

DER facing budget roadblocks

HARRISBURG — Secretary of Environmental Resources Maurice K. Goddard released today a comprehensive program for operating his department in the current fiscal year with a budget shortage of \$6.7 million.

The Secretary said he has directed his staff to take actions which will cut an estimated \$3 million immediately of the \$6.7 million cut made by the General Assembly. These actions will include the furloughing of some 48 employees.

If an additional \$3.8 million is not appropriated to the Department in a supplemental budget, as currently proposed in House Bill 1333, it will be necessary to take a second level of cuts to reach the full \$6.7 million shortfall,

Farm credit loans top \$30 billion

EAST LANSING, MICH - Loans made to farmers and farmer cooperatives through the Farm Credit System topped \$30 billion during the year ending June 30, according to figures released today by the Farm Credit Administration.

The \$30.4 billion in loans made represents a 19.7 percent increase from the \$25.4 billion in loans made the previous year. Loans outstanding through the System totaled \$30.0 billion at June 30, a 21.9 percent increase from the \$24.6 billion of a year earlier.

The lending totals were presented by W. Malcolm Harding, FCA Governor, at the annual National Institute on Cooperative Education of the American Institute of Cooperation meeting here this week.

The Farm Credit System includes the Federal Land Banks which make long term loans through local Federal Land Bank Associations; Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, which provide loan funds for local Production Credit Associations, the System's short and intermediate term lenders; and the Banks for Cooperatives, which finance farmer cooperatives. The Farm Credit Administration is the supervisory Federal agency for the member-owned System.

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including elimination of major programs involving some 300 employees, Goddard declared.

"The budget which the Governor recommended for us contained just enough money to carry our last year's effort forward with no new positions, no new programs and no improvements in operations," Goddard said. "The \$54 million currently appropriated to us by the General Assembly simply is not enough for us to live on and services to the people of the Commonwealth are going to suffer."

The largest item in the first reductions, amounting to \$958,000 in savings, comes from not buying any new equipment, unless it is with Federal money; holding supply purchases to a cost of no more than five per cent higher than last year, despite rising prices for goods; and not filling vacancies without the express approval of the Secretary.

A \$550,000 saving will come from doing no forest pest spraying in the fiscal year which ends June 30. Goddard explained that since it is the Department's basic policy that forest pests should be combatted with parasitic insects rather than chemical sprays, DER cannot fund any

spraying for temporary relief from the gypsy moth, oak leaf roller, hemlock looper or any other forest pest.

Other areas for significantly high savings include: dismissal of most State Park summer employees immediately after Labor Day and closing of many of the 46 State Park campgrounds, or portions of them, at that time (list will be announced soon), \$350,000; reduction in supplies for the air quality and water quality programs, \$200,000; furloughing of 24 Bureau of Forestry employees after Labor Day, \$228,000; elimination of all stream clearance work, \$200,000; and furloughing of 12 field staff in the Office of Resources Management, \$100,000.

Goddard said he regretted the decision to furlough staff most of all but indicated it was unavoidable since more than 80 per cent of the Department's general government operation expenditures are for personnel costs.

"Special teams from the Department's Bureau of Human Resource Management will work closely with all those being furloughed," he said, "to provide all the help they can in securing new employment for the people and seeing that they receive all Commonwealth assistance and benefits owed them."

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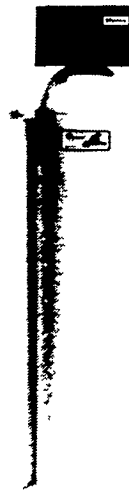
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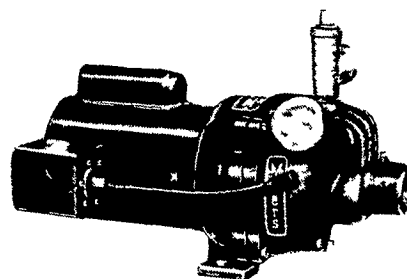


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