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Funky man Ralph Harris, a Los Angeles freelance writer, gave us a good chance to chuckle at ourselves in a recent issue of OMNI magazine. He said it was widely believed that the major obstacle confronting the environmental movement was "the American's big business," best summed up as "Damn the balder, full speed ahead." Harris says this assessment is an unfair generalization—that business people are interested in the environment and would be the first to support a cause they believed in. Unfortunately, they've not yet found that cause.

To remedy this, Harris proposes the immediate formation of some business-oriented ecology groups.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTHWORMS: A coalition of contractors, heavy equipment operators, etc., would clean up the great outdoors by getting rid of the dirt—not the litter, just the dirt. His goal would be to raise enough money to pave the entire U.S. and build a giant, coast-to-coast condominium centered somewhere near Mattoon, Illinois.

CAMPAIGN TO VARNISH THE REDWOODS: Lumbermen and manufacturers of furniture-care products could unite in this organization to see that the redwoods last even longer for future generations to study, enjoy and polish.

THE REAL ESTATE: All 420 million Americans are considered to be owners of an ordinary home. In order to protect and enhance the environment, RDC invites members and the general public to its weekly breakfast meetings featuring local and nationally-known speakers on economic and resource development issues. The meetings are held on Thursday at 7:15 a.m. in the Randy Room of the Press on Tudor Road. Meeting charge is $2 and reservations are requested by calling 279-8915.

Membership Information

The Resource Development Council extends an invitation to all persons interested in the responsible development of Alaska's resources to join the Council's efforts. For membership information, contact Mike Abbott, Financial Development Director. The Association of Community Resource Review business headquarters are located at 444 West 7th Avenue in downtown Anchorage.

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**By ROBERT WARREN**

**Director, Northern Alaska Environmental Center**

Editor's Note: The following editorial appeared in the October edition of the Northern Line, a publication of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center. RDC commends Mr. Robert Warren for his message urging cooperation and honesty in dealing with the issues facing Alaska today.

Recently I was asked by someone close to Alaska’s mining industry, “What is the environmental community’s policy on mineral development?” It was a good question. I certainly didn’t know the answer. But the assumption within the question was that we did indeed have such a policy and that it somehow involved a well-planned opposition to future mineral development in Alaska.

Many people within the mineral industry believe that we have such a plan. They believe that the plan is not only to prevent the development of Alaska’s minerals but to thwart all economic growth. Preposterous, you say? Maybe so, but equally preposterous are some of our views of the mineral industry. For some of us, they are just a bunch of greed-crazed hustlers bent on rape and ruin, with little concern for what they leave behind or what they destroy in the process. And so, just as they see us as a bunch of illogical “antis,” we view them as villains, totally opposed to reasonable environmental safeguards.

The real problem may lie in our perception of “us” and “them.” Maybe it is time for each of us to show a little understanding of all perspectives, even those of the “other guy.” Rather than using our limited resources to fight to stop all mineral development in Alaska, we should be developing a viable strategy. For too long we have allowed ourselves to be placed in the role of opposing economic growth and diversity. The time has gone when we can look at the world as being populated by white hats and black hats. The stereotypes don’t work anymore. It’s time we grew beyond them and worked constructively towards solving our mutual problems.

**‘Us’ and ‘Them’**

Students in the classrooms today will soon be the citizens who are seeking careers within the mining industry and making decisions about mineral resource development in Alaska.

In recognition of this fact, the Alaska Department of Education is developing a curriculum and activities about mineral resource development in Alaska. The “Alaska Resource Kit / Minerals” will consist of specific information and activities about mineral resources including oil, coal and gas mining history, economic implications and environmental concerns relating to the development of mineral resources. It will provide students with current materials and practice in information gathering and decision making.

**A Letter From Our President**

**Quality**

As Alaskans we look forward to development of our natural resources to provide an economy that will yield a high standard of living in the future. We should give serious consideration to the quality of our efforts in all facets of that development for we may be able to use our natural assets to provide not only the hard money exchange, but also to help generate new knowledge and abilities that would have value in the future.

Knowledge and technical ability backed by a recognition for quality may provide revenues for Alaskans beyond that of the developed resource itself. Alaskans should begin now to set high standards of performance that will enhance the merchandising of knowledge and abilities along with the merchandising of the resources themselves.

**Education Program Targets Students**

**Book On Agriculture Available**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough has released a colorful book detailing the history of agriculture in the Matanuska Valley, the industry’s current status in the valley and its potential.

The 64-page book covers recent farming activity, products of Valley farms, lands, soils and the environment. Economics, transportation and utilities are also covered in addition to policies needed to encourage agriculture.

Persons interested in obtaining a copy of the book, titled “Agriculture,” should call or write the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in Palmer, 745-4801.
Education Program

The Education Program at the Florida Center is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the natural world and its environment. The program includes interactive exhibits, guided tours, and hands-on activities that are tailored to different age groups and interests. Visitors can learn about local flora and fauna, participate in conservation projects, and engage in workshops on topics such as wildlife photography, bird watching, and environmental science.

Bristol Bay Plan

The Bristol Bay Project is a comprehensive plan aimed at preserving the natural resources and ecological balance of the area. The project involves collaboration between local communities, environmental organizations, and government agencies to develop sustainable practices and protect the region’s biodiversity. Key components of the plan include the management of fish populations, the restoration of wetlands, and the promotion of ecotourism.

Valuable CnducedForest Resources

The value of forest resources in the region is significant, contributing to economic development and the preservation of cultural heritage. The project focuses on identifying and conserving valuable forest resources, which may include timber, medicinal plants, and culturally important species. Efforts are made to ensure that forest management practices are sustainable and that local communities benefit from the use and conservation of these resources.

To learn more about the projects and initiatives at the Florida Center, visit their website or contact them directly.