

Congressman, Environmental Leaders, and Foremost Scientific Expert to Discuss Latest Findings and Action on Mercury Pollution in Maine

PORTLAND, March 15, 2005

Public invited to evening program hosted by University of Southern Maine

Rep. Tom Allen and state environmental leaders have announced they'll join Dr. David Evers, founder of the Gorham-based Biodiversity Research Institute and an internationally recognized authority on mercury pollution in wildlife, at a public forum to discuss the latest findings on mercury pollution in Maine and what people can do to help protect Maine's wildlife and themselves.

"Mercury: How It's Affecting You and the Wildlife You Love" will be held at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 29 at the Glickman Family Library at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. It is free and open to the public, with parking available at the USM parking garage on Bedford St. (immediately off Forest Ave., one block from the library).

LISTINGS EDITORS:

Mercury: How It's Affecting You and the Wildlife You Love

Hosted by the University of Southern Maine, "Mercury: How It's Affecting You and the Wildlife You Love" is an opportunity for members of the public to learn about mercury pollution in Maine, which scientists recently discovered is more extensive than previously thought. BioDiversity Research Institute founder Dr. David Evers will present his coalition's latest findings about mercury, and Maine environmental leaders, wildlife advocates and policymakers including Rep. Tom Allen will discuss how Maine's people can be advocates for mercury reduction, wildlife and children. 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 29 at the University Events Room, seventh floor, Glickman Family Library, 314 Forest Ave., Portland. Parking is available at the USM parking garage on Bedford St. (immediately off Forest Ave., one block from the library).

Evers will present the latest comprehensive scientific findings on mercury pollution and its effects on wildlife in the Northeast. From 2001 to 2005, 50 scientists analyzed new data from thousands of locations and compiled it for a just-released report titled, "[Mercury Connections](#)." Their groundbreaking research has determined that mercury pollution is more extensive than previously reported and has identified nine biological hotspots of mercury in the Northeast. For the first time, they also found mercury in mountain-dwelling songbirds. "Until now, we thought that mercury could be found only in its toxic form in water environments. Our discovery of mercury in forest songbirds turns that conventional wisdom on its head. We don't know exactly why and how mercury gets from the air into these birds, but we plan to find out," Dr. Evers said. Rep. Allen, a leader of bipartisan efforts in Congress to reduce mercury in the environment and fulfill the intent of the federal Clean Air Act, will discuss action he and members of Maine's congressional delegation are taking to [support strict controls on mercury pollution from power plants in the Midwest](#). Since Maine lies in the path of prevailing winds from these industrial-pollution sources, it annually records some of the most severe heavy-metal contamination anywhere in the United States.

Environmental leaders Kevin Carley, executive director of Maine Audubon, and Brownie Carson, executive director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, will discuss ways that Maine's people can be advocates for mercury reduction, wildlife and children.

"Maine's people need to understand the extent of the threat mercury poses to their families, our economy, and our way of life," Carson said. "They can and should make their voices heard on this issue to their elected officials so we can stop the poisoning."

For more information, call (207) 839-7600. To order or download a copy of the new mercury report, visit www.briloon.org/mercury.

MAINE AUDUBON works to conserve Maine's wildlife and wildlife habitat by engaging people of all ages in education, conservation and action. With a 160-year history of connecting people with nature, Maine Audubon is the only organization in Maine working to conserve wildlife in three ways: providing hands-on environmental education for people of all ages, conducting research and wildlife conservation projects statewide and taking action to help shape effective science-based conservation policy. Support for Maine Audubon comes from its 11,000 members and supporters, including individuals, foundations and corporations. Maine Audubon's 11 public wildlife sanctuaries on 3,000 acres, along with its environmental-education centers, camps and hundreds of trips, programs and volunteer opportunities

throughout the year, offer children through senior citizens wide-ranging opportunities to explore, learn about and care for Maine's wildlife.