

CONTENTS



CONTENTS

Voice from the Wild (Letter from the Editors).....3



PROTECTED AREAS

Wrangel Island, the Arctic Enigma4



LEGISLATION

Russia Continues Down the Soviet Union's
Treachorous Nuclear Path7



ENDANGERED ECOSYSTEMS

The Intrusion of New Species
into the Caspian Sea Ecosystems9

A Summer Epidemic Places the
Caspian Seal Population in Further Peril12

The Destruction of the Aral Sea.....13

Will Lessons of the Aral Sea
be Forgotten in Lake Balkhash?16



ENDANGERED SPECIES

The Current Distribution of the
Argali Mountain Sheep17



CONSERVING FORESTS

Will Russia's Economic Growth
Threaten the Forests?20

The Progress of Forestry Reform
from an NGO Perspective.....22

A Spotlight on the Illegal Timber Trade
in the Russian Far East.....24

Current Challenges of FSC
Certification in Russia.....26



FOR DISCUSSION

Ecotourism in Russia's Protected Areas28

Developing Ecotourism in
Russia's Zapovedniks28

Can Ecotourism Deliver its Promises?
A Case Study from Astrakhansky Zapovednik31

Early Steps in Developing Tourism in Belarus.....32

A Portrait of a Belarussian Forest Preserve33

The Riches of Belarus's Wetlands.....34



NEWS OF THE DAY

Russia-US Treaty to Conserve Shared
Polar Bear Population35

Russia Finds its One Hundredth Zapovednik.....36

"We will Survive While Nature is Alive"36

Russian Nature Press Brings Russia's
Environmental Literature to English Speakers38



BULLETIN BOARD

Don't miss the June Issue of Smithsonian Magazine!.....39

New Publication Celebrates Russian-Dutch
Cooperation in Nature Conservation
in the Russian Arctic39

Keep Abreast of the Development of Ecotourism39

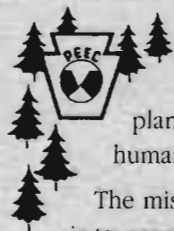
Environmental Film Festival in St. Petersburg.....39

New Publication: Together on Earth39

Seventh World Wilderness Congress this November.....39



CONSERVATION CONTACTS40



The mission of the **Pocono Environmental Education Center** is to advance environmental awareness, knowledge, and skills through education in order that those who inherit the planet may better understand the complexity of natural and human-designed environments.

The mission of the **Center for Russian Nature Conservation (CRNC)** is to promote the conservation of nature in Russia and throughout the former Soviet Union, and to assist conservation groups in that region through information exchange, coordination of professional and educational exchanges, and provision of technical assistance to protected areas. CRNC is a project of the Tides Center.



Center for
Russian Nature
Conservation

This issue of Russian Conservation News was produced with support from the Weeden Foundation, the Morrison Family Foundation, the Global Forest Program of World Wildlife Fund, and many individual donors.

Special thanks to Andrea Williams, Charles Dewey, Jonathan Sachs, Andrew Sabin and Rodney Cole for their generous support of this journal.

Copyright 2000 Pocono Environmental Education Center and The Center for Russian Nature Conservation/Tides Center.

ISSN 1026-6380

Printed on recycled paper.