

Pennsylvania Environmental Heritage Program

Maurice K. Goddard, 1912-1995

a brief biography and compilation of reflections submitted by Bob Hosking Jr.

Maurice K. Goddard is widely regarded as one of the most prominent environmental professionals in Pennsylvania History. His position of prominence is not only a reflection of his importance as an environmental administrator, his role as an academic leader, his reputation as an environmentalist who refused to compromise his principles of stewardship or buckle under political pressure, or his extraordinary vision and accomplishment of establishing a Pennsylvania State Park within 25 miles of every Pennsylvanian. For many of his friends, colleagues and acquaintances, "Doc" Goddard, as he was affectionately known, was first and foremost a prominent man in stature and in character. So prominent in fact that he served as the subject of the Second Pennsylvania Environmental History Symposium, the only such symposium to date to focus on a single individual. Much of the information contained in this article was obtained from the proceedings of that symposium, which I attended on April 17, 1997.

During the Second Pennsylvania Environmental History Symposium, Caren Glotfelty, the current Maurice K. Goddard Professor of Forestry and Environmental Resource Conservation at the Penn State University School of Forestry Resources described her early experiences working with Doc Goddard with the following words: "What an intimidating presence he was to me then—so tall and angular, white-haired, and forceful. Despite his deep voice and commanding appearance, I found he had the demeanor of a warm and helpful teacher." M. Eileen Graham, Director of University Relations at the Penn State University Mont Alto Campus recalled that she regarded Doc Goddard as her grandfather, and that many of the alumni who knew him at Penn State's Mont Alto campus called him "Gramps". She concluded her comments at the Second Pennsylvania Environmental History Symposium by stating "Doc called us and asked about our families. He genuinely cared. The man who brokered those deals on Capitol Hill was the same man who scrubbed floors in the house in Camp Hill and took care of his invalid wife. He was the man who knew that when all was said and done, those compass points of family, friends, character and love were what really counted in life." Still others described him as a compulsive teacher, a straight-shooter who could be recklessly honest at times, and an autocrat who believed in the cause of public service and the role of government in effecting positive change. One personal characteristic that I've heard repeated over and over by individuals recounting their experiences with Doc Goddard is the forcefulness with which he would laugh. Ralph R. Widner who worked with Doc Goddard as the director of public affairs for the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters recalled that when Doc Goddard laughed, his whole frame would go up and down like a piston.

Maurice K. Goddard was born in Lowell, Massachusetts in 1912, but by 1915 his father accepted a clergy position in Pretty Prairie Kansas. It is reported that his mother so missed the trees of New England, that she planted and passionately cared for many trees around their Kansas home; an inspiration often attributed to the young Maurice Goddard's interest in forestry. By his freshman year in high school, the Goddard Family had moved to Toronto, and he planned to attend Toronto University's Forestry School after graduation. But by the time he graduated, his family moved again, back to New England, so he attended the University of Maine instead.

Doc Goddard had an uncle who was supervisor of the Coconino National Forest in Arizona, so after graduating from the University of Maine with a B.S. in forestry in 1935, he tried to get a job working for the U.S. Forest Service in the White Mountain National Forest of New Hampshire. When he could not get a position by the August following graduation, he accepted a position as a teacher at the Mont Alto Campus of Penn State University. After two years teaching at Mont Alto, Doc Goddard moved to Berkely California to study at the University of California, where he received his M.S. in forestry in 1938. After Berkely, he moved back to Pennsylvania where he received a position as head of the summer forestry camp at the main campus of Penn State University. A year later he married Ethel Mae Catchpole.

Like many men his age at that time, Doc Goddard joined the war effort in 1942. He served in the U.S. Army, on the staff of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, as the executive officer, Personnel Division, Supreme Headquarters, of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. He left the Army in 1946 as a Lieutenant Colonial.

After completing his military service Doc Goddard went back to Mont Alto to get the forestry school up and running again. In 1952 he was promoted to the head of the Forestry Department at the University Park Campus. Three years later he was appointed Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters by Governor George M. Leader. It was during his term of service under Governor Leader that Doc Goddard professionalized the Department of Forests and Waters. When he first took office as Secretary, Department of Forests and Waters personnel were selected according to political patronage by the county chairmen of the political parties. Consequently, an employee was subject to the prospect of being replaced each time there was a change in political administration. Doc Goddard changed that system by requiring minimum qualifications for state forestry personnel, including a requirement that all personnel take civil service examinations. In 1963 Governor William Scranton signed the law granting civil service protection to state foresters.

It was also during his term under the Leader administration that Doc Goddard began implementation of his vision that there should be a Pennsylvania State Park within 25 miles of every Pennsylvanian. He first drafted legislation that established the Oil and Gas Lease Fund. The Oil and Gas Lease Fund bill stipulated that money collected from oil and gas leases on state lands could only be used for conservation, recreation, dams or flood control. Under Secretary Goddard's leadership, much of the money was used to greatly expand and improve the State Park System. Doc Goddard was also a strong supporter of Project 70 and Project 500. Signed by Governor William Scranton in 1964, Project 70 appropriated more than \$40 million dollars for expanding the State Park system in the vicinity of large metropolitan areas. Project 500 was a \$500 million dollar bond issue approved in 1968 which appropriated \$85 million to develop State Park lands purchased with funds from Project 70. By 1976, Pennsylvania had added 45 parks totaling 129,588 acres in 35 counties to what was widely regarded by national park and recreation groups as the best state park system in the country.

Doc Goddard continued to serve as Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters until 1971 (a total of 16 years), when the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources was formed. He was then appointed by Governor Milton J. Shapp as the first Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, a position he maintained until 1979 when he retired from public service.

There is scarcely room in an article of this size, or even in the usual volume of this newsletter to properly address all of Doc Goddard's significant accomplishments, but an abbreviated overview should at least include the following. When asked what he considered to be his two most notable accomplishments, he frequently responded with: Improving the professionalism of the old Department of Forests and Waters, and; Establishing first-rate state park facilities within 25 miles of every resident of the commonwealth. Other significant accomplishments would certainly include his life of love and devotion to his wife Ethel, and their two sons Kimball and Mark. A list of accomplishments directly attributable to the proceedings of the Second Environmental History Symposium proceedings include:

- ☼ As a result of his commitment, Pennsylvania was the first state to have a forest management plan for each of its state forests.
- ☼ Dr. Goddard personally encouraged and promoted the formation of private, non-profit watershed associations starting in the 1950s. These associations have enhanced both environmental quality and environmental consciousness throughout the state.
- ☼ A leading advocate of Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Program, Doc Goddard's work in the field of pollution control and abatement - including the abatement of mine drainage - gained him national recognition. He was appointed by President Kennedy to serve on the Water Pollution Control Advisory Board and by President Johnson to serve on the National Advisory Environmental Health Committee.
- ☼ Largely through his efforts, comprehensive studies and plans for the development of water and related land resources were completed or were underway for all of Pennsylvania's major river basins by the time of his retirement. Dr. Goddard not only played a major role in the inception and acceptance of the Delaware River Basin Compact, but was, in great measure, responsible for the effectiveness of the Delaware River Basin Commission during the many years he served as a member. He was also a leader in the creation of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, which was based on the format of the Delaware River Basin Compact.
- ☼ As chairman of the State Conservation Commission, he worked effectively to establish soil conservation districts in nearly all of the counties in Pennsylvania. With eroded soils cited as the number one pollutant in the state and the nation, Dr. Goddard moved effectively to take corrective action. The Soil and Erosion Control Amendments to the Clean Streams Law were among the first such provisions to be enacted in the nation and have been responsible for the restoration of many streams in the state.
- ☼ After his retirement from PaDER, and until the time of his death, Dr. Goddard continued to play a leadership role in solving environmental and natural resource issues. For example he served for several years as the representative of the governor of Pennsylvania on the Delaware and Susquehanna River Basin Commissions, and on the advisory committee of the Goddard Chair at Penn State.
- ☼ Doc Goddard received honorary doctoral degrees from Waynesboro College, the University of Maine, Drexel University, and Gettysburg College.

Doc Goddard was awarded the National Wildlife Federation's prestigious Special Achievement Award (1986) for his 50 years of service as an outspoken defender of natural resources. In 1992, the University of Maine marked its 125th anniversary by naming him one of the 125 "Alumni Who Have Made a Difference", and in 1993 the Council of the Penn State Alumni Association selected him to receive the Honorary Alumni Award, which is given only to those outstanding individuals, who, although they are not Penn State Graduates, have made significant contributions toward the welfare, reputation, or prestige of the university. He has also been honored by establishment of the Maurice K. Goddard Chair in Forestry and Environmental Conservation at Penn State. The Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals awarded Doc Goddard the Karl Mason Award in 1980 for his leadership in the field of environmental programs and for serving as the outstanding first Secretary of the Department of Environmental Resources.

At the Second Pennsylvania Environmental History Symposium, Peter S. Duncan, III, a former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission described Doc Goddard's philosophical approach to his work with, "An early disciple of the multiple-use, sustained-yield principle advocated by Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot and refined by Aldo Leopold, Goddard set out to convince anyone who would listen to his ideas concerning the benefits inherent in sound, scientific natural resource management." Those of us who joined PAEP prior to 1995 might remember Doc Goddard as a fellow PAEP member. He is listed in the 1992 and 1995 PAEP membership directories, and attended some of our annual meetings. Caren Glotfelty noted during the Second Pennsylvania History Symposium how little personal history was available about such an important and prominent man. She attributed that fact to the man himself, who was both modest and uncomfortable under the microscope of public celebrity. Accordingly, in the PAEP Directories he is listed simply as Dr. Maurice K. Goddard, General Member, 211 North 19th Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011. No other biographical information is provided. I vividly remember personally meeting Doc Goddard for the first and only time at the 1993 PAEP Annual Meeting. He was indeed a large and imposing figure who spent what I viewed as an extraordinary amount of time talking with me about my educational background, my family, and my views on environmental protection. At that meeting I scarcely knew who he was, and had little or no appreciation for his accomplishments. Yet our discussions that evening will always remain a vivid part of my memory. I especially liked his honesty and openness about everything we discussed, but I will never forget his booming irrepressible laughter.

Maurice K. Goddard died on September 14, 1995, one day after his eighty-third birthday.