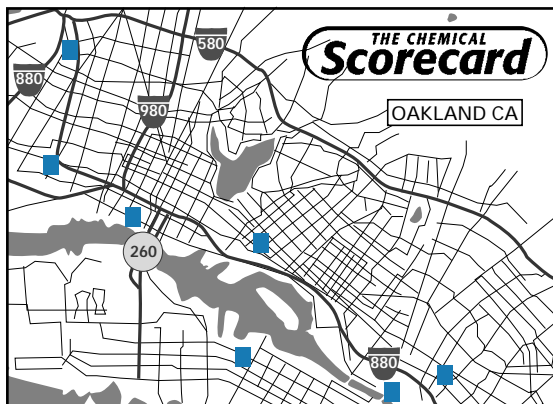


## Online "Chemical Scorecard" Puts Pollution on Display

A unique new Internet service launched by EDF allows anyone to enter a zip code and see a map highlighting local sources of pollution—and to send inquiries straight to those sources. The new EDF Chemical Scorecard is available at [www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org) and is free to all users.

The moment the Scorecard went online, it was being accessed at the rate of 60,000 inquiries an hour. Peter Jennings noted the launch on *World New Tonight*. Both ABC News and MSNBC linked their web sites directly to the Scorecard. During its first week online, it received more than two million hits.

"What could have taken hours, days, or weeks to dig out of massive government and university databases can now be obtained with a few clicks of a mouse," explained EDF toxicologist Dr. William Pease, who conceived and designed the



Scorecard users can call up local street maps on their computer screens, simply by typing in their zip code. They can then find out more by clicking on the facilities—represented here in color—that emit polluting chemicals.

Scorecard and directed its development. "All you need to know is your zip code."

The site contains full information on the health effects of thousands of polluting

chemicals, as well as instant rankings based on pollution loads and health hazards for 17,000 manufacturing facilities across the country. It identifies the individual chemicals involved, highlights the top-ranked hazards, and shows multi-year emission trends.

*Continued on page 5.*

### Press Reaction to the EDF Chemical Scorecard

"One of the most far-reaching marriages of computer technology and environmental activism yet."

— *San Jose Mercury News*

"It's an environmentalist's dream..."

— *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*

"This is a grand slam of a site for folks with an interest in toxic chemicals."

— *Seattle Times*

## 500,000 Acres Will Shield Waterways from Farm Runoff

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved plans, designed by the States of Minnesota and Illinois with EDF assistance, to restore up to 420,000 acres of wetlands, forests, and native grasses along the Minnesota and Illinois Rivers. Like a 100,000-acre program on the Chesapeake Bay that was also designed with EDF help, the new programs will pay farmers to retire flood-prone or eroding cropland along the rivers and to recreate natural buffer zones to prevent runoff of farm chemicals into the water.

The plans combine state funds with the \$2 billion annual Federal Conservation Reserve Program. EDF attorney Tim Searchinger first suggested this concept to the USDA in 1996 and worked closely with officials in Illinois, Maryland, and



Friends of the Minnesota Valley

Floodplain trees and grasses naturally filter sediment and fertilizer from flood waters and help support vast fisheries.

Minnesota to design the model plans now approved.

"Each plan will restore far more natural area around a river than any previous river restoration plan in the country," said Searchinger. "By comparison, the Kissimmee River project in Florida, often considered the largest river restoration plan in the U.S., will recreate 25,000 acres of wetlands."

### Restoring a River's Edge

The Minnesota and Illinois Rivers are part of the Mississippi River ecosystem, which extends into 40% of the United States and once overflowed into vast floodplains of forests, marshes, and backwater lakes. These floodplains filtered pollutants, served as spawning grounds for vast fisheries, and

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## Inside

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EDF's Chemical Scorecard makes the facts about local pollution as easy to get as a weather report—and publicizing pollution is the first step in preventing it.

### 4 The Highway Lobby Is Forced to Detour

The highway lobby sought to turn back the clock to the 1950's, but EDF and others managed to preserve key reforms in the Federal transportation bill.

### 6 Warrior For Change

International counsel Annie Petsonk works tirelessly for the environment.

### 7 Think Before You Buy

Prevent pollution and waste by purchasing wisely. Here's how.

## “Safe Harbor” Approach Gains Administration Support

The Safe Harbor conservation approach developed by EDF to help endangered species on private land is an important part of the Clean Water Action Plan proposed by President Clinton to



© Middleton/Littschwager 1994

*Under Safe Harbor agreements, Texas landowners are restoring habitat for endangered Attwater's prairie chickens.*

improve water quality in the nation's lakes, rivers, and streams, restore aquatic and riparian habitats, and further the goals of the Clean Water Act. Safe Harbor

encourages landowners to manage their land in ways that will benefit endangered species, in exchange for protection against added legal liability under the Endangered Species Act if the species increase.

The President also included \$5 million in his 1999 budget proposal to develop Safe Harbor agreements and help pay for the measures that participating landowners agree to take. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that 500 landowners will be covered by such agreements.

With support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and others, EDF designed and helped implement the nation's first Safe Harbor program and has advocated the broader use of this important new conservation tool. In North Carolina, more than 23,000 acres of habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker are now covered by Safe Harbor agreements. In Texas, landowners are restoring 16,500 acres for the endangered Attwater's prairie chicken. Also in Texas, the endangered Aplomado falcon is being re-introduced on more than one million acres of private lands, thanks in large part to Safe Harbor.

## Chinese Environmentalist Works as an Intern in Texas Office

Wen Bo, editor of the English edition of *China Environment News*, has worked in EDF's Texas office this spring as an environmental intern through the National Committee on US-China Relations. A dedicated environmental activist since high school and a charter member of Friends of Nature (China's first environmental group), Mr. Wen has aimed to learn how U.S. environmental groups work, acquire information he can use in his future work in China, and make contacts to help Chinese groups link with their U.S. counterparts.

Mr. Wen worked primarily with attorney Melinda Taylor, director of EDF's Ecosystem Restoration program, investigating pollution from the hog and poultry farming industries throughout the United



Molly Stevens

*Visiting the U.S. to study American methods of environmental advocacy, Chinese environmental editor Wen Bo interned at EDF's Texas office.*

States. He also worked with economist Dr. Peter Emerson, studying problems associated with pollution from shrimp farms on the Texas coast.

## EDF Members Help Advance California Sea Life Act

EDF activists were part of a broad coalition of sport and commercial fishing leaders and other environmentalists that helped build bipartisan support in the California Assembly for the Sea Life Recovery and Management Act. Letters and faxes from members of the EDF Action Network to key legislators helped move the bill through two committees and the Assembly as a whole.

The Act provides tools long advocated by EDF to restore declining fisheries and protect ocean habitats. It will benefit coastal tourism, sport and commercial fishing, ocean recreation, coastal residency, and consumers of California seafood. The Senate was considering the bill at press time.

To join the EDF Action Network, send your name, e-mail address, and address where you vote to [congress@edf.org](mailto:congress@edf.org), or go to [www.edf.org](http://www.edf.org) and click on *Want to Help?*

### Become an EDF Partner For the Environment



Each month hundreds of EDF Partners make a regular, scheduled gift from their credit card or checking account to support wildlife and the environment. Each monthly pledge is especially helpful because EDF can count on it in advance, and we save paper, postage, and check processing costs.

Please become our newest EDF Partner. Call the Membership office at 800-684-3322 today for more information.

## EDF Letter

Editor: Norma H. Watson  
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 ©1998 Environmental Defense Fund, Inc.  
 Published bimonthly at NY, NY ISSN 0163-2566  
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## Director's Message

### Information is Power

When Alexis de Tocqueville visited America more than 150 years ago, he was surprised at how often people banded together to solve problems. "Americans," he wrote, "are constantly forming associations." Today's environmental groups show that voluntary association is still a defining trait of our society. But problems now are more complex, and the information that local groups need is often filed away in distant government offices.



Fred Krupp

In the eight years since companies began disclosing information about many toxic chemical emissions under right-to-know laws, those emissions have dropped 45%. The laws never required companies to reduce the pollution, but clearly motivated them.

Still, the "right" to know about toxic chemicals in your community doesn't mean much unless you can easily find the facts. EDF's new Chemical Scorecard (*see story, page 1*) is a step toward making the data about local pollution as easy to get as the local weather report—and as much a part of people's everyday knowledge.

#### What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

The Chemical Scorecard also puts pollution facts in a human health context, showing what is known—and not known—about each chemical's effects on health. Sadly, the manufacturers of many chemicals have yet to conduct the needed health tests. EDF disclosed the scope of this problem in a recent report, *Toxic Ignorance*, and Vice President Gore announced last month that if companies do not conduct the needed tests voluntarily, EPA will require them to. When citizens and grassroots groups get the full facts on chemical releases and their health impacts, they will be more empowered to work with businesses to prevent pollution.

What the general store was to Tocqueville's America, the web sites and discussion groups of the Internet will be to the citizens of the 21st century—a place to share information, band together, and solve problems. This will breathe new life into democracy in America, and new strength into our shared environmental cause. With the Chemical Scorecard, we are thrilled to be stepping onto these uncharted shores.

*Fred Krupp*

## EDF Laments Death of Edward Lee Rogers

EDF lost a long-time friend and colleague in March when its first General Counsel, Edward Lee Rogers, was killed in an automobile accident in Virginia. Hired at the end of 1969 as EDF's second paid staff member, Rogers led much of EDF's litigation during the infancy of environmental law, including some of the earliest legal action to remove lead from gasoline and many water resource



Lee Rogers and his wife Ailene attended an EDF 30th anniversary party last summer.

cases seeking to protect free-flowing rivers from unnecessary dams and channels. He filed the action that helped halt the Cross Florida Barge Canal and ultimately led to the decision to restore the natural waterway.

"Lee had the courage and dedication to accept a position with EDF when our financial condition was so precarious that we could offer him no more than three months' salary," recalled founding trustee Dr. Charles F. Wurster. "He helped bridge a period when inactivity could have been the end of EDF, and his actions contributed to the needed momentum that brightened the future for EDF and environmental protection."

Known as a formidable litigator, Rogers continued to work on environmental issues throughout his career. He was assistant attorney general in the Maine Environmental Protection Division, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works with responsibility for Corps of Engineers water resource projects in the Carter administration, and was later in private practice.

## Plans Will Help Shield Rivers from Farm Pollution

*Continued from page 1.*

provided habitat for numerous songbirds, ducks, rare mussels, and the most diverse river life in the temperate world. But 75% to 95% of the floodplain on each major tributary and stretch of the main river has been converted for farmland, urban development, or navigation lakes behind dams.

"The Minnesota plan will turn the Minnesota River back into one of the few large rivers in the United States with an intact floodplain," Searchinger said. "The two plans will nearly double the floodplain habitat on the upper Mississippi River system," he added.

#### Roots Were in the 1996 Farm Bill

Congress created the Conservation Reserve Program in 1985, largely to reduce crop surpluses by allowing 10% of the country's cropland to lie fallow, but the cropland to be retired was chosen with limited regard to its environmental importance. Searchinger and others were instrumental in winning more environmental focus for the program in the 1996 Farm Bill. The new Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs focus on the most environmentally valuable lands, which are often the most marginal agriculturally.

Total costs of the Illinois and Minnesota plans will exceed \$800 million, with roughly 75% coming from Federal agriculture funds. State funds will help the farm-

ers replant forests and restore wetlands and will extend temporary Federal agreements into permanent conservation commitments for most of the restored lands.



Friends of the Minnesota Valley

*This natural floodplain, part of the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge near the Minnesota River's entry into the Mississippi, shows how most of the river's edge will look after completion of the Minnesota River Enhancement program.*

EDF executive director Fred Krupp praised Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman for approving the two programs. Krupp added, "Governor Arne Carlson of Minnesota and Governor Jim Edgar and Lieutenant Governor Bob Kustra of Illinois also deserve great credit for pursuing Enhancement Programs even before the Federal government had fully approved the idea."

EDF is now helping other states, including New York, North Carolina, Oregon, and Pennsylvania, to develop Enhancement Programs.

# The Highway Lobby Gets Detoured in Congress

By Michael Replogle, EDF's Federal Transportation Director in the Washington office.

Almost eight years ago, Congress passed and President Bush signed legislation that revolutionized Federal transportation priorities and funding. For the first time, transportation planners had to consider the environmental consequences of building new highways, and more “highway” funds could be spent on other options such as mass transit and bike paths. EDF helped lead that fight.

This year, as Congress debated the reauthorization of the law, the highway lobby turned out in force, clamoring to turn back the clock to the 1950's “build highways only” approach. EDF and others fought back, and won increased support for environmentally preferable transportation projects.

The reauthorized law preserves the key principles of the original law, linking transportation plans to their environmental consequences. It emphasizes maintenance of existing infrastructure and strengthens the role of local communities in decision-making. The national commitment to mass transit has actually increased, after a bruising battle in the Senate. Some areas will see new transit programs, thanks to efforts by Senators D'Amato (R-NY), Sarbanes (D-MD), and others.

## Highways, Smog, and Sprawl

The original 1991 law, known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA, pronounced “ice tea”) spawned many reforms that are making transportation planners more accountable for impacts such as increased smog and urban sprawl. This has forced policy makers to consider alternatives to “business-as-usual” road building.

Some members of Congress wanted to weaken this accountability and limit the requirement for public input on transportation projects and their alternatives. A solid coalition of environmentalists fought against these proposed restrictions on the use of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Air Act. Thanks to the leadership of Senators such as Chafee (R-RI), Lautenberg (D-NJ), Wyden (D-OR) and Graham (D-FL), the aggressive attacks were successfully blunted.

The reauthorized bill, ISTEA 2, has passed both the House and Senate, and final action is slated soon after we go to press. Important market-based reforms appear poised to gain in the final bill. Among these are programs such as “Transit



*Commuting to work in EDF's Washington office by bicycle and train, Michael Replogle uses the transportation alternatives he advocates.*

Check,” which would let companies offer mass-transit vouchers as an employee benefit as easily as they now offer “free” parking at work. Also likely are more programs that vary tolls on roads and bridges by time of day, reducing congestion by smoothing out peaks in traffic. ISTEA 2 will also provide new funding incentives for communities to collaborate on sustainable transportation strategies.

## The Pressure to Build

Unfortunately, ISTEA 2 also provides such a large increase in highway funding—about 40%—that systems for planning and accountability may be overwhelmed. The increased transportation dollars will clearly create pressure to build more roads, and, in the 18 states where the use of state gas tax funds is limited to highways, growing conflicts are likely over the effects of such

spending on sprawl development, air quality, equity, and the environment. More big new beltways will be built in the growing metropolitan regions of the South and West. A large increase in Congressionally designated “demonstration projects” also threatens citizen participation in local planning.

EDF and others will continue to press state and local agencies to consider alternatives to road building and widening and will spotlight the long-term effects of their transportation spending choices on the environment and health. Environmentalists will also make use of the yearly Federal appropriations process to limit environmental damage from new road funding.

## What Should the Gas Tax Support?

A proposal by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair Bud Shuster (R-PA), opposed by the Senate and the Administration, would give Federal gasoline tax revenues special treatment, allowing them to be spent only on transportation. This would lead to more road construction at the expense of environment, education, and other discretionary programs, and would hinder efforts to reduce the Federal deficit and taxes. According to a 1994 Congressional study, road users pay barely two-thirds of the cost of building and maintaining our nation's roads and impose large hidden pollution, health, and other costs on society. Taking transportation trust funds “off-budget” would likely exacerbate this problem.

Although we hope that many of its “pork” highway projects will not come to pass, on balance, ISTEA 2 deserves support. Despite the concerted efforts of the highway lobby, the key reforms won nearly eight years ago have been reaffirmed in 1998, with some small additional gains and only modest losses. We will need to work harder to limit future highway spending that threatens sound environmental policy. But ISTEA 2 shows that even in the 105th Congress, bills that are strong on the environment can prevail and become law, providing tools for more environmentally sound solutions to local problems.

## Chemical Scorecard

Continued from page 1.

By bringing up local street maps on the computer screen, the user can see the location of every facility reporting chemical emissions to air or water. A click on that spot on the map produces a report on the facility, including its rankings compared with all others in the same state and throughout the country. Special “take



Jason Grow/San Francisco Chronicle

EDF toxicologist Dr. William Pease and attorney David Roe are illuminated by the video projection of the Chemical Scorecard web page.

action” options allow users to send individualized letters by fax (for free and without leaving the screen) directly to officials of high-polluting facilities. They can also send e-mail to the head of U.S. EPA, get information on how to prevent pollution, and find names of groups already active in their area that they can contact or join.

With just a few clicks of the mouse, a visitor would find that, for the country as a whole:

- *dichloromethane* is the recognized carcinogen with the highest releases into the environment;
- *toluene* has the highest releases among toxic chemicals known to cause birth defects;
- for 81% of the chemicals being released to air, there is not enough information in the public record to assess their risks to human health;
- the two highest-volume polluting facilities in terms of total releases to the environment are Magnesium Corporation of America, in Rowley, Utah, and Asarco Inc., in East Helena, Montana.

“Putting this information to use is as important as getting it in the first place,” emphasized EDF attorney David Roe. “By itself it can’t tell any community whether the local pollution is safe or not. Answering the safety question takes specific information, locality by locality, about who’s actually being exposed to how much of which chemicals. We think that the companies responsible for the pollution should gather that information and pursue pollution prevention measures.”

## New Ads Urge Consumers to Prevent Waste

Expanding the focus of the national recycling ad campaign, EDF and The Advertising Council have created new public service messages on the need to prevent waste in the first place, by choosing reusable items over disposables and by avoiding excess packaging. The new ads are part of the EDF/Ad Council National Recycling Media Campaign, which began in 1988 with the slogan, *If You’re Not Recycling, You’re Throwing It All Away*. It shifted in 1994 to build consumer demand for recycled products and packaging, using messages such as *Complete the Circle: Buy Recycled*. Since 1988, the campaign has generated more than \$275 million worth of donated advertising.

The need for the new focus is clear. Although America’s recycling rate has grown dramatically since the campaign began, and the volume of recycled materials purchased by manufacturers and consumers has grown steadily as well, Americans still generate more trash per person than the citizens of any other developed country.

With the slogan *“Buy Smart. Waste Less. Save More.”* the new PSA’s emphasize the importance of preventing waste by thinking ahead when you buy. Waste prevention saves energy and natural resources as well as reducing the pollution that comes from manufacturing excess packaging and short-

### Enjoy a Sneak Preview of New Radio Ads

Be among the first to hear two of the entertaining new “Reduce-Reuse-Recycle” radio ads by calling this number from any touch-tone phone:

212-505-0606 Extension 321  
(Only through August 31, 1998)



Kenneth Chen

In new TV ads, actress Leanna Croom portrays a shopper oblivious to the fact that much of what she has purchased will end up in her trash can.

lived products. (See the article on page 7)

### TWO WAYS YOU CAN HELP

**1** EDF urgently needs member contributions to expand distribution of the new PSA’s to broadcasters and publishers. Please use the reply envelope facing this page to contribute generously. Each dollar you contribute to the cost of reproducing and distributing the ads can produce \$50 or more in donated ad time and space.

**2** Please call the Public Service Managers at your local newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations. Urge them to get the new “Reduce-Reuse-Recycle” public service ads from the Ad Council (1-800-933-PSAS) and to run the ads as often as they can.

## Market Forces Can Protect Texas Environment

Writing in the March issue of *Texas Water*



Pete Emerson

*Resources*, EDF economist Dr. Peter Emerson urges the use of incentive-based policies to protect the Texas environment. He discusses strategies such as tradable permits to reduce air and water pollution, water marketing to allocate and conserve water, and individual transferable quotas to deal with the problems of over-

fishing, and shows how these measures could be used to address environmental problems in Texas.

“Given an incentive to conserve, innovate, and trade, resource users and polluters will apply the basic economic insight that cooperation and efficiency make everyone better off to achieving important environmental goals,” writes Emerson.

The paper, “EDF Believes Market Forces Can Protect Texas’ Environment,” is available from the Texas Water Resources Institute (409-845-8571) and can be found online at [www.edf.org](http://www.edf.org).

# Annie Petsonk Heads Upstream for the Environment

As EDF's international counsel, Annie Petsonk works hard at hashing out global agreements on issues ranging from climate change to declining fisheries. Driven by two goals—to help people and to help the environment—Petsonk has not forgotten that her now-global interests first sprouted at a very local level.

"When I was a kid my family started skiing and built a little ski area on a local mountain in Pennsylvania," Petsonk recalls. The area, called Blue Knob, is still in business. During her childhood at Blue Knob, Petsonk camped in the woods and studied the area's wildlife. Her parents supported her interests and set an example by working on peace and social justice issues in their community.

While in high school, Petsonk volunteered at a Pennsylvania hospital and saw firsthand how pollution affected local residents. "The pathologist could tell where in the town a person had lived, depending on the color of the lung tissue. The closer the person lived to the railroad tracks where the coal trains went through, the blacker the lungs," she explains. "I began to see that protecting human health and protecting the environment are intimately related."

Petsonk majored in biology at The Colorado College and then worked at a nearby hospital where she became involved in health care planning. Among other work, she wrote applications for certificates of need, the documents that hospitals prepare to justify the purchase of new equipment and services. One day, someone said to her, "Isn't it nice the hospital has you to do this instead of having to pay a lawyer?" A light went on in her head, Petsonk recalls. "I'd never thought of law before, though some of my relatives were attorneys and one was a judge."

"That's when I really began to think about how to go upstream in protecting the environment and human health," Petsonk says. Her hazel eyes widen as she explains what she means by "upstream." In a story she often tells, a man tries frantically to rescue babies that are floating down a river's torrents—until a passerby interrupts the exhausted man and asks, "Why don't you go upstream and find out who's throwing them in?"

Petsonk's first stop upriver was Harvard Law School. She took on five clerkships during law school, focusing mostly on envi-

ronmental and health issues, and a sixth, immediately after graduation, with Judge Benjamin Kaplan on the Massachusetts Appeals Court. Soon after that, she joined a Denver law firm as a litigation associate specializing in environmental law.

## An Extended Safari

A year later, Petsonk and a few friends embarked on a two-week photo safari to Kenya. "I loved it so much I stayed four years," she recalls with a twinkle in her eye. She worked three years for the United Nations Environment Program in Nairobi, drafting, negotiating, and implementing treaties and other legal instruments, including the Montreal Protocol on the ozone layer. That work broadened her focus from domestic to global issues. Her aim, which a colleague says is "to design laws that countries will want to obey," began in Africa and continues today.

After Kenya, Petsonk joined the U.S. Department of Justice as a trial attorney. There she focused on such international issues as the environmental sidebar to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and international law on toxic chemicals, wildlife, and trade. In 1995, after five years at the Justice Department and a stint at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Petsonk joined EDF's staff.

Undoubtedly the greatest challenge in her three years at EDF has been the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. From 1995 until the Kyoto summit last December, Petsonk worked with other attorneys, economists, and scientists to develop the global emissions-trading plan that has already begun to spur competitive markets to reduce greenhouse gases. EDF attorney Joe Goffman, one of her teammates in this effort, says Petsonk was a stellar performer and leader at the Kyoto conference. "What puts Annie a cut above the rest," Goffman says, "is her ability to keep on top of an ever-changing flow of information and to keep in her mind a clear vision of the big strategic picture."

Goffman calls Petsonk "a warrior for change." This title seems especially poignant after the uphill battle at Kyoto.



T. Charles Erickson

*An avid kayaker, Annie Petsonk brings to skiing, running, rock-climbing, and other sports the same intensity that she brings to her international legal work.*

"Seven of the nine essential elements EDF sought in the Kyoto Protocol were included in the final text," Petsonk says proudly. But while she is happy with EDF's accomplishment, she says there's a long way to go before her work is done. Eliciting the support of Americans and their elected officials for the Kyoto treaty will be a daunting task, as will be garnering the support of many countries that have yet to sign the agreement. "If we delay," Petsonk warns, "we risk very serious disruption of the Earth's climate."

When she can break free from the rigors of international negotiations and the big picture, Petsonk heads outdoors. Depending on where she is, she enjoys kayaking, skiing, hiking, running, birding, and some rock-climbing. "One of the virtues of EDF's Washington, D.C., office is that it's about 20 minutes from the Potomac River," she says. "Although I am not nearly as good a kayaker as some of my colleagues at EDF, I have pretensions to be one day." That day will probably come soon, judging by Petsonk's knack for riding rough waters, both legislative and literal.

**By Howard Youth**

# An Ounce of Prevention: Think Ahead Before You Buy

By Roberta Desmond, EDF Public Service Director, who is working on the new EDF/Ad Council waste prevention campaign.

**R**ecycling has become an everyday habit for tens of millions of Americans. As a result, recycling has grown substantially over the last decade: from 11% to 27% of all municipal solid waste. Despite this success, however, Americans still generate too much waste. Every year, each of us discards nearly 1500 pounds of trash, most of which still goes to landfills and incinerators.

It's important to recycle more, of course, but there's an even more effective way to cut down on waste. Simply stated, prevent it. By not creating waste—in the form of unnecessary products or packaging—we not only avoid having to manage it later, we also avoid having to expend the energy, consume the natural resources, and create the pollution that comes from manufacturing it in the first place.

Waste prevention may be second nature to many environmentalists, but if we are to make it a national habit, we need to reach a much larger audience. New ads produced by EDF and The Advertising Council will help spread the word that waste prevention is all about purchasing wisely. These new TV, radio, newspaper, and magazine ads convey the smart shopping tips, "Reduce and Reuse."

## Think Reduce

When you reduce, you literally buy less of the things you don't need, like excess packaging. About \$1 of every \$10 we spend on food pays for packaging. Some packaging is unavoidable, but you can:

- Choose products with the least packaging, and thank store managers for stocking them.
- Buy whole fruits and vegetables to avoid the unnecessary trays and wraps.
- Buy the large or economy size (less packaging per pound of product).
- Buy concentrates (again, less packaging).
- When you have just an item or two, say, "No bag, thanks."

Reducing unnecessary purchases goes beyond packaging. A recent PBS special on overconsumption, *Affluenza*, suggests asking yourself a few questions before you buy

something: "Do I really need it? Could I borrow one from a friend or neighbor? Do I have something already that can do the same job?"

## Think Reuse

Although it may take more energy and natural resources to create a durable product than a disposable one, the durable product comes out ahead for the environment in the end, because it's used over and over. For example, using 1000 throwaway plastic teaspoons consumes over 10 times more energy and natural resources than making one stainless steel teaspoon and washing it 1000 times. It's better for your pocketbook, too, because the durable product costs less in the long run. Here are some other ways to reuse:

- Whenever you can, use durable items such as cups, plates, utensils, cloth napkins, sponges, and dishcloths.
- Look for products that are available in refillable packages.
- Reuse bags, containers, and other items.
- Maintain and repair durable products.
- Buy reusable alkaline batteries (with no toxic cadmium or mercury).
- Bring your own shopping bags to the store, or reuse theirs.
- Reuse grass clippings as fertilizer by leaving them on the lawn (using a mulching mower) or by adding them to your compost pile.

You can also sell or donate things you no longer need, instead of throwing them out.

## Preventing Waste at Work

Many people have even more opportunities to prevent waste at work or at school. For example:

- Use routing slips to share publications and documents rather than copying them.
- Print and copy on both sides of the page.
- Use electronic mail, and avoid printing your e-mail messages unless necessary.
- Install software for paperless faxing via your modem.
- Use spell-check and print-preview functions before printing a document.
- Submit office forms such as purchase orders and time sheets electronically.
- Use durable cups, glasses, plates, and utensils at work.
- Buy reliable, long-lasting equipment for your office.

Most of these steps not only help the environment, they save time and money, too.

## Environmental and Economic Benefits

When you use less and reuse more, you're helping the environment both "upstream" (when products are manufactured) and "downstream" (when they're disposed of).

Waste prevention reduces pollution from manufacturing and the need for energy and natural resources, such as oil, metals and minerals. Reducing the use of resources in turn minimizes the environmental impacts



*Using 1000 throwaway plastic teaspoons consumes over 10 times more energy and natural resources than making one stainless steel teaspoon and washing it 1000 times.*

of mining, drilling, processing, and transporting them.

Downstream, waste prevention reduces the need for landfills and incinerators and the pollution these types of facilities generate. Waste prevention is even better than recycling, because recycling still creates its share of environmental impacts, although less than manufacturing products from scratch and then disposing of them.

Environmental and economic benefits often go hand in hand, and waste prevention is a prime example. When you cut down on trash, you save money for your community by reducing the cost of waste collection and management. You also avoid the cost of replacing throwaway items over and over again.

So think ahead when you buy, and put "Reduce and Reuse" at the top of your shopping list. And remember, when you've done all you can to prevent waste in the first place, recycle what's left!



Roberta Desmond

# Brazil Pulls Out of Destructive Project in Wetlands

**B**razil's environmental agency, IBAMA, announced in March that it is dropping plans for a 2,100-mile shipping channel through the vast Pantanal wetlands. The Hidrovia Paraguay-Paraná Waterway project had threatened world-renowned critical habitats that are rich in biodiversity. Eduardo Martins, head of the Brazilian Federal Environmental Agency, said the Hidrovia project does not make strategic or economic sense and is unnecessary. Brazil will instead pursue navigation improvements and smaller-scale works that will not affect the Pantanal, he said.

The Pantanal wetlands are located on Brazil's southwestern border with Paraguay and Bolivia. They are habitat for an estimated 150,000 species of birds, plants, and animals, including the giant river otter, caiman, puma, and hyacinth macaw.

"This is a major step forward," said EDF scientist Deborah Moore, who leads EDF efforts to protect the Pantanal, working with more than 300 non-governmental groups in South and North America and Europe. EDF pressed the Inter-American Development Bank, the U.S. State Department, and others to abandon support for the project in favor of better, less harmful alternatives.

"The Brazilian government is taking a courageous step in publicly abandoning the worst aspects of the project," said Moore. "Other countries may still choose to do pieces of the project, but without Brazil's support it is essentially dead."

A key influence on this decision was a report by an independent panel of experts invited by EDF and Fundação CEBRAC, a Brazilian nonprofit group, to evaluate Hidrovia's environmental, social, and economic impacts. The panel found the engineering and economic feasibility studies and environmental assessment of the project "flawed and inadequate." It recommended alternatives to improve quality of life, transportation, and natural resource management in the region.

## Moore Named to New Commission on Dams

Noting that similar projects in the region have resulted in costly failures, the panel recommended greater use of independent expert reviews to improve the rigor and objectivity of project evaluations.



Cees Buys, The Netherlands

*Pantanal dwellers, like this Chamacoco woman doing her laundry in the Paraguay River, would have been adversely affected by the project.*

Along these lines, the World Bank and the World Conservation Union/IUCN have created the World Commission on Dams, an independent panel of experts to review the environmental, social, and economic impacts of large dams around the world. EDF's Moore is the only U.S. environmentalist named to the 12-member international Commission.

The Commission will assess alternatives for water and energy development, recommend guidelines for decommissioning and removing dams, and develop internationally accepted standards for

planning, managing, designing, and building dams.

"I hope the Commission's work will help build consensus out of dam controversies," Moore said. "Rather than repeating the same tired arguments, it's time to ask how we can better define a common ground. We need more rigorous investigation of the benefits and costs to society of dam projects. There are many worthy solutions that, if implemented, can end most conflicts and avoid the need for costly new dam and river development projects. The World Commission on Dams will elevate the debate over how the world will manage its scarce water resources into the next century."



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