land around us to meet our needs for food, shelter, energy, and more.

In this context, a clear, well-communicated anti-capitalist analysis is more relevant than ever. Both the climate crisis and the current economic turmoil are good illustrations that an economic model based on continuous growth is destroying our (and millions of other species’) ability to survive on Earth. Some of the US’s most mainstream newspapers and magazines are outright questioning unfettered capitalism. Where are we in this dialogue? The time is ripe for a radical intervention.

Vibrant social movements have sprung up throughout the global South. They are fighting not only the causes of global warming (fossil fuel extraction and development), but also its “false solutions”: carbon trading, agro-fuels, industrial tree plantations (some of which threaten to undermine the world’s remaining rainforests with genes from genetically engineered trees), massive hydroelectric projects, nukes and other carbon offset projects. We in the global North have a lot to learn from groups like Via Campesina and the World Rainforest Movement, who are resisting the corporate takeover of communal lands and actions against timber plantations. These and many other grassroots movements are joining forces under the banner of “ecological justice,” community control of resources, food security and indigenous sovereignty are joining forces under the banner of Climate Justice.

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Blow Up a Koala on His Cell
Aussie scientists are using cell phones to spook koalas. Researchers targeted the chatty marsupials on St. Bee's Island off of northeastern Australia with satellite tracking devices to monitor their movements, and they also put them in the theatre while computer programs turn on every 30 minutes and record for two minutes. Not wanting to get left behind in the “green revolution,” the koalas are now being held by power and car batteries. Researchers record the koala’s bellows and try to translate them. They hope this can help them to more accurately preserve the koala who is threatened by habitat destruction.

We expect findings to report that koalas are saying things like, “... nothing, what are you holding?”

I dropped a stick on that python again. LOL.

Dick Cheney and Laura Bush in Epic “Chase for the Trifectos”

With the Bush administration’s clock at two minutes to midnight, the battle over protecting areas of the Pacific Ocean from fishing and mineral exploitation is raging.

On this side, weighing in at 126 pounds is first Lady Laura Bush, who, in a flash of self-assertiveness, has asked her aides to confer with scientists on how to maintain diverse eco-systems.

In the other corner is Vice President Dick Cheney, who was unapologetic for raising fishery security arguments, arguing that banning fishing and mineral exploration will hurt the region’s economy.

WTF, right? We hope they both drown.

May the Schwarzenegger Be With You

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger opened his “climate change summit” by telling the no-doubt star-struck attendees that the globe that environmental protection can be balanced with economic growth. No, really! He said that!

Indigenous groups have been mobilizing against a new UN program called Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). Launched in September, this World Bank-funded program was conceived for raising new revenue streams, security reasons, arguing that banning fishery and mineral exploration will hurt the region’s economy.

The REDD document itself admits that the program would “deprive communities of their legal rights to traditional lands, not-for-profit conservation values.” The document does not demonstrate how it would benefit native forests and monoculture tree plantations.

In theory, one could cut down a native rainforest, replant it with a Eucalyptus tree plantation and get carbon credits for “reforestation.” Around 60 million people depend upon the forest lands that REDD considers most threatened.

The report on the funding for these projects originating in the US, and many similarly destructive projects within our borders, an intensified movement is needed here in the belly of the beast.

One of the main tenets of Climate Justice is that change comes from the grassroots. Solutions to the climate crisis must come from communities on the frontlines who are fighting the fossil fuel industry and who are already feeling the impacts of industrial development and climate change. There are several smaller, environmental justice and indigenous-led groups in the US that are doing great work around issues. What is missing here is broader support of these groups and cross-issue movement building.

With the anti-capitalist movement’s tendency toward theorizing and critiquing, good boards are often get overlooked. The official consensus that the grassroots.

If we are serious about making change, and serious about the fact that meaningful change happens when communities come together to solve their own problems, then we need to get off our asses, out of our cultural and ideological ghettoes, and onto the streets with regular people about our visions for a better future.

Momentum is already building. The direction that this momentum is directed will have a huge impact with who shows up to make shit happen. Right now, there are a lot more professionals than environmentalists showing up to climate debates than anti-authoritarians.

Now is the time to build bridges, to bring together communities and organizations, and campaigns to listen to each other and make space for many opinions and perspectives. At the same time, we must establish a baseline of demands that does not include a continuation of corporate control of the planet, and does include a respect for the rights and dignity of all people and species. Just a speculation that is doing great work The UN meetings in Copenhagen will be huge.

The Kyoto Protocol will probably have a mixed reception and the global community will need to get people to fly to Denmark to fill the streets outside the conference center (the indigenous people who have covered it, but to build this movement global and locally in the US a coalition of environmental justice, indigenous and anti-capitalist groups are coming together to mobilize for Climate Justice here, where so many global problems are rooted. The particular form this mobilization will take will be determined in coming months, with input and participation from many different groups. As this movement takes shape, we will need to come together across lines of race, class, education, culture and geography. We will need to meet each other, listen to each other, and exercise our power together in the streets. Earth Firsters have much to bring to this struggle, with a focus on biocentrism and a skill set of direct action strategy and tactics. Wherever the US action hubs end up being for the Mobilization for Climate Justice, I hope y’all will be there. When abitig is not organizing with Rising Tide, she enjoys getting to know the plants and mountains of Southern Appalachia.
The Role of High-Risk Situations

One of the most defendable roles for transient community members to fill are the riskier arrestable ones. The absence of common inhibitors, like a job and rent, enables the average traveler to jump into action worry-free. Anyone that has organized actions before knows that filling these roles is often tedious. Allowing local organizers to stay out of jail also helps out local campaigns drastically in the long run.

While most arrests result in small slaps on the wrist, the scumbags in blue can definitely escalate charges. This is where bond money comes in. What happens if one fronts money for a couple of comrades to get out of the slammer, and they don't get reimbursed? Even worse, what if someone signs for someone to get out, and that person just never appears in court? Now, you have a whole new situation on your hands.

Support throughout the winding maze of the judicial world is extremely important. Splitting town, then planning on showing up to court later, can really take away from possible empathetic support roles. While facing the peril of large fines, SLAPP suits, probation, grand juries, or the possibility of bail or prison time, having someone help your back really helps. Going into actions as a team and feeling the aftermath alone can be really confusing and sometimes detrimental to everyone involved.

Culture

Traveling to a new place often means navigating a different demographic of people. This can lead to culturally enriching experiences. For instance, learning stories of local indigenous people in central California or seeing how trans-friendly Philadelphia is can be eye-opening. Learning about new cultures can help identify new areas of interest. Additionally, for local organizers, it can provide a time to express how culturally unique your bioregion is.

Accepting Transience in the Movement

We need to think critically about our activism. New perspectives are perfect for this. We all have our own unique experiences. Sharing these experiences with each other is beneficial for all parties involved. What better way to bond than late night discussions about strategy with new comrades?

The capability to pass along skills to help others with their campaigns is incredibly empowering. Sharing the solutions we've helped develop can create a brighter future for someone else. As we all travel through life, we intersect at different points. These points can prove to be life changing, as we aid each other in developing solutions to the problems that we encounter.

Staying in one place, might make it seem as though we are part of a small, fragmented movement. Traveling and engaging in different campaigns helps us realize that we are indeed part of a very tightly-knit, widespread movement. Including ourselves in our perspectives of the wider movement helps us develop a better grasp on what we belong to. It's easy to feel alone when we've never seen the other amazing people from different bioregions that you're fighting with.

All things aside, that about the exuberant flood of fresh energy from wild-eyed travelers? When local energy begins to slip, a fiery traveler ready to throw down can really boost group morale. Campaign work and organizing sometimes become routine and monotonous. A new persyn falling in love with a campaign after traveling from across the country helps remind long-termers what they are fighting for. You'd be surprised how contagious and inspiring some people's energy can be.

A basic acknowledgement of transience in our movement is a must. Many communities fall short of this. Let's face it, nearly everywhere that activism and campaigning occur, an influx of new people appears at one time or another. Why push these people away and disregard them for the short time they're available? This is blatantly ignoring a piece of our culture. We are all fighting the same fight; let's do it together!
Planted Buckwheat, Coffee Berry

What you plant
in the slap and suck of a winter’s rain
is thick with rivers of orange roots.
Recognition lies in the fingertips,
placing saplings snug
in muddy syrups and waterfall soils.
Persistence is rich.
Leaves draw nour (oots:
in the slap and suck of a winter’s rain
in the dark
how we can walk, weighing the hours
between fruit and relief.
What you know; the sterile
sure sigatures scrawled
in the dark
that “this too shall pass”
Mama Nature has already paid the cost
And even though
she sometimes gets confused, lets go & loses control
She knows she’s Mama
She knows the Earth is her home
And these days
she’s spending all her time getting ready to stay ready
In anticipation of Man’s next display of foolishness
Regardless of whether we’re ready to accept the ramifications
Of humanity’s actions or inaction
Mama knows…she’s always known
In no uncertain terms…Earth is her Turf!!!
And it’s Nature’s Nature to always reclaim what’s hers
Mess with just one of her babies & even history won’t miss you &
There’s nothing worse than an angry Mother’s fury
Nature is
One of those over-protective kind of Mamas that almost never plays
A Mama that will always let you know
She would much rather hold you, but
if you push her too hard, she’ll fight
Think twice before you act unwisely
Unless
You think your conscience is strong enough to handle the loss
Cause when Nature takes, she takes it all
Big Mama’s (temp tantrum) have been known
To turn Heaven & Hell inside out before you can blink your eyes
So, while there’s still a chance
Find what’s left of common sense in your heart
Be an unswerving example of peace & harmony
Moving productively is gracefully through life like a Dewdrop
Or we’re gonna lose big time…this time we’re gonna lose it all
In the long run, this Old Gal always wins
That’s the way it’s always been
That’s the way the Story always go
She’s Mama… Big Mama
And Mother Nature is always lost!
—Steve Toth

This Beautiful Garden Planet

There must be more to life
than what’s lurking in our living room
So we step outside into the open
where birds are calling from their cores &
& trees are unspeakably taking part
People are always reaching for the impossible
& I’m no exception
Why am I always putting things into words
when nature specializes
in nonverbal communication?
As we’re weedding the garden on our knees
I can’t help but wonder
What if it turns out
that on this beautiful garden planet
it’s humans who are the real weeds?
—Steve Toth

Redding Town

On Cypress Avenue I watch for the ghosts
of Wintu women, with willow root baskets,
pine nut skirts, poles spread with the silver
skins and carmine flesh of drying salmon.
I spot them in a half-circle
along Churn Creek Road, near a deli.
They are watching a great-granddaughter
pump unloaded into her battered truck,
the power of Eagle dangling
from her rearview.
I wonder if their baskets hold blackbird
feathers, salmon bones, the future.
—Susan Kelly-DeWitt

It all began with little drop of Dew
As stupidity knocked down too many trees
And the Rain ran away
When the Clouds disappeared
And arrogance lost its mind
Next, some big money Jerks come pay an unasked for visit
Covered the beauty of Creation’s Bounty with concrete.
And a heart broken Earth turned in on herself.
Brutally humiliated,
As she was forced to watch:
Flowers fade, the silent spaces where birds used to play &
Bumble Bees hooked on Pollen followed the flowers that got away
She sat, had to watch the Leaves fall to the ground
Feel the pain of seeing the plusthest of foliage get rotten & die
Mother Nature was “pissed” & she cried
Was furious, but she just cried
She ate the hate & got sick from the steady diet of disrespect
As she tried to be “cool” & get through this rerun cycle of strife
Still under our feet all kinds of little Critters witnessed
Strawberry Creek (like the Ohlone’s Mission Creek) being driven
Deeper underground looking for a safe place to hide
As sneaking greedy hypocrites worked hard at all pernicious Boo-hoo’d & tried to look like they were pushing tears aside
(To their own no treacherous handwork)
Then had the nerve to curse the desiccated blandness of the Land
And the Floods of madness
That brought about the nothingness of Drought
A soulless duplication of the dryness
Of Arrogance’s own lack of humanity & imagination
A continuous saga, a bankrupt drama
The archrhythmic Dance that collapsed from woebipping dollars
And in complete disregard of common sense.
Greed wrapped itself from head to foot
Masked the sterile suicidal shame in their own self pity
And were so unbelievably busy feeling sorry for themselves
That they completely lost sight
Of the fact that they were only a small part of life
They never even noticed
The resilient reapparance of the beauty of Clouds
Or that little ignored drop of Water
You know, the one that refused to give up the ghost
Mama’s stubborn little Dewdrop

Cute little thing jumped up & gave a tiny blade of thirsty Grass
Just the right amount of courage to break through the concrete
And remained as all again, “this too shall pass”
Mama Nature has already paid the cost
And even though
She sometimes gets confused, lets go & loses control
She knows she’s Mama
She knows the Earth is her home
And these days
she’s spending all her time getting ready to stay ready
In anticipation of Man’s next display of foolishness
Regardless of whether we’re ready to accept the ramifications
Of humanity’s actions or inaction
Mama knows…she’s always known
In no uncertain terms…Earth is her Turf!!!
And it’s Nature’s Nature to always reclaim what’s hers
Mess with just one of her babies & even history won’t miss you &
There’s nothing worse than an angry Mother’s fury
Nature is
One of those over-protective kind of Mamas that almost never plays
A Mama that will always let you know
She would much rather hold you, but
if you push her too hard, she’ll fight
Think twice before you act unwisely
Unless
You think your conscience is strong enough to handle the loss
Cause when Nature takes, she takes it all
Big Mama’s (temp tantrum) have been known
To turn Heaven & Hell inside out before you can blink your eyes
So, while there’s still a chance
Find what’s left of common sense in your heart
Be an unswerving example of peace & harmony
Moving productively is gracefully through life like a Dewdrop
Or we’re gonna lose big time…this time we’re gonna lose it all
In the long run, this Old Gal always wins
That’s the way it’s always been
That’s the way the Story always go
She’s Mama… Big Mama
And Mother Nature is always lost!
—Avotja

Send poems to
Warrior Poets Society
P.O. Box 115601
Berkeley, CA
94712-5501

Page 24 Earth First! Brigade 2009
A CANADIAN COLLECTIVE UNITES RADICAL MOVEMENTS

BY LEAH


Roughly 200 pages of articles, interviews, book reviews, and letters that read like mini-essays, Upping The Anti (UTA) leans heavily on all things within the radical left. The last two issues of the publication also include a number of essays about the student activist movement in Canada and the US, where you can learn that the group, Platypus, is taking over. This is a collection of writings that is not primarily for an Earth First! audience, but by no means is it a collection to be ignored.

With many books sent our way, it is at times hard to find ones that are worth highlighting from an EF perspective, due to the general anti-conservation and “greenwash­ing” books that arrive that are irrelevant to our movement. UTA gives folks the opportunity to tap into movements and writings that come from the hearts of various campaigns. What I enjoyed the most was consistently experiencing each author’s fervor and conviction.

The latest release, number seven, included multiple articles on indigenous struggles. After reading the article, “Declaring the Emergency: Civil Action Direct Action, Nations, and the Struggle in Brantford,” the comparison between the arrests and oppression of the Six Nations people to those targeted in the Green Scare—as well as the arrests dur­ing the 2008 Republican National Convention—appeared more obviously.

The article discussed the possible victories in the campaign for Six Nations people to re­claim land that is subjected to development, as well as those lands that are already devel­oped. It also calls for an increase in the use of blockades, one of their main tactics.

Each issue of UTA allows its contributing writers to fully present their topic, a luxury lost to smaller journals. This month, May 2008’s release of UTA number six included the article, “The Green Scare is Everywhere,” a concise pres­entation and topic that most certainly de­serves a spotlight from a wider audience outside of our own. The article points out an important fact that all activists organiz­ing, called “America versus Nature” to know and un­derstand: Based on Operation Backfire and the Green Scare, the activities of all “activists can and will be used against other left groups that challenge capital and state.”

In the latest release, an article calling for positive female representation from the hip­hop community was submitted as a letter response to an interview with M-I of Dead Prez (UTA number six). The interview in­cluded questions I would want to ask the rapper himself, such as the chance with a letter response that complemented much of M-I’s points. The rapper discusses going to college, getting turned off by what he could lead to and getting into organizing, because the “US government-funded education system was preparing us to go out into the world with the skills for capitalist exploitation.”

Upping The Anti seems similar to the Cri­mefilkic magazine, Rolling Thunder, in its criticism and analysis of theory and action, though UTA has a greater “radical left” wingspan of activists and organizers.

The editorial in number seven was a rough start, filled with too much cross-sectioning and intellectual politics, though it obvi­ously came from a well-read perspective. I commend those who write, read and dis­cuss all the dissection of the world. Still, I mostly wonder why there aren’t more strong-standing collectives building on our experiences, taking action and implement­ing alternatives, rather than so much talk of theory. The editorial is well written in a way that is critical of today’s widely read theoretical authors, such as Zerzan, Derrick Jensen, Naomi Klein and George Monbiot. I enjoyed parts of the anonymous editorial, in particular the short analysis on politics.

Released twice a year, UTA is a journal of submissions to a pan-Canadian editorial collective based out of Toronto. It is on the shelves for $10. If you want five or more copies for distribution, the journal is $5 a copy, and they will cover the postage. New articles will be uploaded to their website over the next few months. If you would like to find out about submitting to the collec­tive, visit www.uppingtheanti.org.

Vengeful Animals Are Getting Even

BY KENT MACDOUGALL

The animals are angry—and they’re fighting back. From China, where six black bears who were kept in cramped, crushing “ex­traction cages” to have their bile painfully removed via surgical extraction process, got up on their keeper and ate him, to Uganda, where baboons avenged the death of a troop member by ambush­ing the guilty farmer and tear­ing out his heart, to the US, where a Siberian tiger leapt from its zoo enclosure and killed a visitor seen taunting it, animals are rising up in rebellion against their human oppressors.

Far from isolated acts of re­venge limited to fierce animals with sharp teeth and claws, these three incidents are part and parcel of a worldwide upsurge in resistance to tyrannical civilization by representatives spanning nearly the entire spec­trum of the animal kingdom.

Insects are among those retai­ling for human deprivations. Last month, the Chompants of Mexico, honeybees who were provoked when a stray bullet from an open-air pol­ice station through their window swarmed the range and sent 20 cops to the hospital, many in serious condition with stings over much of their bodies.

Hostile interactions between wildlife and humans have be­come increasingly common just about everywhere, as hu­man populations mushroom and “development” encroaches on once-undisturbed habitats. Attacks to large carnivores multi­plied in India’s northeastern Assam state, as deforestation re­duces monkeys, leopards, tigers and elephants to homelessness, driving them onto farms and into villages. Hunger has over­ridden the instinct of Indian wolves to avoid humans, impelling them to attack and carry off small children.

In Borneo, the poaching of Royal Bengal tigers has taught them to consider humans as a legitimate meal. One tiger killed 22 people. Primates turned into bush meat in equatorial Africa don’t willingly sacrifice their lives in order to transmit their simian impressions to their human executors, who in turn pass on HIV and AIDS to others.

And, so it goes wherever ani­mals are being oppressed—that is, just about everywhere. The individual and group actions of self-defense, resistance and revolt described in this article comprise only a small sample of the guerrilla skirmishes being fought wherever capaci­tous hyper-industrialized civilization has taken over and is exploiting spec­ies. Animal rights activists can take heart that the victims they seek to liberate are increasingly fighting to liberate themselves.

Intensifying the joint liberation struggle can only benefit all spe­cies, humans included.

Fishermen who favor the rel­ative safety of a boat while aiming to kill top predators of the sea aren’t immune to wrathful resis­tance either. In 2000, a 10-foot-long swordfish hooked off Mexico’s Pacific coast leapt into a lone fisherman’s boat and thrust its spear all the way through his fisherman’s abdomen, pinning him to the side of the boat. The fisherman lay there helpless for two days while his boat drifted, until he was spotted by another boat and rescued. Likewise, in 2006, off the coast of Bengal­da, a blue marlin vaulted across the stern of a boat and impaled an angler.

And, so it goes wherever ani­mals are being oppressed—that is, just about everywhere. The individual and group actions of self-defense, resistance and revolt described in this article comprise only a small sample of the guerrilla skirmishes being fought wherever capaci­tous hyper-industrialized civilization has taken over and is exploiting spec­ies. Animal rights activists can take heart that the victims they seek to liberate are increasingly fighting to liberate themselves.

Intensifying the joint liberation struggle can only benefit all spe­cies, humans included.

Kent MacDougall is a retired newspaper reporter and journal­ist-photographer who sticks Zerzan’s Fall 1996 Wild Earth story, “Humans as Cancer.” He can be contacted at kentmacd@berkeley.edu.

January-February 2009 Earth First! Page 25
my profile is set to private

BY SACRAMENTO PRISONER SUPPORT

MySpace is a networking website with more than 100 million members. Users create detailed profiles to communicate and share information with others. In addition to the commercial, social and political uses of MySpace, it is a searchable, public archive of images, affiliations and written exchanges, offering detectives raw data on 70 million potential suspects, witnesses or victims. It gives the government access to information about millions of people that it would never have the time or resources to acquire on its own. MySpace also mitigates the scandal associated with the exposure of massive surveillance programs, because the subjects of the program are neutral people that produce and disseminate them.

In Jeremy Jenson's police policy, MySpace indicates that it records user Internet Protocol (IP) addresses for "security and marketing purposes." Their privacy policy further states that the company will provide a use specific information if merely requested by law enforcement—even if it's not required by law—and that it will provide information to a third party if they think it is necessary to protect "the public." According to Newsweek magazine, "a 20 members, 'round-the-clock law enforcement team fields 350 calls a week from its rolodex of nearly 800 agencies, helping them surf the site.... Communication between cops and [MySpace] has surged this year, with MySpace now contributing to about 150 investigations a month." The same Newsweek article stated that "under Justice Department guidelines, anything posted online is fair game." MySpace ought to be familiar to Justice Department guidelines, since they hired former federal prosecutor Hemamshu Nigan to monitor the site.

In January 2008, MySpace made an agreement with 50 Attorneys General, promising to "enhance the ability of law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute Internet crimes" and to develop "identity verification technology" for the site. Besides the public goal of prosecuting Internet crimes, law enforcement also uses MySpace data to map and analyze political movements and subcultures. In their 2005 ethnography of anarchists in St. Louis, "Terrorism."

Police officer Chuck Tilby and professor Randy Borum state that "the government was monitoring the MySpace accounts of Jenson and Weiner. (McDavid did not have one.) The informant had a MySpace account that she continued to log on to after her arrest, and FBI case agent Nason Walker had a MySpace account he used regularly. In the discovery process, the government turned over printed copies of Jenson and Weiner's MySpace accounts that included all of their blog posts, comments and friends. The criminal complaint that charged the three with "conspiring to damage or destroy certain property by explosive or fire" referred to the government's MySpace account and quoted from it extensively."

In February 2006, Jenson asked Weiner, "Is MySpace LiveJournal accounts were referenced frequently. The prosecutor announced that, in Jenson's MySpace page, he said he was a "ninja" and an "assas-" Thus proving that he was too dangerous to release on bail. The prosecutor used the information retrieved from Jenson's MySpace account to argue he had no evidence and no ties to a particular geographic community. The judge, therefore, posed a "flight risk." Because decisions are made at bail hearings based on a lower standard of proof, this "evidence" was accepted.

In the case of US v. Eric McDavid et al., MySpace and his co-defendants, Zachary Jenson and Lauren Weiner, were arrested and branded as eco-terrorists due to the efforts of an FBI informant. The informant traveled to groupings and protests from 2003 to 2005, trying to gather information and encourage attendees to break the law. According to FBI agent Nason Walker, "The information she has provided has been utilized in at least 12 separate anarchist cases." McDavid, Jenson and Weiner knew the informant, "Anna," for one and a half years prior to their arrests. After the three were arrested, it came out that Jenson's MySpace account and quoted from it extensively. Thus proving that he was too dangerous to release on bail. The prosecutor used the information retrieved from Jenson's MySpace account to argue he had no evidence and no ties to a particular geographic community. The judge, therefore, posed a "flight risk." Because decisions are made at bail hearings based on a lower standard of proof, this "evidence" was accepted.
Dear EF Lawyer,

A lot of my friends partook in a lockdown this summer. As a result of that, some of them may be facing varying degrees of charges and repercussions. The most disconcerting issue of all is the possibility of paying restitution fees. Some of the particular questions are: Can institutions garnish my wages?

How will this interfere with owning vehicles or, say, land? In a nutshell, how far can companies go to get their money? Is it realistic to float through life, middle fingers in the air, or is it all eventually going to catch up with us? Looking forward to your response!

Sincerely,

—Helia Hatin

BY STU SUGARMAN

Dear Helia,

Thanks for asking this question! Most people can get too distracted by the possible sentence and forget that a restitution order may be imposed, as well. For these people, restitution is the kind of thing that bites them in the butt at the end of the case. The relief of learning that they are facing a lesser custodial time than they had thought is immediately dissolved by feelings of rage at having to actually pay the evil-doer money. I'm glad your friends are thinking of restitution and what effect that might have on them.

Restitution happens when someone is convicted of a crime, and the court finds that person caused an entity or person to suffer some damage or loss that is easily calculated in terms of money. The court can order the defendant to pay that money back, in addition to any other sentence.

All of my advice is based on my experience in the Oregon state and federal court systems. Your state might be different, but the federal laws and general concepts I discuss are likely applicable to the courts in other states and consistent throughout the country.

Before I get to the questions you ask, here's a little about courts and restitution, focusing on the relatively small restitution order that might follow a lockdown (as opposed to, for example, the destruction of a group of houses, a research laboratory or a group of SUVs). The highest restitution demand I've ever seen for a lockdown was $8,000 against Tre Arrow when he occupied a lodge over the entrance of the building housing the Forest Service's Region 6 Headquarters. We fought that, and the court awarded restitution of only $500. Other than that bill, I've only seen restitution amounts well under $1,000 for lockdowns.

The burden is on the government to ensure that the court orders restitution within a certain time after sentencing. (In Oregon state court, the time limit is 90 days.) The defense normally will reserve the right to fight any restitution amount and conduct its own investigation into what the true amount, if anything, should be. I strongly recommend that you do this, because we can often reduce, if not eliminate, the restitution number. If the court does order restitution, that amount becomes a monetary judgment against the defendant.

The restitution figure is not intended to cover the entire loss in every case. For example, the cost to a person or company of repairing a damaged fence, to replace a vehicle or to pay medical bills caused by injuring someone are recoverable as part of a restitution claim. However, the time limit for filing the amount of the claim, filling out forms to make the claim, and the cost of going to court to talk to a judge or prosecutor are not compensable as restitution. Restitution only covers the cost of replacing or repairing what was damaged or lost in the incident.

The restitution order must be based on evidence that is sufficient enough to prevail in a civil case. Thus, the evidence must be adequate to prove that, more likely than not, the company suffered this damage to its property. Sometimes, companies just send a short note to the prosecutor listing the figure they say the defendant cost them, but with no written information to back up that figure. In such cases, the court should order no restitution at all.

If the defendant gets a probationary sentence, the judge will require the defendant to pay any restitution as a condition of probation. If the convicted person makes an insufficient attempt to pay the restitution before the end of probation, the judge could order that person to serve jail time for a probation violation. Of course, your lawyer will know best what your judge might or might not do.

If you are sentenced to serve more than 12 months in custody, the judge and parole officer are likely to care only whether you make an honest effort to pay the restitution. If the restitution number is sky high, you very likely won’t be sent to jail for failing to pay off the entire amount before probation or parole ends.

Your lack of ability to pay restitution may be a factor in your state. Being unable to pay may be used to bar you from obtaining your driver’s license or to a new job or another asset you possess, or a group of houses, a research laboratory although the law opposes to, for example, the destruction count and any other asset you possess, or a group of houses, a research laboratory although the law opposes to, for example, the destruction count and any other asset you possess,

You are the defendant and the government is the plaintiff. The government must show that you have the ability to pay it, and it will seize your wages if necessary. Before garnishing your wages, the government will try to exhaust other sources of funds, such as welfare or unemployment benefits, any other wage or bank or other asset you possess.

Judge, your judgment against you. In Oregon, but that law changed so that now, lack of ability to pay is not relevant to deciding what the restitution amount should be. In federal court everywhere in the US, your lack of ability to pay will not be a factor in deciding the amount of restitution you will be ordered to pay.

Now, let’s discuss your questions. Yes, institutions (such as the government or a corporation) can garnish your wages if they have a judgment against you. In Oregon, they can take up to 25 percent of each paycheck until your debt is satisfied. They can also go after your savings account and any other asset you possess, although the law will protect some assets you have from a creditor’s claim.

There is good news here, though, because it is the government, not the institution, which has the restitution judgment against you. The government is not as likely to garnish your wages to satisfy a restitution claim as an institution, because governments tend to have too many other, higher priorities—such as cases when the government gets to keep the money it garnishes instead of turning it over to a company or person.

If a judgment for restitution is entered against you, you should expect that it will hurt your credit rating until it is paid off. That will limit your ability to get nearly any form of loan for a house, car or anything else. The mortgage lender may also require that you pay off the judgment (or at least put it in an escrow account created by the mortgage lender) before loaning you any money, so as to avoid fighting with another creditor over the money. The government would hold that money and would return it to you when you had repaid the loan, or would return it to you or the government when a judge ruled one way or the other whose money it is.

Many people who are ordered to pay restitution never pay it. However, these people tend to be too poor to even care about a credit rating. If you want to own a house or a new car some day, but won’t be rich enough to own one outright without a loan, you will almost certainly need to pay the restitution amount. However, since only the government can go after your property and wages pursuant to a restitution order, and the government is less likely to collect the monetary judgment than an institution, you may be able to avoid debt collection efforts such as garnishment of property. Of course, the institution could then sue you in civil court for damage done. If you lose a monetary judgment in that case, the institution itself could become your judgment creditor, and it could then garnish you itself.

Do you have a legal question? Contact Stu Sugarmann, quirote516@yahoo.com. Please write “Dear EF Lawyer” in the subject line.
The following list is a small sample of the total number of political prisoners and prisoner support groups worldwide. The regulations for prisoners vary according to individual states. Before sending monetary donations, stamps, books or packages, ask prisoners what the regulations are. Assume that the authorities read everything you write to a prisoner. When prisoners are awaiting trial or sentencing, it is best not to discuss their cases or related topics with them. Although some prisoners may wish to talk about their cases, they must be instructed to write separately. Prisoners can obtain a discounted subscription to the EJF Journal by sending a check for 10-42 stamps to POB 3023, Tucson, AZ 85702. Individuals who want to sponsor a prisoner’s subscription should send $20 to the same address.

Prisoner and Legal Updates

- Vaggelis Botzatzis was released from jail, awaiting trial in Greece for the alleged arson of a bank, a car dealership and two cars owned by an energy company.
- Dean Cain, WJ4308, and Luke Stowe, WJ4308, HMP Lincoln, Greethell Rd, Lincoln, LN2 4BD, UK. Awaiting trial on three charges related to interfering with animal research on farm.
- Julien Coupaut, N° d’Ecou 290173, 42 Rue de la Santé, 75014 Paris, France. Awaiting trial on charges of sabotaging a high-speed train line in France.
- Bradley Crowder, Sherburne County Jail, 13880 Highway 10, 13880 Business Center Dr, Elk River, MN 55330, USA. Awaiting trial on charges of constructing and possessing Molotov cocktails at the Republican National Convention (RNC).
- Matt DePalma, Sherburne County Jail, 13880 Highway 10, 13880 Business Center Dr, Elk River, MN 55330, USA. Plead guilty to unlawful possession of destructive devices at the RNC. He is awaiting sentencing.
- Francesco Giorla, Casa Penale, Via Lamaccio 1, 67039 Sulmona (AQ), Italy. Moved to the above address. Awaiting trial for allegedly using explosives to damage power lines. Giorla is a member of Il Silvestre, an Italian eco-anarchist group and frequent target of state repression.
- Paola Gori has been released from jail, and is on house arrest. Awaiting trial for alleged involvement in a conspiracy to rob a post office. Gori is a member of Il Silvestre.
- John Graham, Pennington County Jail, 300 W. 6th St, Rapid City, SD 57701, USA. Awaiting trial on murder charges. Graham was framed by the FBI for the 1975 murder of fellow American Indian Movement (AIM) activist Anna Mae Pictou Aquash.
- Eric McDaid, #16209-053, FCI Victorville Medium II, POB 3300, Adelanto, CA 92301, USA. PO Box has changed. Serving 19.5 years for conspiracy to destroy the US Forest Service’s Institute of Forest Genetics, a cell-phone tower and power plants. For more information, visit www.supporteric.org.
- Daniel McGowan, #63794-053, Currently in transit, USA. McGowan is being moved around, presumably to attend more hearings. Serving seven years for Earth Liberation Front (ELF) arson at a lumber company and a hybrid poplar farm. For more information, visit www.supportdaniel.org.
- Rev. Edward Pinkney #294671, Pugsley Correctional Facility, 7401 East Walton Rd, Battle Creek, MI 49015, USA. Awaiting trial for the above address. Serving three to ten years for “threatening” a judge in court by quoting The Bible. Pinkney has been the cornerstone of a campaign to prevent a resort from being built in a park in low-income Benton Harbor, Michigan.
- Andrew Stephanoup, #26399-050, USP Marion, POB 100 Marion, IL 62959, USA. Moved to the above address. Serving three years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). For more information, visit www.andystephanopan.com.

Awaiting sentencing for committing arson, committing aggravated arson and conspiracy to commit arson in connection with a series of ELF actions targeting genetic engineering and development. Mason is expected to be sentenced to 15-20 years. For more information, visit www.freemason.org. Heath Nicolas, VM4859, HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3JZ, UK. On trial at press time. Plead not guilty for conspiracy to blackmail a male prison guard linked to the vivisection industry.
- Donald Currie, A3660AA, HMP Parkhurst, Clissold Rd, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NQ, UK. Serving an “indefinite sentence” of at least six years—with no fixed release date or upper limit—for arson against targets linked to the vivisection industry.
- Lauren Gazzola, #3497-011, FCI Danbury, RTE 37, Danbury, CT 06811, USA. Serving 4.5 years for conspiracy charges stemming from her work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.supportlauren.com.
- Josh Harper, #92429-086, FCI Sheridan, POB 5000, Sheridan, OR 97378, USA. Serving three years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.supportjosh.org.
- Kevin Knauss, #3502-011, Unit L, FCI Sandstone, POB 1000, Sandstone, MN 55072, USA. Serving 4.5 years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.supportkevin.com.
- John Smith, TB4887, HMP Lindholme, Bawtry Road, Hatfield Woodhouse, Doncaster, DN7 6EY, UK. Serving 12 years for attempting to blackmail a farmer who supplied pigs for vivisection.
- Sarah Whitehead, VM7684, HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Rd, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3JZ, UK. Serving 15 months for burglary charges after reforming an abused beagle from a dangerous home and nine additional months from a parking violation. Whitehead is accused of stealing more than 100 animals from a pet breeder who was later prosecuted for animal abuse. For more information, visit www.myspace.com/supportsarahs.

Animal Liberation

- Jon Ablewhite, TB4885, and Kerry Whitburn, TB4886, HMP Lowdham Grange, Lowdham, Nottingham, NG14 7DA, UK. Serving 12 years for conspiracy to blackmail a supplier of guinea pigs for vivisection.
- Jacob Cornby, #39510-011, FCI Victorville Medium I, POB 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301, USA. Serving four years for conspiracy charges stemming from his work with SHAC. For more information, visit www.freemason.org.
- Donald Curtis, A3660AA, HMP Parkhurst, Clissold Rd, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NQ, UK. Serving an “indefinite sentence” of at least six years—with no fixed release date or upper limit—for arson against targets linked to the vivisection industry.
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Ecodefense

- Andrew Arana, 70936-065, FCI Herlong, POB 800, Herlong, CA 96113, USA. Serving 6.5 years for two counts of arson for burning logging trucks, and a sand and gravel company. Signed a plea agreement, Arrow will receive credit for time served since March 2004 in Canadian and US jails, leaving less than two years in his sentence. For more information, visit www.treatrow.org.
Announcements

Earth First! Roadshow
Winter-Summer 2009

The Earth First! Roadshow is going to be sweeping the nation late this Winter and we want all of our readers, campaigners, organizers, listeners and bystanders to come out and support the Earth First! movement — present and looming future. The EF Roadshow promises to be a fun-filled, educational, and sometimes spine-tingling event that hopes to rekindle the embers of old Earth Firsters and set about new fires in those who may not know how pertinent our movement is to defending all things wild.

The Earth First! movement has made a significant impact on those who are threatening our Earth and all her beings. Even so, much work remains to be done.

For dates, information and to learn how you can help, visit www.earthfirstroadshow.wordpress.com.

Black Mesa and Work Camp News
Any time of year, especially Winter

The residents of the Big Mountain region of Black Mesa need your support. We are at a critical juncture and must take a stand in support of communities on the frontlines of resistance in the fight against the extraction of their land.

Marco Camenisch, Postfacial 3143, CH-8105 Regensdorf, Switzerland. Serving 18 years for using explosives to target nuclear facilities and landmines, Marco was also an alleged murder of a Swiss border guard. Camenisch reads French, German, Spanish and Italian fluently, as well as some English.

"Jeffrey "Free" Luers, #13797671, Columbia River Correctional Institution, 9111 NE Sunderland Drive, Portland, OR 97211, USA. Serving 10 years for a hybrid poplar farm. We are writing to let you know that Jeffrey is preparing to be released in 2015.

"Olga Aleksandrovna Nevskaya, Ul163/5, 7 Otryad, pos. Dzerzhinsk, Mozhaysk 140090 Moscow oblast, Russia. Eco-activist serving 6 years for animal liberation and for attempting to assault an oil truck. For more information, visit www.freefreeenow.org.

Briana Waters, #36432-086, FCI Danbury, Route 37, Danbury, CT 08811, USA. Serving six years for the ELF arson of the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture. Waters insists she was not there. For more information, visit www.supportbriana.org.

Joyanna "Sadie" Zacher, #36436-086, FCI Dublin, Camp Parks, Unit E, 701 St 8th, Dublin, CA 94568, USA. Serving nearly eight years for ELF arsons at an SUV dealership and a hybrid poplar farm.

Indigenous Resistance

Byron Shane of Chubbuck's Clan, #70909-051, FCI Tahaltahse, 301 Capital Circle NE, Tahaltahse, FL 32901, USA. Serving 80 years for aggravated assault of federal agents, escape and bank robbery. "Oso Blanco" flamed his crews of prison guards. For more information, visit www.freedom.org.

Other Political Prisoners

Roderick Coronado, #30895-000, FCI El Reno, POB 1500, El Reno, OK 73066, USA. Serving one year for distribution of information related to the assembly of explosives and weapons. For more information, visit www.earthfirst.org/otherpolitical/

Lincoln Henry Frittelli, #89637-132, USP Lewisburg, POB 1000, Lewisburg, PA 17837, USA. Peltier, an APL activist, was serving life in prison after being framed for the deaths of two FBI agents killed during the 1975 Pine Ridge siege. For more information, visit www.freedom.org.

MOVE

Militant, the MOVE 9, members of an eco-revolutionary group, were framed for the murder of a cop and sentenced to 30-100 years each. For more information, visit www.onamovemovement.org.

William Phillips Africa, #A49594, and Delbert Orr Africa, #A440985, SCI Dallas, Follies Rd, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, USA.

William Phillips Africa, #A49594, and Delbert Orr Africa, #A440985, SCI Dallas, Follies Rd, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, USA.

Other Political Prisoners

Roderick Coronado, #30895-000, FCI El Reno, POB 1500, El Reno, OK 73066, USA. Serving one year for distribution of information related to the assembly of explosives and weapons. For more information, visit www.earthfirst.org/otherpolitical/

Lincoln Henry Frittelli, #89637-132, USP Lewisburg, POB 1000, Lewisburg, PA 17837, USA. Peltier, an APL activist, was serving life in prison after being framed for the deaths of two FBI agents killed during the 1975 Pine Ridge siege. For more information, visit www.freedom.org.

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William Phillips Africa, #A49594, and Delbert Orr Africa, #A440985, SCI Dallas, Follies Rd, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, USA.
"I spent a year in the Northwoods of Wisconsin at an outdoor school. It was not a survival school, because I died. I died to my old way of thinking. I died to being egocentric. I died to the pursuit of the civilized lifeway. I became alive to many other things—became alive to the Circle. I became alive to the native lifeway. I became alive to the connectedness of all things. I became alive to trusting, being and the now. My heart is full. I have much to share, more than words can say."

—Coyote Three Feathers aka John Herron
(Wilderness Guide Program 2004-2005)

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The type of death we're dancing with here is the fear of letting go—letting go of what we've been taught defines us, that which we are held most scared.

What are the definitions which define your reality?

What choices do they open before you?

And which are closed?

What undefined because of those choices?

What choices do they open before you?

Under whose discretion?

What if you held freedom?

—Thea McDaniel