



Conservationist Harley W. MacKenzie, left, chats with Gov. Patrick J. Lucey Friday.

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Man of Foresight, Understanding

Friends, Family Hail MacKenzie

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POYNETTE — The friends and family of Harley W. MacKenzie Friday gathered in a wooded glen ablaze in autumn red and gold to hear him lauded as one of Wisconsin's first environmentalists.

The occasion was the dedication of the 250-acre Harley W. MacKenzie Environmental Center here. The facility, founded by MacKenzie in 1934 when he headed the old Conservation Dept., has been known as the Dept. of Natural Resources Conservation Center and Game Farm in recent years.

Gov. Patrick J. Lucey set the tone of the event, calling the 32-year-old conservationist a man of "foresight and understanding."

"YOUR FORESIGHT and understanding set an early course for Wisconsin's environmental protection programs," the chief executive told MacKenzie and his 200 wellwishers.

"Before the environmental movement grew into its present height of public concern, you were planning for the future of Wisconsin's resources."

MacKenzie, a Poynette native, served as Chief Conservation Warden and later headed the old Conservation Dept. He left the post as the state's chief environmentalist in 1942 amid a heated dispute with then Wisconsin Gov. Julius P. Heil and state lawmakers.

The praise continued, with Rep. Lewis Mittness (D-Janesville), head of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, calling MacKenzie "as foresighted as any conservationist could be."



Harley W. MacKenzie, left, with Gov. Patrick J. Lucey, DNR Secretary Lester P. Voigt, and State Rep. Lewis Mittness.

Mittness reminded the bipartisan delegation of lawmakers and wellwishers of a quotation from the late President John F. Kennedy. He said: "One man with courage makes a majority."

"MAC," Mittness said, his voice cracking with emotion, "you demonstrate this."

For his part, MacKenzie singled out Lucey and DNR Secretary Lester P. Voigt for special thanks.

On the chief executive, MacKenzie said: "If you have a good governor like this who takes conservation seriously, he'll last forever."

He told the crowd that Voigt had waged an uphill fight to protect the state's resources from thoughtless misuse and industrial pollution, saying "by jingles, he's stuck his chin out for all of us."

BEFORE THE event, the Assembly Natural Resources Com-

mittee heard testimony on two bills by Rep. Robert Thompson (D-Poynette) that would establish an educational camp at the MacKenzie center and create a system of conservation camps for boys and girls.

Lucey took the occasion to urge support of both measures, saying "it is only fitting that this dedication and these hearings be held in Poynette, the place where many of our environmental educational efforts began."