

1992 Environmental Conference attracts record attendance

John E. Pinkerton, Environmental Division technical editor

Environmental concerns continue to receive high priority in the forest products industry, as evidenced by the record attendance of more than 900 at the 1992 TAPPI Environmental Conference. With paper industry capital expenditures for environmental protection now running at over US\$ 1 billion annually, it should come as no surprise that there is tremendous interest in virtually all aspects of environmental control, ranging from more effective operation of in-place technologies to exploration of novel techniques for minimizing environmental impacts of the industry's manufacturing operations and products.

In the opening session, Robert C. Williams, president and chief executive officer of James River Corporation, welcomed the attendees to Richmond, home of James River's corporate offices. Williams briefly described some of the key challenges facing the U.S. paper industry today. He observed that the paper industry is the most capital-intensive industry in the United States, and that this fact must be considered as environmental regulations and programs are developed since there is not an unlimited supply of capital. He expressed concern about the increasing role of federal and state governments in fiber recycling issues and product specifications. The ever-expanding use of litigation in environmental matters was mentioned as a significant drain of industry resources.

Peter E. Wrist, president and CEO of the Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada, gave the Gunnar Nicholson Lecture. Wrist presented a thought-provoking discussion on the issues of sustainable development, biodiversity, and environmental protection. In recent years, the public perception of the forest products industry has changed. Previously unquestioned industry practices are now under attack. In Wrist's view, reversing this new public attitude will require alteration of many traditional approaches to forest management and manufacturing operations. Public desires for wildlife protection, aesthetically acceptable forestry, biodiversity, reduced wastes, elimination of toxic compounds, and global climate stability need to be recognized and acknowledged. If these desires are to be accommodated without destroying the global competitiveness of the North American industry by excessive government oversight, new industry initiatives will be necessary. Research programs will have to address forest management practices, increased utilization of recovered fibers, and elimination of toxics. Public pressures are increasing for the zero-discharge mill, and research to take steps in that direction should be pursued.

In the first keynote address, G. M. Leonard, associate chief of the U.S. Forest Service offered his assessment on future timber supplies for the U.S. forest products industry. It is

Ronald B. Estridge (left) presents Charles B. Welch with a water-color collage in recognition of his leadership and service to the Environmental Division.



apparent that endangered species, wetlands, and other issues will diminish the availability of wood from federal lands. In Leonard's opinion, private nonindustrial woodlands must fill this shortfall because increased output from U.S. industrial forest land and additional imported Canadian timber seem unlikely.

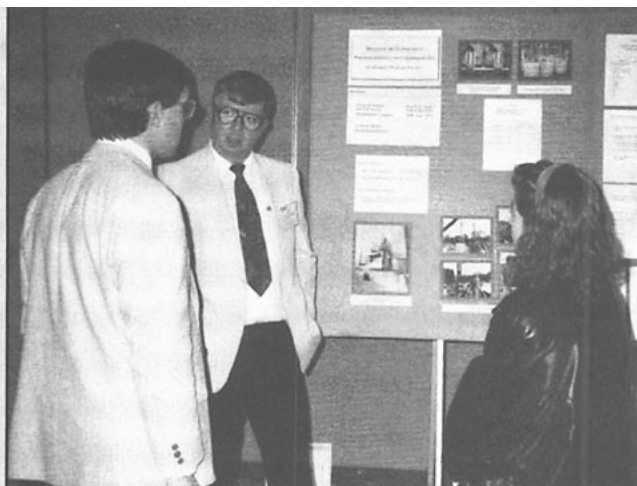
The TAPPI Directors keynote address was delivered by Ronald B. Estridge, senior vice president, technology, at James River Corporation and TAPPI vice president. Estridge discussed TAPPI's emerging proactive role in the scientific, technological, and educational aspects of environmental matters. He encouraged TAPPI members to become spokespersons for the industry's environmental achievements and promote more environmentally oriented research and development within the industry. He also challenged TAPPI members to become more involved in local and national politics.

Division awards were presented to Norman C. Shroyer and

Conference chairman **Allen M. Springer** welcomes attendees to the 1992 Environmental conference.



William A. Barkley discusses his paper during the poster session at the Environmental conference.



Charles B. Welch. Shroyer, technical director of Union Camp's Fine Paper Division, received the Environmental Division Technical Award and Roy F. Weston honorarium for his long involvement, dedication, and many accomplishments in the environmental arena. In his acceptance speech, he passed along several sage pieces of advice based on his 30 years of experience in the industry.

Welch, environmental department manager for Riverwood International (formerly Manville Forest Products), earned the Environmental Division's Leadership and Service Award. An active member of the Division for more than 20 years, Welch has made many contributions towards accomplishment of the Division's goals and objectives. As part of the award, Welch received a collage and water color painting by Atlanta artist James Potocki, commissioned by the Division. The painting entitled "Serene Reflections" depicts a misty sunrise in a plantation forest. The Division Scholarship was awarded to Lisa Downs, an undergraduate in the University of Maine's chemical engineering program.

The Russell O. Blosser Memorial Best Paper Awards were given to the following authors for papers presented at the 1991 Environmental Conference: Alison Slade, Peter Dare, and Anne Leonard ("Modeling aerated lagoons treating bleached kraft mill effluents: determination of model input"); Steven Schneider and Barry Zuercher ("Chloroform emissions at a secondary fiber mill: determining sources, quantifying emissions and modeling risks"); Billy Huston, Enrique Hans Beer, and Kenneth Hardesty ("Recycling of nonintegrated paper mill sludge and ash into cement"); and Jen Folke, Karl-Johan Lehtinen, and Howard Edde ("The scientific foundation of adsorbable organohalogen [AOX] as a regulatory parameter for control of organochlorine compounds").

The substance of the conference was the 39 technical sessions that addressed a diverse array of environmental topics. Several sessions were devoted to discussion of potential impacts of emerging legislation and regulations, including reauthorization of the Clean Water Act and Resource Conservation and Recovery Acts, implementation of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments and Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Acts, stormwater regulations, and new OSHA

process safety management and laboratory safety regulations.

Water quality issues were prominent at this year's conference. Receiving water impacts, biomarkers, color, phosphorus limitations, anaerobic treatment, wastewater treatment plant optimization, use of artificial wetlands, and advancement treatment technologies all received attention at one or more sessions. Solid waste management topics, including landfill design, bioremediation, ash use, sludge combustion, landspreading, and waste minimization were highlighted as well. Important air quality issues such as odor impacts and "air toxics" were addressed in other sessions.

A special feature in this year's conference was several sessions devoted to analytical questions related to environmental measurements. Analyses of samples for chlorinated compounds, e.g. phenolics and dioxins, were the focus of many presentations. Selected papers from the conference will appear in *Tappi Journal* through the year. The papers are also collected in a three-volume set of proceedings available from TAPPI PRESS.

At the joint meeting of the Division's Air, Water, and Solid Waste Committees, Dennis Berioz of Northrup Corporation made a most informative and entertaining presentation on his company's pollution prevention efforts to reduce the environmental impact of its B-2 bomber manufacturing operation in California. He discussed various programs that had been undertaken to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes, atmospheric emissions, and wastewater discharges. Efforts to reduce emissions associated with employee auto use through van and car pooling were mentioned. Berioz suggested several key factors that contribute to the success of a waste minimization program, including commitment by top management, involvement of all employees, and recognition/reward incentives.

The 1992 Environmental Conference again underscored the significance and importance of environmental concerns to the forest products industry. The record attendance and multitude of technical issues addressed during the conference certainly suggest that environmental issues will continue to occupy a significant fraction of the industry's attention and resources.

The conference was preceded and followed by a series of four courses designed to help industry personnel stay current on critical environmental issues. □