

WHATEVER'S RIGHT

By

Mart Allen

3/21/03

I have spent more years than I care to remember at times bushwhacking through the woods. My life's work and recreation centered on the outdoors. As a forester I have been involved in countless timber harvesting operations; I have supervised and monitored many as a private, State, and Federal forester. As one might expect I have seen and experienced it all. The work, like everything else in my life, was taken seriously and was done professionally. I took pride in my work and nothing makes me angrier than those who do not and try to pass it off as exceptional.

Over the years I have seen my share of such work and nothing vexes me more to witness it and see it swept under the rug. I have learned over the years it is preceded with great amounts of spin and hype calculated to mask the mess. It's a tried and truly effective ploy whereby minimal amounts of mostly the uninformed may stumble across it. Vast tracts of remote timberland often posted against trespassers are ideal locations to get away with slipshod and illegal operations.

In the fall of 1998 a friend flying over it on a hunting trip in the last week of October apprised me of just such a site. It proved to be the climax of what, to my perception, had been a deteriorating forestry program since 1994. It was on the Adirondack League Club – a fifty thousand acre plus area fitting perfectly the situation I have described above. I began in 1994 within channels to bring the problem to the attention of those who would be ultimately responsible. I am sorry to say they were rebuffed and my efforts were not rewarded.

As the web unwound an all too familiar scenario came into view and is proving to become the norm rather than exception. As O'Rielly says "the rich and powerful stick together". One will lie and the other will swear to it.

On November 6, 2001 I outlined the whole scenario in this column in a series of articles. My only interest in any of this matter was to see the entities involved do what is right; to date that has not happened. I have every reason to believe it's business as usual and until I am sure it is over, I am going to continue to hammer away.

Four entities are involved in what can best be characterized as a subtle cabal. They are the Club, State departments of D.E.C., A.P.A. and the Attorney General's office. None have shown any contrition or inclination to do the right thing. They continue to defend the indefensible in a classic example of elitism. It contains all of the typical aphorisms associated with subterfuge by masters of the art - duplicity, obfuscation, malice, arrogance, deception, deceit and coercion to name but a few.

There are several reasons why I feel compelled to write a sequel to my original articles. First and foremost the public have a right to know the truth. They have a right to know the state government ignores its own edicts and allows special interest groups to do so with impunity. Next, all members of the Club have the right to know the Board is violating it's own constitution precepts and member's rights. The Board treats them like mushrooms, keeping them in the dark and feeding them you-know-what. The interests of the small loggers and wood oriented businesses who are unfairly penalized by the state's policies have the right to know. Several I have worked with have been wronged

as a direct result of the actions such tactics encourage. They have asked me to speak out on their behalf.

I am particularly interested in learning how serious the plethora of environmental groups is about their missions. Since the Governor was just awarded a stewardship award by one of them; will he back it up with a serious look at my allegations?

In summary, I have no intention to accept the stigma of being the only one sanctioned in what I consider a most egregious matter. Anyone foolish enough to think so will find they have the wrong sow by the ear.

Starting with next week's edition I will present evidence supporting my stance. A series of 22 photos will be posted on a web site documenting some of the transgressions I reported. My original articles will be included as well. I welcome comments from others who may agree or dissent with anything I may have or will report.

I apologize for taking this tact and have tried in vain to resolve what I consider are some of the worst environmental transgressions I have seen in a more equitable manner. To say that I am angry as hell and will not take it anymore is an understatement.