

# **ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION**

# FEBRUARY 22, 2011

# 6:00 PM – CVRD Board Room, 175 Ingram Street

# Agenda

# 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

# 2. FOLLOW UP WITH DR. BRAD STELFOX

### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

|     | M1          | Adoption of minutes of Environment Commission from January 20, 2010   | 1-5    |
|-----|-------------|---|--------|
| 4.  | BUSI        | NESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES:  |        |
|     | B1          | Discussion with Economic Development Commission re possibility of working jointly with Environment Commission | Verbal |
| 5.  | <u>STAF</u> | F REPORTS   |        |
|     | SR1         | Budget 2011 from Kate Miller  | 6-9    |
| 6.  | <u>NEW</u>  | BUSINESS  |        |
|     | NB1         | Shawnigan Lake Watershed – Bruce Fraser   | 10-11  |
| 7.  | COM         | MITTEE REPORTS  |        |
|     | CR1         | Communications – Kevin Visscher   | 12-14  |
| 8.  | CORF        | RESPONDENCE   |        |
| ۰,  | C1          | Review of Email from Peter Nix dated Jan 5, 2011  | 15-18  |
|     | C2          | Ecostravaganza Market Place invitation  | 19-21  |
|     | C3          | Land Dedication for F1 zones – forwarded by Lorne Duncan  | 22     |
|     | C4          | Ecology Economics Ethics blog – Email from Hugh Robertson,<br>received January 20, 2011                       | 23-28  |
|     | C5          | Email correspondence from Paul d'Haene  | Verbal |
| 9   | INFOF       | RMATION   |        |
|     | IN1         | Judy Stafford re United Way Public Policy Institute   | Verbal |
| 10. | <u>NEXT</u> | MEETING:  |        |
|     |             | March 17, 2011  |        |

### 11. ADJOURNMENT:

#### Distribution:

CVRD Director Gerry Giles (Chair) Roger Wiles Peter Keber Chris Wood Dave Polster CVRD Director Phil Kent CVRD Director Rob Hutchins CVRD Director Tom Walker Rodger Hunter (Co-Chair) Kevin Visscher Bruce Sampson Bruce Fraser Justin Straker Judy Stafford Larry George, Cowichan Tribes

#### As Well As Full Agenda:

Warren Jones, CAO, CVRD Brian Dennison, General Manager, Engineering and Environment Services Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy Division

#### Full Agenda as Hard Copy

Director I. Morrison Director L. Duncan Director K. Kuhn

#### Agenda Cover Only:

Director G. SeymourDirector T. McGonigleDirector M. MarcotteDirector B. HarrisonDirector D. HaywoodDirector K. CosseyDirector M. DoreyDirector L. lannidinardoTom Anderson, Manager, Planning and Development Services

Minutes of the regular meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION held in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, on January 20, 2011 at 6:00 pm.

|  | PRESENT:   | Director Giles – Chair<br>John Morris<br>Director Hutchins<br>Roger Wiles<br>Chris Wood<br>Judy Stafford  | Rodger Hunter<br>Kevin Visscher<br>Director Kent<br>Justin Straker<br>Bruce Sampson  |
|--|--|---|--|
|  | ALSO<br>PRESENT:   | Kate Miller, Manager, Region<br>Dyan Freer, Recording Secre<br>Ian Morrison, Director Electo<br>Ernie Elliott – retiring GM, Co<br>Maureen Tommy – incoming | etary<br>oral Area 'F<br>owichan Tribes  |
|  | <b>REGRETS:</b>  | Larry George, Bruce Fraser,<br>Dave Polster   | Pete Keber, Director Walker,   |
| ELECTIONOF CHAIR   | Nominated we<br>Gerry Giles<br>Justin Straker<br>A ballot was i  | sked for nominations for the portere:   | osition of Chair.<br>y Giles was elected Chair by  |
| ELECTION OF CO-<br>CHAIR                                     | Justin Straker<br>Chris Wood w<br>Rodger Hunte<br>Nominated by   |   |  |
| APPROVAL<br>OF AGENDA  | with a chang<br>following appro  | e of order with delegations   |  |
| WELCOME to the<br>DELEGATIONS from<br>the COWICHAN<br>TRIBES | Cowichan Tri<br>Ernie Elliott sh<br>environment.<br>We honour our<br>for others, res<br>and give thank<br>his talk.<br>Maureen Tom<br>member which<br>Mother Earth<br>generations. | The river is our artery and veil<br>elders. Help others, share,<br>pect rights of others, take re   | <b>g General Manager.</b><br>ortance of taking care of the<br>ns. Family is heart of tribes –<br>be truthful and honest, care<br>sponsibility for your actions,<br>have were the main focus of<br>being a Cowichan Tribe's<br>C. Maintain a balance on<br>our lives and for our future<br>common vision. Thank you |

#### ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the December 16, 2010, Environment Commission meeting be adopted as presented.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

#### BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES

- B1 Sign In Sheet for public presentations will be sent out to the whole of the Commission to sign up. Presentation will be put up on website for commission members to read. Dyan will circulate and update list.
- B2 Discussion on the land presentation. Decision to present to the Regional Services Committee February 23, 2011 at 6 pm. It will explain fully the recommendations from the commission with an update on the State of Environment Report. Justin, Roger and Chris will work on the presentation. Kate will ascertain there will be enough time provided.

# **B3** Combining Economic and Environment Commissions

Pros and cons will be discussed at the next meeting with both commissions taking part. Discussion -- communications would be key topic on how to make good economic decisions with strong environmental ideas. Combined we become a lot stronger.

It was moved and seconded that the Environment Commission recommend to the CVRD Board that the Board permit the Economic Development Commission and the Environment Commission to explore the possibility of establishing a joint Environment and Economic Commission and bring forward a report for the Board's consideration on the matter, and further, that this matter be referred to the Economic Development Commission for their comment.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

This motion is referred to the Economic Development Commission for their comments and consideration after which a joint report will be formulated for the Board's consideration on the matter.

- B4 Letter to Duncan Christian School re support for Solar BC Grant sent on December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- **B5** Commission Appointments Mayor Tom Walker is a 2011 designate for the Environment Commission. He replaces Director lannidinardo.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

- C1 Email dated January 12, 2011 to Kate Lindsay re Mid-Island Biosphere Reserve proposal requesting support to make certain areas on Vancouver Island a Biodiversity Biosphere. Email received and referred to Rob Hutchins to meet and explore more about it. Add to next meeting's agenda.
- C2 Recreation guides from North Cowichan/Island Savings Centre and Lake Cowichan Chris will look at placing ads in these publications including KPRC and Ladysmith.

It was moved and seconded to participate in ads for the Valley Recreation Guides to a maximum of \$1000.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

- C3 Email from Peter Nix review his email to bring back to Feb. 17 mtg.
- C4 Letter from the Council of Canadians dated January 17, 2011, commending the Environment Commission on their work on the State of Environment Report is referred to CVRD Board.
- C5 Response to News Leader's article to be discussed at next meeting.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### CR1 Land committee – Justin Straker

Sustainable Land Use workshop planned for February 17, 2011 with the focus on land use using an ecological simulation model, showing future probable land effects. Invitees list being formulated. Decision to change date to February 22 or 24 so more directors can possibly attend. Justin will advise as to when speaker is available.

#### CR2 Recommendation #2

The CVRD Environment Commission has reviewed available information and developed recommendations for specific targets. The Environment Commission acknowledges that these targets need to be refined and supported, and that managers need to understand the consequences both of adopting these targets, and of not adopting these targets.

#### It was moved and seconded

That the CVRD develop and adopt targets for maintenance of ecosystem function and services across the land base.

1. That the CVRD Board direct staff to conduct an analysis and impact statement for adoption of the attached targets, including identifying options for implementation, and report back to the CVRD Board and Environment Commission. This activity should be identified in the 2011 CVRD work plan, with corresponding budget allocated; and

2. That the CVRD Environment Commission and Economic Development Commission form a sub-committee to work together to explore the implications and the consequences of adoption of the attached targets.

#### MOTION CARRIED

In summary the three recommendation that the commission is making to the CVRD Board are as follows and are detailed in the associated white paper to be provided to the board as a backgrounder:

#### Recommendation #1 – Assess Regional Carrying Capacity and Cumulative Effects

 The CVRD Environment Commission recommends that the CVRD and partner organizations conduct a structured evaluation of regional environmental carrying capacities, and the cumulative effects of human activities on the ecosystem goods and services in the CVRD, including current effects and a range of plausible future effects.

### Recommendation #2 – Set Protective Targets for Land-Based Indicators

- The CVRD Board direct CVRD staff to conduct an analysis and impact statement for adoption of the attached targets, including identifying options for implementation, and report back to the CVR Board and Environment Commission. This activity should be ident in the 2011 CVRD work plan, with corresponding budget allocated
- The CVRD Environment Commission and Economic Developn Cowichan form a sub-committee to work together to explore the implications and consequences of adoption of the attached targets

# Recommendation #3 – Immediate and Mid-Term Actions

#### Immediate

- Re-zoning to conservation designation of all identified Sensitive Ecosystems
- Develop a conservation/restoration strategy for Garry oak and associated ecosystems to meet targets for conservation and old forest contained in this report
- Undertake small-scale environmental modification projects of CVRD facilities

#### Mid-Term

 We recommend that the CVRD begin and advance a collaborative process to address land-use and potential opportunities/constraints on public/Crown and private forest lands in the region.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion: This recommendation identifies with the Corporate Strategic Plan #4. That needs to be emphasized. Excellent work done by land committee – thank you from the Chair

#### CR3 Communications – Chris Wood

It was moved and seconded that the Environment Commission

- 1. fund and organize a video creation contest amongst high school, junior and middle school students "to post on You Tube and the winner will be the one that receives the most hits, and
- 2. Invite EDC to see if we can derive common messaging and work together on some of our communications work.

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

The plan will be refined and Kevin Visscher will take lead on this project. Communications committee will meet to discuss further. Dyan to make database for schools and grades served. Sponsorships might be available for prizes.

#### CR4 Agriculture – Judy Stafford

 Article in Cowichan Valley Voice January/February 2011 issue as a follow up on the cover crop workshop.

- Food security coalition met for 3 years now. Agricultural subcommittee met with them this week to discuss issues and plans.
- Island on the Edge –next movie by same producer as 'Food Security is in our Hands' is premiering Feb 12 at 2 pm at Christian Reformed Church. All are invited.

#### **INFORMATION**

- IN1 CGC will be hosting a donor breakfast at Clement Centre on March 3. Will be a review of last year's activities
- **IN2** A recommendation will be going to the Board suggesting implementation of a different level of taxes for people that buy up agricultural land and don't use it for agricultural purposes to have a higher tax rate.

#### NEW BUSINESS

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NB1 Agriculture – Suggestion that a mentoring program and farm machinery repair course would be beneficial as young people don't have experience in farming nor access to land. Could possibly take place on a CVRD piece of property with farmers as mentors.

Should we establish an Agricultural Acquisition Fund to allow for purchase of land for agricultural purposes? This would encourage people to produce food. Suggestion was to send it to UBCM for discussion around if governments are allowed to do this.

# NEXT MEETING Tuesday, February 22, 2011

ADJOURNMENT It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Chair

**Recording Secretary** 

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Dated: \_\_\_\_\_



# STAFF REPORT

#### ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2011

DATE: February 14, 2011

FILE NO:

FROM: Kate Miller, M.Sc. MCIP, LEED AP, Manager Regional Environmental Policy Division

SUBJECT: 2011 Draft 131 Environmental Initiatives and Environment Commission Budget

#### **Recommendation/Action:**

That the Commission reviews the current 2011 DRAFT Environmental Initiatives 131 budget and subcomponent Environment Commission budget attached and make any recommendations they feel appropriate.

#### Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

The Environmental Policy Division has proposed a number of programs and activities to support the corporate strategic plan recently developed by the CVRD but which require funding and staffing support to realize. This is particularly critical for this Division as it has a small core budget and major components of the Corporate Strategic objectives fall within its mandate.

# Financial Impact: (Reviewed by Finance Division: \_SGN/

The Draft 2011 budget has been developed based on direction of the Regional Services Committee and reflects the core services that were provided in 2010; overall the Environmental Policy Divisions' budget has an increase in the expenditure level from 2010, which is due to a surplus of \$147,163 being carried over from 2010. The requisition has decreased by \$20,000 or 4.3%. There has been an increase in the allocations from other departments of \$42,656. The Environment Commission has been provided with a separate budget line inside the Environmental Initiatives 131 budget from which to develop programming; the amount is \$51,500 which is consistent with the 2010 budget.

#### Background:

As per the CVRD financial policy, commissions and committees are asked to review proposed annual program budgets. The role of the committees and commissions is to provide guidance for any proposed general increases; second to review the proposed budgets and programming implications; and third make any recommendations to the CVRD board related to those budgets.

The CVRD Board directed managers responsible for regional budgets to return with budgets with no more than a maximum 2% increase to core costs; any additional programming must be approved as a supplemental request to the core budget. This direction was brought forward to the commission at the October 21, 2010 meeting at which time the commission made two motions; one to approve a working budget increase for the commission of 2% for the 2011 period and secondly to carry forward the allocated but as yet unused 2010 surplus to the 2011 period. The calculated carry forward for the 2011 period was \$15,198 to cover the approved expenses for the lands workshop, air quality workshop and the reprint of the SOE report.

The Commissions surplus has been removed from the Divisions tax requisition request resulting in a deficit to the commission's 2011 working budget at this time. The commission is asked to review its proposed 2011 budget and make any modifications or recommendations it sees fit.

Submitted by,

Kate Miller, M.Sc. MCIP, LEED AP Manager, Regional Environmental Policy Division.

Reviewed by: Division Manag proved by alMàna

| Proposed 2011 budget previously allocated funding    | 2010           | 2011            |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| land committee                                       |                | 5,000           |
| dangers of air contaminants public awareness campain |                | 5,000           |
| reprint of SOE                                       |                | 3,000           |
| travel<br>meeting expenses                           | 1,500<br>5,000 | 1,500           |
| contract for services                                | 20,000         | 5,000<br>20,000 |
| advertising  | 5,000          | 20,000          |
| communications                                       | 20,000         | 26,000          |
| Total  | 51,500         | 65,500          |
| Budget   | 51,500         | 51,500          |

Function: 131 - Environmental Initiatives

2011 Requisition Review

| A) Core Budget (Existing Service Level) |  |   | 2010                       | Proposed   |  |                                   |  |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Core Budget                             | 2009<br><u>Tax Requisition</u> <u>Ta</u>       | 2010<br><u>Tax Requisition</u><br>\$486,482 | % Increase<br>(Decrease)   | <b>2011</b><br><u>Tax Requisition</u><br>\$466,482 | \$ Increase<br>(Decrease)<br>-\$20,000 | % Increase<br>[Decrease]<br>-4.1% | Cost per<br><u>\$100,000</u><br>(\$0.14) |
| Main Reasons for 2011 decrease:         | Increase in surplus<br>increase in allocations | S   |                            |  | -\$147,163<br>\$42,656                 | -30.3%<br>8.8%                    | (\$1.02)<br>\$0.30                       |
|   | Decrease in wages                              |   |                            |  | -\$12,762                              | -2.6%                             | (\$0.09)                                 |
|   | Increase in flood plain management             | n management                                |                            |  | \$25,000                               | 5.1%                              | \$0.17                                   |
|   | Increase in other operating costs              | erating costs                               |                            |  | \$9,300                                | 1.9%                              | \$0.06                                   |
|   | increase in non-grant funded projects          | t tunded projects                           |                            |  | \$62,969                               | 12.9%                             | \$0.44                                   |
|   |  |   |                            | Subtotal   | -\$20,000                              | -4.1%                             | (\$0.14)                                 |
| B) Supplemental Items                   |  |   |                            |  |  |                                   |  |
| i) Requested by C                       | Commission                                     | Anticip                                     | Anticipated Funding Method | thod   |  |                                   |  |

| (!   | Requested by Commission      | Antic    | Anticipated Funding Method | poq              |  |                           |   |
|------|------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------|--|---------------------------|---|
|      | 1)                           | Reserves | <u>S.T. borrow</u>         | Operating        | <u>Impact on</u><br><u>Requisition</u> | <u>% Increase</u><br>0.0% | <u>% Increase</u> <u>Cost per \$100k</u><br>0.0% \$0.00 |
|      | 3)                           |          |                            |                  |  | 0.0%<br>0.0%              | \$0.00<br>\$0.00  |
|      |                              | \$0      | \$0                        | \$0              | \$0                                    | 0.0%                      | \$0.00  |
| ii)  | Recommended by               | Antici   | Anticipated Funding Method | hod              |  |                           |   |
|      | Corporate Leadership<br>Team | Reserves | S.T. borrow                | <u>Operating</u> | Impact on<br>Requisition               | % Increase                | <u>% Increase</u> <u>Cost per \$100k</u>                |
|      | 1) Water Shed Board          |          |                            | \$25,000         | \$25,000                               | 5.1%                      | \$0.17  |
|      | 2)                           |          |                            |                  |  | 0.0%                      | \$0.00  |
|      | 3)                           |          |                            |                  |  | 0.0%                      | \$0.00  |
|      |                              | \$0      | \$0                        | \$25,000         | \$25,000                               | 5.1%                      | \$0.17  |
| (111 | Other items                  | Antici   | Anticipated Funding Method | pot              |  |                           |   |
|      |                              | Reserves | S.T. borrow                | <u>Operating</u> | <u>Impact on</u><br><u>Requisition</u> | <u>% Increase</u>         | <u>% Increase</u> Cost per \$100k                       |
|      | 1) Coastal Zone Mapping      |          |                            | \$75,000         | \$75,000                               | 15.4%                     | \$0.52  |
|      | 2) CURP C                    |          |                            | \$112,000        | \$37,000                               | 7.6%                      | \$0.26  |
|      | J CVKU CURPORATE EMISSIONS   |          |                            | \$37,000         | \$37,000                               | 7.6%                      | \$0.26  |
|      |                              | 20       | \$0                        | \$224,000        | \$149,000                              | 30.6%                     | \$1.03  |
|      |                              |          |                            |                  |  |                           |   |

2:\2011 Budget\131 Environmental Initiatives\131 - Requisition Review .XLS

\$1.07

31.7%

\$154,000

Total Impact

# ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION FEBRUARY 22, 2011

DATE: February 9, 2011

FROM: Bruce Fraser

SUBJECT: Request for Discussion

With respect to the logging that has been conducted during January/February 2011 on the west shore uplands of the Shawnigan Lake Watershed the following questions will be asked at the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Environment Commission:

- 1. Who is the owner of the forest land that has been logged?
- 2. Who actually planned the logging layout?
- 3. Who conducted the logging?
- 4. Was the Regional District informed of the impending logging or consulted prior to the onset of logging with regard to the anticipated visual impact on the lake environment or the hydrological impact to the watershed?
- 5. Given the size of the opening, what specific professional considerations were given to the visual and hydrologic impacts?
- 6. Are the conduct of the planning, consultations and logging practices consistent with the private managed forest land regulations and the forest certification obligations of the company?
- 7. Is the logging that has taken place consistent with the environmental management intentions of the draft OCP for South Cowichan?
- 8. Has there been any indication that the logged land will now be put forward for sale and subdivision?

If the answers to these questions indicate that the Regional District was not systematically informed, or consultations were not carried out, or that professional consideration of the impacts were not made or that they are inconsistent with the practices normally required by the private managed forest land regulations or the certification body, or withheld due to "private corporation" privilege and if the rapid completion of the logging is in any way anticipatory of the conditions of the OCP that might have led to lesser impacts, or that the corporate intention is to create further rural settlement sprawl, then serious remedial action needs to be taken on behalf of Shawnigan residents whose visual backdrop has been affected, whose water supply may be affected and whose OCP intentions may be bypassed.

This note constitutes notice of motion for the March meeting of the Environment Commission. In the case of unavailable or unsatisfactory answers to the above questions... Be it resolved that the Environment Commission recommend to the Regional District Board that a formal complaint be made to the Private Managed Forest Land Council regarding the situation and a formal response from them be provided to both the Regional District and the Environment Commission.

Failing a satisfactory response from the PMFLC, then

Be it resolved that the Environment Commission recommend to the Regional District Board that it make urgent representation to the Minister of Forests to invite the Forest Practices Board to conduct an audit of the oversight practices of the Private Managed Forest Land Council with specific reference to the Shawnigan Lake Westshore Logging Practices and their outcomes.

Failing a thorough and satisfactory airing of and resolution to the issues involved and a commitment to avoidance of any repeats of the situation, then

Be it resolved that the Environment Commission recommends to the Regional District Board that they lodge a formal complaint with the relevant Forest Certification body and request both a formal audit and that the results of the audit be provided to the Board and the Commission.

**CVRD Environment Commission Video Contest** 

Planning Meeting – Monday, February 14th, 2011 4:15pm @ the CVRD Bldg.

Present: Gerry Giles, Roger Wiles, Kevin Visscher

#### Agenda

- 1. Opening -Kevin
- 2. Show an example of a video contest -Lakeland College



Vermilion & Lloydminster Alberta, Canada

# Lakeland College Renewable Energy Video Contest Closes Feb. 10







# Great Opportunity for Your Students

- 1st Prize iPad 64GB with WiFi
- 2nd Prize Bose Portable SoundDock
- 3rd Prize Samsung Camcorder SMX-F43 Flash

 These are the
 prizes is available for three different categories in Lakeland College's

 Explore Your Renewable Energy Future video contest. Entries can win more than one prize.

Categories are: Lakeland student, non-Lakeland student and people's choice. The first two categories are judged. The third is based on votes.

All you have to be is 14 years of age and a Canadian citizen.

Check out all the contest details at Energize the Future.

# Tips & Inspiration & Spotlights

Whether your students are in need of inspiration for a video, or howto-tips, we've put together some helpful hints on a variety of things from editing to parodies.

Along with those resources, are some spotlights on different types of renewable energy including solar, wind, geothermal and biodiesel.



Check out it all out at

www.lakelandcollege.ca/CSI video contest tips/

# February 10 is entry deadline

Time is ticking down for contest entries. They are due by 11:59 pm on Thursday Feb. 10.

Contest details, entry form and downloads are all available at <u>Energize the</u> <u>Future</u>!



Please feel free to forward this email to a friend.

Send to a friend!

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Unfortunately the links no longer work.

I did manage to find a link that will give more information to this particular video contest: <u>http://wildfireapp.com/website/6/contests/73629/</u>

Lakeland College is hosting the contest

http://www.lakelandcollege.ca/applied research/csi video contest.aspx Pay close attention to the drop down menus –"The Rules". We need to incorporate the same kind of detail when making our own contest. (No sense in reinventing the wheel.)

The above is a good example of what we need to include for the CVRD Video Contest. The promo video is an idea we could also do. Kevin will email Rob Hutchinson to inquire if he knows someone that can help us produce a 1 minute promo video. Gerry will also check some contacts that she knows. The promo video will likely involve the Environment Commission members highlighting the eight themes of the SOE. This might be helpful to intro the SOE presentations that we are all lined up to do in the near future!

The other option is to promote the contest by a more conventional method. Like the sample above we can create an ad/poster to be sent out to the schools.

- 3. It was suggested that we create the following categories:
  - a) Elementary Aged
  - b) Middle School Aged
  - c) High School Aged

This is open to students attending a public, independent, or home school. The above categories will hopefully allow students from any grade level submit something. Students will need to submit their age and grade level when entering the contest.

4. Kevin will check local stores (Future Shop, London Drugs, The Source, etc.) to sponsor the prizes. We will go with the following prizes:

#### 1st Prize

An iPad 64GB Wifi and 3G plus a case (valued at over \$900)

2nd Prize

Bose Sound Dock Portable plus a case (valued at over \$470)

**3rd Prize** 

Samsung Camcorder SMX-F43 Flash plus a case (valued at over \$270)

**Recommendation: With 3 prizes for each category, we need to budget for \$5,000**. I will email Justin to see if we can have a few minutes at the next Environment Commission meeting scheduled for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. The Commission will need to approve this budget.

#### 5. Award Categories:

- People's Choice for each category (Voting) –this needs to be done via the CVRD website and YouTube. Gerry will check with the CVRD Tech Support to see how this can be done.
- Best Entry for each category (Judged) The Environment Commission will set aside time at the May meeting to judge the finalists.

#### 6. Entrant Requirements

- Videos must be your own work
- Maximum 90 seconds in length
- Entrants will need to submit their videos electronically via the CVRD website.

#### 7. Timeline:

| Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup><br>Feb 28 to March 14 <sup>th</sup> | -Approve project budget at CVRD Environment Commission meeting<br>-Make promo video  |
|--|--|
| <br>March 28 to April 1st                                | -Kevin visits schools to promote the video contest using the SOE presentation.   |
| April 15 <sup>th</sup>                                   | -Contest is open for submissions and voting. Early submissions are allowed.  |
| May 15 <sup>th</sup>                                     | -Contest closes to voting at 11:59pm on May 15 <sup>th</sup> .   |
| May 16-18  | -Votes are tallied   |
| May 19 <sup>th</sup>                                     | -Environment Commission members judge finalists at the CVRD  |
| May 20 <sup>th</sup>                                     | Environment Commission meeting to determine the final placing.<br>-Winners will be announced. Schools notified. Friday assembly?<br>Media? Sun FM radio? |

8. Meeting adjourned just after 5 pm.

# Dyan Freer

From: Sent: To: Subject:

Peter Nix [peternix@shaw.ca] Wednesday, January 05, 2011 3:23 PM 12things@cvrdenviro.com Feedback from the 12things.ca website

Jan 5, 2011

**CVRD** Environmental Commission Ideas for Action on Climate Change

Thank you for your invitation for input for a better "green account" for Cowichan. And thank you for your State of the Environment report. The community needs your message that climate change will have severe social and economic impacts on future generations. Now, we need to transform those words into action.

With your linkage between environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change in mind, my "broad" comments on a green Cowichan necessarily include more that just traditional environmental concerns:

- ----

# **Climate Change Champion**

The North Cowichan Environmental Advisory Committee has just become a "Climate Action Advisory Committee" (I am on it, but it has only 5 members). A good start, but I believe that we need a more regional and more inclusive committee. This committee could be "informal" - so as not to frighten your political masters. But it could feed the less politically contentious ideas into the CVRD Environmental Commission while feeding more radical ideas into other public groups. It could liaise with interested members of the public at large, with the above North Cowichan Committee and/or any other groups such as the Transition Group, Cowichan Green, Carbon Busters and so on.

I recognize that there are political turfs here and that you may well have better ideas as to how action on climate change can become more inclusive in our community. You may worry about getting too diffuse comment from the public that would frighten your political masters. You may worry that too many people would create confusion and lack of direction with never-ending open-ended committees. But in order to successfully act on climate change, we need a paradigm shift in organization as well as lifestyle.

We need to ensure that all aspects of our society are viewed with a "carbon reduction" lens, not just municipal governments.

# Don't React to Climate Change - be Proactive

Local governments are now spending money on flood control based on flooding from last winter. OK, this needs to be done. But remember that extreme weather events will increase as a result of climate change and no amount of money can stop massive flood events. So let's get ahead of the curve. Let's be proactive. There only realistic solution if is to reduce our individual and collective carbon emissions, then will have less extreme weather events.

# Indicators of Environment Health

Traditional indicators of environmental health no longer adequately reflect the condition of our environment. For example, climate change will likely accelerate the incidence and severity of invasive species; therefore,

traditional indicator species of environmental health (e.g., frogs, lichen) may be a result of changes in climate rather than more conventional issues of "environmental health" such as air, water, and habitat quality. Alternatively, we now know that non-traditional socio-economic indicators will impact our environmental health, so they should now be included as indicators.

For example, gasoline consumption may be an excellent environmental health indicator since sales of gas reflect the extent of greenhouse gases emissions in our community, and therefore the state of our environment in terms of climate change. Other non-traditional indicators might include sales of alternative energy systems, carbon levels in forest and agricultural soils and lake water temperatures because these factors will track the extent of climate change and therefore the potential for impairment of all our environmental, social and economic systems.

#### **Population Growth**

The big elephant in the room of official community planning is population growth. With existing technologies, we simply cannot increase populations and have a sustainable planet. So we need to encourage smaller families.

Municipalities have traditionally had little or no say in family planning, and of course the issue is political dynamite. But this is a crisis and we need to change our paradigm as to what is appropriate action from our local governments. Moral suasion for population control should be a part of your basket of tools for action on climate change.

#### Development

More conventionally, the physical development of our municipalities is a crucial component for action on climate change. Urban sprawl out into agricultural land or undisturbed land is antithetical to a sustainable community. Sprawl destroys habitat and increases our greenhouse gas emissions. So we need much stricter and "greener" development criteria.

My idea for one sweeping change would be to simply demand that all new development be "carbon neutral"; that is, no net increase in carbon emissions from a baseline. This criterion would unleash protest, but if implemented would also unleash innovative ideas from private enterprise. And it would relinquish local governments of the burden of a plethora of convoluted by-laws and regulations. I know this seems simplistic and would be politically difficult, but sometimes simple is good. And it would have the huge value of educating the public about the dangers of greenhouse gases.

And of course there are a wide variety of micro-management options to limit urban sprawl – zoning by-laws, densification policies, road or gas taxes, and so on. You would know all about that.

### Transportation

Since 82% of Cowichan GHG emissions are related to the movement of vehicles, transportation is a critical component of any climate action plan (actually, the real figure would be more like half of that – see the next topic, coal exports). Here are some ideas:

- Develop the infrastructure for electric vehicles (plug-in sites etc); for example, make plug-in sites mandatory for new houses
- Work with the province on reducing speed limits; maybe have dedicated lanes for small electric vehicles in some areas

- Increase the cost of parking for cars ۲
- Support and accelerate plans for mass transit (e.g., highland railway, buses) ¢
- provide local tax support for companies working with alternative energy and/or electric transportation ۲

# **Coal Exports**

About 50% of BC's GHG emissions are exported to other countries in the form of coal - and then re-imported in the form of consumer goods. So any climate action plan in our community is meaningless unless we phase

CVRD has no regulatory powers in this matter/ But as a recognized government body, it has the power of moral suasion - you need to use it. I ask that you not be tied down by conventional ideas of what is an appropriate action in this period of historic crisis. CVRD can and should act beyond mere regulatory levels and lead by persuasion and conviction - and one way to do this is to be an advocate for phasing out coal exports.

At one conference of municipal leaders in Vancouver, it was explicitly suggested by some elected officials that municipalities should not feel constrained by tradition, or even law. We have a moral duty to respond to the historic crisis of climate change by any means possible. CVRD could petition senior governments, engage the public on this issue, present information briefs to local council on the contribution of coal exports to our "real" GHG emissions - and so on.

# **Engaging the Public**

Very importantly, the public will more likely act on climate change when they come to understand that this is not just an "environmental" issue. CVRD cannot succeed in acting on climate change unless a critical mass of the community supports the concept of a low carbon lifestyle.

I engage the public from my own niche as a "carbon buster". But the perception of many is that my niche of science and environmentalism is biased, unimportant or just plain crazy. This is a fundamental problem. So we need more institutional voices to promote action on climate change, voices that may have more credibility with larger segments of the population. In short, you need to be more outspoken, more forceful and use more resources from the community.

In the dirty thirty's, the federal government tried to educate farmers to reduce soil erosion through the use of more progressive agricultural practices - with little initial success. Permanent success came only when they sought out community leaders, educated them individually to use more sustainable practices. At that point, when other farmers saw these community leaders on board, the farming community began to practice more sustainable methods of farming through this process called social diffusion.

I invite you to set up a community leadership program to engage the public; that is, promote ideas and practices of carbon neutrality by highlighting what sympathetic community leaders are saying and, more importantly, doing. I would be happy to help find people. You can find people with marketing skills to help with the

# Some ideas:

- persuade newspapers to run a regular column on what specific citizen leaders are doing to reduce their carbon footprint - perhaps you could pay for the space (I have try to do this with occasional editorials -
- but I have become a bit of a flashpoint and so cannot convince a wide segment of people)
- have church leaders etc. write in the paper about his/her path to carbon zero 6
- get local sports figure to demonstrate their new electric scooter or etc.

- your commission could make and distribute lawn signs to allow home-owners to highlight their effort in going towards carbon zero (i.e., "I am a Carbon Buster and use an electric mower) or "I plant trees to reduce global warming, etc – these signs should all have a common logo like Carbon Busters or 12BigThings or etc). Again, I offer to help and to get other volunteers.
- I had hoped to outfit an old school bus filled with information use electric technology as much as possible and get volunteers to send it to malls and schools. But I need more institutional help and more volunteers money is useful of course but it is not the main problem). Maybe you could help with this project or some other project where the action from a quasi-government body and other public groups could be more that the sum of each part? Or maybe this project is not so important and needs rethinking maybe the tipping point in public attitudes is not so far away (I gave a talk at Frances Kelsey the other day and some mothers were in tears about the fate of their kids, knowing that climate change will alter their world.

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Cheers, Peter Nix Cowichan Carbon Buster

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The Ecole Mill Bay Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is pleased to invite you to join us in celebrating our World Environment Day, Ecostravaganza! on Saturday, June 4, 2011 from 10 am to 4 pm. Ecostravaganza! will be hosted at Ecole Mill Bay located at 3175 Cobble Hill Road, Mill Bay. Our goal is to promote green living for families within the Cowichan Valley in a fun, friendly and welcoming way.

We are currently looking for vendors, participants and sponsors with a focus on local and sustainable businesses that share our vision of a green community. If your business or organization would be interested in taking part, please contact Sarah Milne at <u>marketplace@ecostravaganza.ca</u>.

The Ecostravaganza! will include a:

- business vendors' marketplace
- food vendors' court
- children's activity area
- plant sale market
- small selection of workshops
- main stage area
- used book sale
- silent auction

Ecostravaganza! 2010 was a huge success with over 2000 attendees, 51 vendors and dozens of performers. The day included happy kids, incredible performances, beautiful sunshine and lots of recycled plants and books going to new homes.

The business vendors' marketplace will feature a combination of information, services and product providers. The business vendors' marketplace makes up the core of our event with businesses and non-profit associations offering products for sale and/or promotional information. These vendors need to fit within the green living parameters of our event in one of the following categories:

- organic products (not necessarily certified)
- local products
- sustainable products and services
- recycled products and services
- ethical or fair trade products
- environmental information (both profit and non-profit organizations)

We would love to have your business or organization help us to make this a fun and amazing day.

Visit <u>www.ecostravaganza.ca</u> for more information.

Sincerely,

Ecostravaganza! Team Ecole Mill Bay PAC

# RATES

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Please chose one category

|      | Outdoor Booth 10'x10' (includes one 6' table and two chairs, no electricity)<br>Vendors may choose to supply their own tent.             | \$55.00  |
|------|--|--|
|      | Outdoor Booth 10' x 10' (includes one 6' table, two chairs and photovoltaic electricity)<br>Vendors may choose to supply their own tent. | \$125.00                                       |
|      | Indoor Booth 10'x10' (includes one 6' table, two chairs and photovoltaic electricity)  | \$100.00                                       |
|      | Food Vendor<br>(includes a 10' x 10' space outside on our field, one 6' table, two chairs and<br>photovoltaic electricity)               |  |
|      | "Out of the Box" Booth (does not fit above categories)   | \$125.00                                       |
|      | Please contact us to negotiate.  | \$   |
| FIE  | ase choose any extras you will need  |  |
|      | Extra Table (6' tables) @ \$10 each  | \$   |
|      | Extra Chairs @ \$3 each  | \$   |
|      | Early booking discount (deduct 10% if paying in full before Feb 28, 2011)  | \$()   |
| TOT  | FAL PAYABLE  | \$   |
| Plea | se provide detailed information regarding your electrical needs in the space provided:   | - <u>- , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,</u> |
|      |  |  |

Ecostravaganza! is grateful to Energy Alternatives Ltd. for providing photovoltaic power to our outdoor vendors.

 Optional: Your business will have access to a main stage time slot for educational and/or informational purposes.

#### FRIEND SPONSOR-\$500

This package will include:

- Your business name and/or logo will appear prominently on site signage and in some marketing materials.
- Your business name will be displayed on the Ecostravaganzal website.
- A hyperlink to your business website on the Ecostravaganza! website.

On event day:

- A booth space (10' x 10') in a prominent location.
- Your business will be announced and acknowledged by the MC on the main stage.

#### **DONATIONS / PRIZES**

Ecostravaganzal can also accept monetary, silent auction items and prize donations to help make our event a success. Any support or donation that you are able to provide would be greatly appreciated and would give you another opportunity to highlight your business or organization.

To discuss your participation as a sponsor at Ecostravaganza! please e-mail Sarah Malerby at sponsors@ecostravaganza.ca.

Thank you for your support!

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# **RE: Land dedication for large block F1 rezonings in electoral areas**

A question arose as to what % of land dedication is typical within the CVRD over the last while for F1(forestry) re-zonings....are averages available, and patterns obvious? Also it has been often stated that: "at re-zoning is the time these community amenities and benefits are negotiated".

Research of successful CVRD re-zoning applications (F1) over the last fifteen years showed that on an average, the land dedication to the CVRD, on rezoning of 43.5% of the land base.

| 1/ Aldermere/Doman - Lake Cowichan/Skutz Falls | 79%   |
|--|-------|
| (205 acres dedication)                         |       |
| 2/ Weyerhaeuser-South Shawnigan Lake           | 36%   |
| (47 acres dedication)                          |       |
| 3/ Silver Mine Rd/Lakweb-North Shawnigan Lake  | 15%   |
| (25acres dedication)                           |       |
| 4/ Key Corp-Sooke Lake Rd                      | 56%   |
| (159 acres dedication)                         |       |
| 5/ Limona- Youbou Rd *                         | 25%   |
| (11 acres dedication)                          |       |
| 6/ Malahat-Iris Land Corp                      | 44%   |
| (396 acres dedication)                         |       |
| 7/ Caromar Sales-Sahtlam *                     | 44%   |
| (163 acres gift & dedication)                  |       |
| 8/ Ocean Terrace-Mill Bay                      | 23%   |
| (31 acres dedication)                          |       |
| 9/ Woodland Shores-Cowichan Lake               | 72%   |
| (~800 acres dedication)                        |       |
| 10/ Paldi-Sahtlam                              | 14%   |
| (51 acres dedication)                          |       |
| 11/ Bickford-MillBay                           | 60%   |
| (20 acres dedication)                          |       |
| 12/ Inwoodcreek-Sahtlam                        | 54%   |
| (119 acres dedication)                         | JT /U |
|  |       |

### AVERAGE **43.5%**

\*Limona also complimented the 25% land dedication with structures and infrastructure. \*Caromar Sales rezoning includes seven fee simple building lots for CVRD uses.

The mix of land offered as part of the typical rezoning, for public use and ownership, varies from green space, parkland, watershed values, to ecologically and biologically significant lands, as well as lands such as historical Temples and cemeteries.

Some rezonings specified additional amenities such as built trails, features, playgrounds and other additional amenities that complimented the land dedications and land gifts. Some dedications occur immediately and some are phased over time.

\*(Youbou lands, a rezoning of a hybrid of Industrial and forestry lands to a comprehensive development zone has a dedication of 44% encompassing ~300 acres of park & green space.)

All things said and done the average land dedication on large block F1 rezonings as a pattern is clearly ~43.5%....sometimes more and sometimes less.

FYI...Loren Duncan

# XII Whither or Wither the Planet ...?

If we live as if there is no tomorrow, there really won't be one.

Kurt Vonnegut

2010 is turning out to be the hottest year worldwide since temperature details were first documented in the 1850s, while the past decade has been the warmest ever recorded. Wildfires scorched Russia and Israel and parts of the interior of British Columbia were once again on the burn.

We have notoriously short memories but surely we have not forgotten the floods and landslides that ravaged Pakistan and China, the oil spill that will permanently cripple the Gulf of Mexico or the toxic red sludge that engulfed the Danube.

The World Meteorological Organization has just announced that global concentrations of the main greenhouse gases reached their highest level in 2010 in almost one million years. Is it any wonder that, with increased planetary warming, a massive chunk of the Greenland ice shelf broke off and slid into the ocean this summer or that species extinction is escalating?

One of the most reputable international think tanks, the New Economics Foundation, recently reported that the world went into ecological debt on 21<sup>st</sup> August this year. Known as Earth Overshoot Day, it occurred a whole month earlier than last year. On that day we exhausted our annual environmental budget and we are now eating into our natural capital by extracting more from the planet than it is capable of reproducing.

Lester Brown, founder of the Worldwatch Institute, explains the problem in economic jargon to make it clearer: "We are liquidating earth's natural assets to fuel our consumption." No amount of Federal Reserve stimulus funding or bailouts can rescue us from this meltdown.

Enough doom and gloom? Read on.

One of the most frightening studies ever published appeared in July earlier this year but it sailed right under the radar screen of public awareness. It was reported in *Nature* that the concentrations of phytoplankton or plant plankton in the top layers of the oceans had declined by about 40 percent since 1950.

Plummeting levels seem to be linked to rising ocean temperatures triggered by global warming and to widespread contamination, such as oil spills and plastic pollutants. Increased acidification of the oceans, another consequence of global warming, is also suspected in the disturbing decline of the plankton.

Phytoplankton form part of a complex photosynthesis process that produces oxygen. It is estimated that half the world's oxygen is created by marine photosynthesis – every second breath we take is dependent on the health of the oceans. In addition, phytoplankton help cool the planet by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The microscopic plankton also perform another vital role as the base of the ocean food chain.

The other half of the world's oxygen supply is produced through photosynthesis on land by trees, grasses and plants. North America has been operating at an oxygen deficit for the last 40 years as we clearcut forests, ploughed under grasslands and burned fossil fuels in increasing volumes.

To deprive our unborn offspring of life-sustaining oxygen would be a crime of epic proportions. And just because, as the late Carl Sagan put it, we were too lazy to change our destructive lifestyles. We have no moral right to download the costs, both economic and ecologic, on the backs of future generations or to squander their birthright.

We have probably one decade at most to dramatically control our greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pollution and learn to live within the natural limits of the planet. If we remain so resolute in our refusal to modify our lifestyles and our consumption habits, ecological tipping points will kick in with consequences far beyond human control. No technofixes will ever rescue us once we pass the point of no return.

The environmental crisis in its different manifestations is the defining crisis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – not terrorism, not unemployment, not nuclear weapons or socialism vs capitalism. Environmentalism is not simply another –ism or ideology. It is our life support system.

We are better informed than any generation in history about the dangers threatening the environment and yet we appear immobilized by the magnitude of the problems. We have to frame, and face, the critical questions that will help provide us with a sense of direction to combat the impending crisis.

- Why do we recoil from using language, such as "morality, ethics, values, principles, emotions, feelings, compassion, justice, empathy and spirituality" when discussing environmental issues?
  - What are the relative roles of the individual and institutions, such as the media, corporations, churches and government, in confronting environmental problems?
  - How do we shape an environmental conscience among the corporate, political and moneyed elites?
  - Why do we promote infinite progress and prosperity on a planet with finite resources?
  - How do we persuade individuals to reduce their ecological footprint?
  - Since advertising is aimed solely at expanding consumption, should marketing programs in colleges and universities be converted into departments of ecological economics and sustainable business?

- Should we consider draconian measures, such as restricting the size of houses, limiting the number of cars per family and rationing airline flights?
- How can we hold governments to account on environmental policies if the electorate is not engaged or is ill-informed?
- Do we have the right to protest government environmental policies until we have set an example and curbed our own consumption?
- How do we depoliticize so important an issue as climate change in our partisan political system?
- Are the wealthy developed countries, with their over-sized ecological footprints, creating "climate apartheid" in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu?
- Is the climate crisis not more of a consumption problem in the developed countries than a problem of over-population in the developing world?
- If Canada is already overpopulated in terms of its biocapacity, should we discourage immigration and devote funds to improving the lives of people in other countries?

We will never solve the environmental crisis until we see it as a moral problem. Some years ago, Wendell Berry, the renowned writer and ecologist, wrote that the environmental crisis is fundamentally a crisis of character; it still is. Dr James Hansen, the dean of climate scientists, describes the ecological crisis as both a legal and a moral problem because it is an issue of intergenerational justice. To modify a Marshall McLuhan metaphor: the moral is the message.

It is a moral issue because our conscious decisions and lifestyle choices affect others, not only the unborn but also the disadvantaged struggling to survive in societies shattered by climate change and pollution. If we are not personally aware of the dangers of unrestrained consumption, we have the responsibility to inform ourselves of the impact of our lifestyle decisions on the less fortunate. We are, after all, a sentient species governed by conscious free will, not by programmed determinism.

The environmental crisis is also a crisis of ideology. How sustainable, both ecologically and socially, are the values embedded in our market economy, that focus on self-interest, competition, consumption and growth? Does an adversarial political system that frequently appeals to our baser instincts, best serve our long term ecological and social interests?

Furthermore, it is a crisis of emotions. Somehow, we have to develop and demonstrate the empathy to feel and sense the anguish of the environmentally dispossessed: the submerged Pacific islanders and the victims of floods, fires and droughts. Dare we forget our own northern people as the melting ice and the thawing tundra destroy their age-old lifestyles. How can we even imagine and envision the plight of future generations on a ravaged planet, if we are alienated and estranged from our own emotions?

Above all, the environmental crisis is a spiritual crisis. It is not spiritual in a "new age" or narrow religious sense. What we desperately need is an all-embracing, ecumenical spirituality built around a reverence for the divine in nature and focused on the

perpetuation of life on a vibrant planet – a "reverential ecology" in the words of Satish Kumar, editor of *Resurgence* magazine.

Sacrifice is central to spirituality. Our individual Canadian carbon and ecological footprints are among the highest in the world, far exceeding nature's regenerative capacity. Our level of spiritual commitment must be measured by the sacrifices that we personally are prepared to make in our material lifestyles that will allow us to live within the sustainable limits of the planet.

The eminent ecologist, E.O. Wilson's blunt assessment of the anthropogenic causes of global environmental degradation is that we live in an era of Stone Age emotions, mediaeval institutions and, in our arrogance, we attempt to play God with our technology.

Judging by a recent vote in the Canadian Senate, that institution is still mired in a mediaeval mindset. A procedural problem enabled a majority of Conservative appointed senators to defeat Bill C-311, The Climate Accountability Act. The bill had twice won majority support in the elected House of Commons but it was overturned by an unelected Senate without any discussion. It has been decades since the Senate attempted to defeat a Commons bill without discussion.

Intense lobbying, especially by the fossil fuel industry, reinforced the resolve of the Conservatives, to defeat the climate initiative. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce even circulated a request to its members encouraging them to pressure the senators to kill the legislation. Their message could not be more blunt: "Bill C-311 must die in the Senate."

The Canadian Climate Act simply laid out targets for our greenhouse gases: 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. These emission caps, according to the vast majority of climate scientists, are the only way we will limit the earth's temperature to a 2 degree increase by 2050. Lest we forget, the 2 degree temperature increase was the target that the majority of countries, including Canada, accepted at the Copenhagen climate conference a year ago and then reaffirmed at Cancun this month.

Government spin claimed that the climate bill, if enacted, would shut down the economy and create mass unemployment. One does not have to be a statistician to estimate the unemployment rate in 2050 on a plundered planet. Future Canadians will weep at our self-indulgent narcissism that allowed a minority government to derail a climate protection plan by exploiting a tactic as inane as a procedural matter.

It is crystal clear that we cannot rely on our governments for ethical and enlightened environmental leadership. Partly it is because of the constant pressure exerted on our politicians by corporate lobbyists and partly because of our own fickle voting nature. The lack of political will largely reflects a lack of public will.

Sadly, there is no critical mass of voters to drive public policy on the environment. Many governments, including Canada, have sensed this lack of domestic electoral commitment

to climate issues and, consequently, they are cooling on their emission pledges. We need look no further than the results of the recent mid-term elections in the US as a possible portent for progress on climate change initiatives. How tragically ironic it would be if it was democracy that dashed international attempts to save the planet.

The latest polling numbers indicate that Canadians rate climate change as only the eighth most important global issue. Canada's role as a co-conspirator in the slow death of the Kyoto Protocol, with the execution date set for December 2012, was inspired largely by a careful reading of the electorate. Kyoto will be viewed by future historians as our "Climate Munich" when politicians abandoned principle to appease the party faithful and then capitulated to voter whims.

Although we need national governments to develop progressive environmental policies and to seek international cooperation on ecological issues, we must never rely on them to legislate our attitudes and to restrain our consumption. Joel Salatin, the hero of *Food Inc.* puts it succinctly: There is no salvation through legislation. Furthermore, government decrees merely absolve us from the moral responsibility of regulating our own behaviour.

The onus is on us as individuals to initiate and to ignite the changes that will revolutionize political and public attitudes and action. We can only lead through personal example, not through preaching or through protesting, and the revolution must start in our own homes and in our hearts. Just as Gandhi reminds us that our priorities are best expressed in actions, so must we also anchor our aspirations in actions.

If, as the psychologists suggest, reducing our consumption and moderating our lifestyles, is largely a matter of behavioural change, what is delaying us? We are the arbiters of our own behaviour. Surely we don't lack the courage or the conscience to change our behaviour for the benefit of our offspring.

Appeals to circumscribe our consumption are not new. The prescient English poet of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, William Blake, was ahead of his time when he asked: How do we know what is too much, when we don't even know what is enough. Jeffrey Sachs, the respected humanitarian, in his address to the graduating students at Carleton University recently acknowledged that "our consumerism has too often overtaken our common humanity."

The first step in an action-based crusade is to quantify our consumption and establish our personal ecological footprints. We have to measure and monitor the full sweep of our lifestyles from waste disposal and personal shopping to fossil fuel use and vacations. Earlier articles in this series suggested ways of both reducing and measuring our footprints.

Conservation is really no more difficult than consumption, partly because we already waste so much food and energy in North America. Conserving a litre of gasoline or a kilowatt of electricity not only reduces carbon emissions and pollution, it preserves scarce resources for future generations. The cheapest, cleanest fuel is that which we leave in the ground or the electricity we do not use. Furthermore, modifying our lifestyles and reducing our use of fossil fuels will also eliminate the need for government regulations "to price carbon" in the form of carbon taxes and cap and trade policies.

We must examine all our lifestyle decisions through the lens of ecological precaution and strive to live within the biocapacity of the planet. Mother Earth is, after all, our one and only home.

Once you have set your house in order, take the crusade into your neighbourhood. As Guy Dauncey, the prominent British Columbian environmentalist suggests: Sustainability starts on the street where you live. Major societal change invariably comes from below – it is seldom top down and it is seldom achieved without a protracted struggle. But the struggle for ecological balance, unlike any major change in history, has an overriding urgency.

Communities inspired by an overarching moral purpose and energized by collective action will coalesce into larger movements creating a grassroots groundswell that will drive changes throughout all levels of society. Many municipalities and cities, for example, are undertaking major environmental initiatives and provinces and states are stepping into the vacuum left by our national governments.

For inspiration, read about living simply and what other communities are doing.

- Simplicity and Stepping Lightly by Mark Burch.
- 51 Ways to spark a commons revolution by Jay Walljasper. Yes! Magazine.
- Cowichan Valley Environment Commission. 12 Big ideas for a strong, resilient community. http://www.12things.ca/12things/12-big-ideas.php
- Transition towns. http://www.transitionnetwork.org
- Local Governments for Sustainability. http://www.iclei.org
- carbonn Cities Climate Registry. http://citiesclimateregistry.org

By transforming your lifestyle and inspiring others, you will have left an imprint on your community and perhaps the wider world. It may not always be possible to measure the broader impact our personal efforts, however. But ultimately, at the end of life's journey, it is our conscience that is our most trusty companion, especially when it is reinforced by the conviction that we have done our best.

Hugh Robertson

December, 2010.

# http://ecologyeconomicsethics.blogspot.com

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