



### Cutting trees at Scotsdale Farm

Angry neighbors of Scotsdale Farm at RR1, Georgetown, say cutting the farm's woodlots is destroying the scenic value of the woods and eroding a mature tree habitat for birds. But the Ontario Heritage Foundation, which runs the farm, says the cutting is part of a forestry management project being conducted along Niagara Escarpment woodlots as an example to other woodlot owners

that mature trees can be harvested without hurting the forest. The cut trees will be sold and profits used to help run the farm while cuttings and small branches from the trees will be piled up to create new habitat for small animals on the project. The farm's neighbors plan to continue voicing their disapproval over the cutting. (Herald photo)

## Preventing environmental problems

By BARBARA HALSALL

Is it human nature to only react to disasters instead of trying to prevent them? P.O.W.E.R. is working on prevention of environmental problems. Sometimes we wonder why more residents are not working with us.

An article in the March/April 1990 issue of E-The Environmental Magazine, tells about one area where action was taken after the Exxon-Valdez disaster.

The Valdez Principles, a ten point code of corporate environmental conduct, was drawn up by the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES). The coalition consists of environmental, religious, and investment organizations controlling more than \$150 billion, and representing millions of members. Gordon Davidson, director of the Social Investment Forum, which founded CERES is quoted as saying, "This initiative is the single most significant tool ever to enable consumers and investors to effect corporate performance." He went on to say, "Our activities can now reflect whether companies are making a profit at the expense of future generations' ability to sustain their needs."

Previous efforts, both by the government and by the United Nations, to create guidelines for environmental conduct, have been unsuccessful. Heavy lobbying by industry left them bogged down in negotiations. Some felt that was intentional. Without industry participation, the Valdez Principles were drafted in about six months. They were inspired by the Sullivan Principles which provided a code for corporate



conduct in South Africa.

The intent of the Valdez Principles is to "create a voluntary mechanism of corporate self governance that maintains business practices consistent with the goals of sustaining our fragile environment...within a culture that respects all life and honors its interdependence." 1) Protection of the biosphere via minimization of pollutants; 2) Sustainable use of natural resources; 3) Reduction and safe disposal of waste; 4) Energy efficiency; 5) Reduction of environmental and health risks; 6) Marketing of safe products; 7) Damage compensation; 8) Disclosure of potential hazards; 9) Environmental representation on corporate boards of directors; 10) Annual environmental evaluation and audit.

CERES hopes the code can serve as a basis for shareholders to pressure companies to improve their environmental performance, or help investors choose which companies to invest in. The code can also help environmentalists focus positive or

negative publicity upon certain corporations, or influence job-seekers to apply to exemplary companies.

This week in Alaska natives protested on the 2nd Anniversary of the Exxon-Valdez disaster. Following the massive oil spill, natives gave up their traditional food supply for groceries. The change in diet make them ill. They have tried to go back to eating fish not knowing what the results might be. Now they have been left out of the damage settlement.

The Valdez Principles look to be a good yard stick for corporations. Companies have been invited to work with CERES to develop specific performance benchmarks. Too bad these couldn't have come sooner. I would like to think that something could have prevented the Alaska oil spill.

Clip this list and take it into work for discussion. The most successful companies will make environmental choices early. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

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