



# Paddling the Seine River

## Coming Full Circle

By Curt Belton, Executive Director, Manitoba Eco-Network

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PHOTO: LIANNE BELTON

**BACK IN THE LATE 1960s** and early '70s, we had a lot of freedom and trust from our parents. As free range kids of the latter part of the baby boom, we had the opportunity to explore our neighborhoods and all of the enchanting natural spaces that still remained.

In the summer, one of my favourites was the Seine River at the end of Alpine Avenue in St. Vital. There was an old wooden bridge over the river, we made tree forts, there was wildlife and of course, “pollution.” This came in all forms: shopping carts, tires, bags, rubble, and whatever people

could manage to toss into the river. I remember the early Seine River clean up initiatives and thinking that we were really making a difference by helping to get this junk out of the river. As kids, we were so disappointed when we would notice that after a while people had gone and used the river as a dump once again. What were they thinking?

We loved being down by the Seine, it was a magical world all of it's own and it felt like we were out in the country. There were still folks who had horses and even cows nearby. The days flew by when we were by the river and we were

blissful in our ignorance. We had no idea that the flow of the river had been restricted to 25 per cent of its natural flow as it passed under the Red River Floodway, and we had no concept of the impact of decisions made by the municipal governments of the day that allowed development to encroach on the river. If you look at some of the apartments built in the 1960s, it looks like they tried to ignore the river, while some of the newer developments have obviously have been situated near the Seine because of it's natural beauty but arguably too close for the preservation

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# Peg City Car Co-op

## Autopartage à Saint-Boniface

By Beth McKechnie

**OUI, C'EST VRAII!** Peg City Car Co-op is now in St. Boniface. This most recent expansion increases the car-sharing network to 19 vehicles located in seven central Winnipeg neighbourhoods. These small compact vehicles—mostly Honda Fits—are spread around South Osborne, Osborne Village, Corydon, West Broadway, Downtown, the Exchange District, and now St. Boniface.



Choosing which neighbourhoods will work for carsharing is fairly easy. You need a densely populated area with good access to transit, walking and cycling, and amenities close by. These factors allow Peg City members to use green ways of getting around for the majority of their travel needs complemented by carsharing for those longer trips or to carry heavier items.

It also means each vehicle can be located within a maximum five to 15 minute walk of another car co-op vehicle. That way, if a member goes to book online and finds the Peg City vehicle closest to their home is already booked by another member for the time they want then there are other choices nearby.

The sheer size of St. Boniface makes it a bit trickier, so Peg City is introducing two vehicles in the neighbourhood: one at Université de Saint-Boniface and a second closer to Goulet. This placement means the cars will be within a 15 minute walk of each other and will also connect with other Peg City vehicles across the river downtown and in the Exchange.

Last September's expansion into the Exchange District led to an interesting expansion of another type: corporate and non-profit members. While most of Peg City Car Co-op's members are individuals and families, there is a growing number of businesses and non-profits signing up, most recently Stantec, Scatliff+Miller+Murray, and Green Action Centre.

Why would a business or NGO join the car co-op? It allows employees to commute to work by bus, walking, cycling or carpooling, while still having access to a vehicle for work-related travel during the day. Employees don't have to find and pay for parking their personal vehicle at work, and the business doesn't need to operate its own fleet vehicles for employee use. It's also simpler from an accounting perspective, as the monthly Peg City invoice breaks down usage details by employee. This makes it easy to assign the related cost to a specific project.

Daytime usage of the car co-op vehicles by business and non-profit members also helps balance out the typical evening and weekend usage by individuals and families. This will help ensure the locations are viable and allow Peg City to focus on adding more vehicles in the existing neighbourhoods as demand and membership grows.

So, how do we get *fewer* cars on our roads by expanding Peg City Car Co-op? Studies by the Transportation Sustainability Research Center at University of California Berkeley show that carsharing removes nine to 13 personal vehicles from the road per carsharing vehicle. More carshare vehicles = fewer personal vehicles. Research also shows an overall net reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled, and associated greenhouse gas emissions, by carshare members.

Based on a fall 2014 survey, this holds true with Peg City's members as well. Nearly one-third of members got rid of a private vehicle within one year of joining and 46 per cent indicated they would almost certainly or probably buy/lease a vehicle if Peg City Car Co-op did not exist. Interestingly, those members who had moved recently reported that the location of carshare vehicles played at least some role in their decision making on where to live.

And now that also includes St. Boniface. Merveilleux !



## JULY

### All Summer **Farmers' Markets**

Don't forget to support our local harvesters, producers, and artisans at the multitude of markets offered in Manitoba. Get your market news & updates at [fmam.ca](http://fmam.ca).

### All Summer **South Osborne Gardening Clubs**

Join a Garden Club! Clubs offer participants a chance to learn about permaculture and get some hands on experience in a garden – plus they're free and you get to share in the bounty. Visit [southosbornecommons.ca](http://southosbornecommons.ca) for details.

### 3rd **Green Drinks**

*King's Head Pub, 5pm*

Working or volunteering in the environmental sector? Join us for an informal monthly get-together of after-work bevies.

RSVP to [info@mbeconetwork.org](mailto:info@mbeconetwork.org).

### 4th **Wild Edibles Workshop with Prairie Shore Botanicals**

9am-6pm, Gardenton, MB

Get ready for a fun adventure in wild edible plant identification, harvesting and preparation! This one-day workshop will give you the confidence you need to incorporate a variety of common wild edibles into everyday meals.

Registration required. Visit [psbotanicals.com/courses/adventures](http://psbotanicals.com/courses/adventures) for more info and to register.

### 4th **Natural Garden Tour with Nature Manitoba**

Tour eight private gardens and get some inspiration for your own! Don't forget to check out the other nature tours and trips offered throughout the year.

Visit [naturemanitoba.ca](http://naturemanitoba.ca) for details and tickets.

### 11-12 **Winnipeg Folk Festival**

3:30-5pm

Express your Folk Fest spirit and join the Manitoba Eco-Network in the Family Area for some rain barrel painting and your chance to win one of the creative final products. Times TBA so keep checking back.

## Summer to Fall 2015

### June -August **Organic Lawn Care Program**

Keep your lawn and family healthy and happy this summer. The Eco-Network OLC program is in full-swing, offering a free lawn tool, free workshops, and great resource materials. Call 204-946-6511 or email [organiclawn@mbeconetwork.org](mailto:organiclawn@mbeconetwork.org) for more info.

### Summer & Fall **Rain Garden**

In partnership with Save Our Seine, the Water Caucus program at the Eco-Network will be part of an exciting new rain garden project along St. Anne's Road this summer and fall. Keep watch for more details and the unveiling in the months to come.

### September **Manitoba Eco-Network Annual General Meeting**

Connect with us and learn more about the organization and what we've been doing over the past year. Stay tuned for the date - TBA.

### 20-31st **Building a Community Commons 2015**

A two week long intensive hands-on 'how to' course on starting a community-based urban agriculture project. The course is six credit hours through the University of Manitoba, open to students and community members.

Contact [evan.bowness@umanitoba.ca](mailto:evan.bowness@umanitoba.ca) for details.

## AUGUST

### **Bison Safaris - FortWhyte Alive**

Learn more about North America's largest land mammal during these tour offerings. Held frequently throughout the summer.

Check out [fortwhyte.org](http://fortwhyte.org) for all the details.

### 13-18 **The Subarctic in Summer**

*Churchill, MB*

Imagine hiking the coast of western Hudson Bay, an ancient and rugged landscape where boreal forest meets Arctic tundra, a land transformed by ice, wind and water. Start the real life adventure at [churchillscience.ca/events/](http://churchillscience.ca/events/).

### 29 **Tour the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve with Native Orchid Conservation**

*Stuartburn, MB*

Check out the largest intact blocks of tall grass prairie in Canada on this late summer tour. Visit [nativeorchid.org](http://nativeorchid.org) for details and to learn more about the organization.

## SEPTEMBER

### 11 **Green Drinks**

*King's Head Pub, 5pm*

### 13 **Lily Pond Climb with the Alpine Club**

*Whiteshell, MB*

Join an experienced guide for all day rock climbing in the autumn sun.

Visit [accmanitoba.ca](http://accmanitoba.ca) for more details.

### 18-20 **Harvest Moon Festival**

*Clearwater, MB*

Celebrate the harvest with this fabulous festival of local artists and producers. Visit [harvestmoonsociety.org/festival/](http://harvestmoonsociety.org/festival/) for more info.

### 17-Oct. 8 **Master Composter Course with Green Action Centre**

Want to give back to your community and spread the word about the benefits of composting? Green Action Centre is offering this 12-hour course thanks to funding from the City of Winnipeg's Water and Waste Department.

Space is limited, apply ASAP. Contact us at [greenactioncentre.ca](http://greenactioncentre.ca) or 204-945-3777, [compost@greenactioncentre.ca](mailto:compost@greenactioncentre.ca).



# One Spill Away

## The Energy East pipeline and Winnipeg's water

By Mary Robinson (Chair, Council of Canadians Winnipeg chapter), Alex Paterson (Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition), and Dennis LeNeveu (member of MEJC and CoC)



PHOTO: RACHEL MOFFAT / BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

**WINNIPEG'S WATER SUPPLY** is one spill or explosion away from being contaminated with toxic fossil fuels. You may barely notice as you drive by, but near Hadashville, Man., TransCanada currently runs three natural gas lines under the Winnipeg aqueduct. The lines are only two meters below the aqueduct, well within the blast zone of a natural gas explosion. Now TransCanada wants to convert one of those lines to carry diluted bitumen (dilbit) from the tar sands.

### Dilbit Spill and Winnipeg's Aqueduct

An explosion is frightening, but an even more likely scenario is that of a dilbit spill from the Energy East line leaking into the porous concrete aqueduct wherever the aqueduct is within a spill reach. The aqueduct crosses many bogs that could absorb the visible portions of a continuous small spill while the soluble toxins will enter the pipeline from surrounding contaminated groundwater. This is particularly likely in the portion of the pipeline between Falcon Lake and Hadashville where the aqueduct and pipeline are mostly between 200 meters and two kilometres apart, and crossing at one point at a distance of two meters.

The major aqueduct river crossings downstream of a potential pipeline spill include the Falcon River, Boggy River, Birch River, Whitehorn River, Brokenhead River and Seine River, all of which are within 50 kilometres of the

pipeline. Many other smaller waterways drain from the pipeline route to the aqueduct.

The pipeline runs on the north side of Boggy Creek and the aqueduct on the south side around East Braintree. Downstream the aqueduct crosses under Boggy Creek. Any spill of bitumen entering the creek will pass right over the aqueduct. Even worse, the groundwater on either side of the creek would be contaminated with soluble toxins in high water that would bathe the pipeline and enter unseen.

The aqueduct is not pressurized. Any time groundwater contaminated with dissolved toxins from dilbit is overtop the aqueduct, the weight of the overlying groundwater will create an inward pressure driving dissolved contaminants through the pores and cracks of the pipeline into the aqueduct. These dissolved contaminants are not visible and will be undetected.

This is not an imagined risk. Aqueduct contamination from oil leaks occurred, for example, in the Sylmar tunnel in 1989 and the Mojave aqueduct in 2005, both of which supply drinking water to Los Angeles.

### Leaking Pipelines, BTEX and Deadly Hydrogen Sulphide

TransCanada's own report in 2002 states that approximately nine per cent of TransCanada's greenhouse gas emissions originated from thou-

sands of continuously leaking components along its pipeline network. The rate of failure of the converted Energy East line is likely to be greater than the natural gas lines due to the acidity, chloride salts, abrasive silt, and corrosive hydrogen sulphide in dilbit. A dilbit leak leaves unseen dissolved contaminants like benzene in the groundwater and releases deadly toxic hydrogen sulphide gas into the air and water. Benzene is a carcinogen at a very low level of five parts per billion.

In many areas, the leaking pipeline is fully accessible to the public. How can any responsible regulator approve a leaking forty year old line, whose deteriorated coating is no longer protective, for conversion to carry toxic dilbit and its load of deadly toxic gas? This is an unbelievable horror story.

### Shoal Lake First Nations

Beyond the dangers of a spill there are also ethical issues. Why, up until now, has TransCanada been allowed to run natural gas lines so near to the aqueduct? How in good conscience can they exhibit such carelessness with the precious water we continue to take from Shoal Lake?

To date, Shoal Lake 40 First Nation is still without dependable road access or a connection to clean drinking water after over 100 years of Winnipeg expropriating water without compensation. Elders in the community talk about how they could drink the untreated water directly from the lake before Winnipeg's aqueduct was built. Now Shoal Lake 40 is under a boil water advisory that's been in place for 17 years.

Both Indigenous communities on the lake are unable to develop industries or commercial development which might, according to Winnipeg officials, affect the water supply. Winnipeg has been getting drinking water for free and the First Nations have had to suffer underdevelopment and dependency. This is a gift we forced these communities to give us. Endangering the water with toxic dilbit is the ultimate insult to them.

How can we possibly threaten the water with the Energy East pipeline while these communities live under boil water advisories? Winnipeg needs to start valuing and protecting the water. Winnipeg needs to start valuing and honouring the Shoal Lake band members for their sacrifices.

# The Global Ecological Crisis

Understanding causes, formulating responses

By Daniel Church

**THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD OFTEN SEEMS CHARGED** with an atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty, focused largely around public discussions of planetary futures. This anxiety is borne out of a growing awareness of the risks of catastrophic events related to climate change, ecological problems and natural disasters. So pervasive and existential are these environmental anxieties that they may now equal or exceed the fear of nuclear annihilation that defined the cold war period. Unfortunately, these anxieties are not exaggerated or unfounded, as there is now an overwhelming scientific consensus that the planet Earth is confronted by an ecological crisis of massive proportions, one that jeopardizes the survival of both human civilization and the majority of plant and animal life.

In fact, the evidence that there are numerous interrelated environmental crises and that human civilization is indeed threatened by their cumulative impact is now undeniable. It cannot be overemphasized that an enormous and expanding body of evidence—representative of the vast majority of experts from all academic fields—has demonstrated that we are in the midst of a global ecological crisis. While it is not possible to pinpoint the precise date of the “endgame” or tipping point, there can be no doubt that we are facing a period of profound insecurity.

Understanding the causes of this environmental crisis and formulating effective responses to it is the most urgent and crucial task that has ever faced humanity. Recognizing that economic and social change is urgently needed to redirect human conduct towards a system that consumes fewer resources, creates less waste, and employs radically different practices of consumption and production, we must proceed with the task of analyzing the ecological crisis in order to discern precisely what form that social and economic change must take.

Human activity has dramatically and rapidly decreased the livability of our planet, with the consequence that the very survival of the species has now been called into question. As a result of the catastrophic erosion of ecosystems and the resulting degradation of vital natural resources such as fertile soil, fresh water and clean air, humanity is now confronting a global environmental emergency of apocalyptic proportions. The survival of

our species now depends on our ability to make extremely rapid and radical adjustments to the changing environmental conditions of our planet—adjustments that will prevent further ecological harm while repairing the monumental damage that has already been done.

The first step to breaking through this paralysis is truly understanding the crisis. To that end, we can begin by identifying that the planetary environmental crisis has two primary aspects or facets: climate change and biodiversity loss. These two interrelated crises exacerbate one another, and taken together they pose an unprecedented threat to society and the human race.

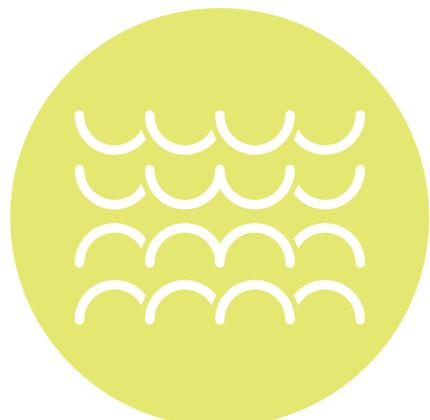
Many scientists have warned that our society, like so many before it, is heading for collapse. The primary driver of that collapse will almost certainly be ecocide. Ecocide is a key concept in this analysis, because ecocide has now surpassed pandemic disease and nuclear war as a threat to human civilization. Contemporary angst may even be sharper today due to the gnawing feeling that we should, could and must do more in the face of the catastrophic ecocide that now imperils all future generations.

Ecocide is defined as the systematic destruction of ecosystems and the extermination of non-human species. However, ecocide also means accidental ecological suicide; humans inadvertently destroying the natural systems on which their survival depends. Therefore, ecocide refers to the set of processes by which humans are systematically eroding the very planetary life support systems on which their own existence relies.

In the face of this crisis much is being done at both local and international levels, but there is much more that must and can be done. We must not accept the idea that we are watching helplessly the advent of a global catastrophe. On the contrary we must replace unrelenting uncertainty and helplessness with determined, informed resolve. Research has identified many positive steps which are grounded in a rich and nuanced understanding that can make things dramatically better.

Solutions to the global ecological crisis include widespread adoption of clean and green technology, a transformative social revolution, measures to reduce population growth, measures to constrain unsustainable levels of con-

sumption and a new worldview that respects the intrinsic value of non-human species. These goals can be pursued through the major strategic approaches of state environmental regulation, environmental activism, environmental internationalism and green consumerism. 



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# Relieving Nature-Deficit Disorder

## A boreal fiction

By Ron Thiessen, Executive Director, Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society (CPAWS) – Manitoba chapter

**ONCE UPON A TIME**, there was an ordinary family that lived in the city: Brenda and her husband Jim, and their kids Randy and Kaylee.

After reading an article, naturally chipper Brenda became concerned that the family was suffering from nature-deficit disorder.

“Who, what, disorder?” said Jim.

“It’s when people stay in the city too much, and get out of sync with the natural world,” said Brenda. “Listen to this... Studies suggest that when kids regularly experience natural settings they pay more attention, do better in school, and suffer less from anxiety and depression.”

And she went on to quote from the magazine about humans’ deep and intrinsic connections with the wilderness and how important it is for physical and mental well-being to get out into the natural world.

They decided it was time to make a change.

*Two years later...*

“I’m king of the forest and you’re just hanging out with rotten seashells,” Randy shouts from a treetop to Kaylee who’s investigating the patterns in the rugged rock outcrops by the lake.

“One of these days he’s going to fall off a branch. That’ll show him,” Kaylee says with a smile under her breath.

Randy and Kaylee are exploring the land around the family’s rustic cabin.

Their parents bought the place a year ago. Brenda had to cajole Jim – the cabin is off the grid and accessible only by a 2.7 km walking trail – but soon he was happily pulling a corroded old wagon to bring supplies in and out. Brenda has even caught Jim whistling as he drags the wagon, and its bent wheel, through the brush.

Not that the cabin adventure has been all fun and games for everyone. The first couple of outings were bliss for Brenda, but Kaylee and Randy said it was boring. They wanted to be in the city, hanging out with their friends, sucking back Slurpees, going to movies and, most of all, avoiding one another.

With no Internet access, the kids had to put away their phones. But, they soon started entertaining themselves by wandering further and further into the forest. They went swimming and started collecting stones, bones and shells from the lakeshore and bush. They even got competitive about it.

Randy and Kaylee are typical siblings; they don’t always get along but they’re companions nonetheless. Randy likes to climb trees and swim for hours. Kaylee prefers to watch waves crash and study clouds forming.

Sure, they might say it’s just that there’s nothing else to do, but underneath it all, they even like spending time with their parents – going for family hikes, playing cards in the cabin on rainy days, and listening for owls or watching for northern lights at night.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CPAWS

The cabin has not only brought them closer to nature, but closer to one another, too.

Brenda notices how different she feels after spending time at the cabin – calmer and stronger. And she sees some changes in her family. Randy rarely kicks up a fuss about doing his homework anymore. Kaylee is more confident and doesn’t worry so much about what her friends think. Jim is reading and cooking more now that he isn’t constantly checking email and working weekends.

*What’s the next chapter?*

Maybe Kaylee becomes a crusader for nature conservation. She might join a club at school that starts a petition to conserve the wilderness around her family’s cabin. The usually low key Jim might tell his work buddies about the way the cottage has changed his family and encourage others to connect with their kids in the great outdoors.

Sure, this might not be a true story, but it’s not a fairy tale, either. CPAWS is working hard to inspire more Manitobans to get out into nature. But it can only happen for us and future generations if we preserve the wild spaces that are so beneficial to us all.

In addition to the mental and physical health benefits for individuals and families, the Boreal Forest is an integral component of earth’s life support system for people and provides key habitat for wildlife. Based on recommendation from more than 1,500 scientists, we’re working to protect at least 50 per cent of our Boreal Forest from industrial developments and implement world-leading best practices on the remaining landscape. 🌿

*We’re making great strides, but there’s much more to do together. To find out how you can help keep our country wild, go to <http://cpawsemb.org/actions>*





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## Paddling the Seine River



PHOTO: LIANNE BELTON

Just one of the many wonders you can find along the Seine.

of the riparian habitat. Are we still allowing development to encroach on the river 40 years later?

One day late in April on a whim I returned with my wife Lianne to the magical world of the Seine. We put in our canoe at the crossing on Creek Bend Road and disappeared into a place of beauty. I can't say that there was no "pollution" as we called it in the '60s, but I was impressed by how clean the river was for early spring. Save our Seine has obviously done a great job of acting as stewards and educating people about the issues that face an urban river. Their goal is to "Preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment & heritage resource of the Seine River." I am grateful that someone is doing this.

As we slipped silently along the Seine we were greeted by Canada geese, alert and on guard, hissing at us and trying to distract us as they led us away from their nests. We also met mallards, wood ducks, and hooded mergansers who startled us as much as we startled them. Deer were abundant as they cast their inquisitive eyes on us as we drifted by, and it was absolutely unbeliev-

able how many painted turtles we saw. At one point we saw a turtle statue that someone had placed on the bank of the river close by a log that

picnic, parent and child kayakers, cyclists, joggers, and walkers in the Bois des Esprits, and other canoeists like us. I can't imagine a better

“ We loved being down by the Seine, it was a magical world all of it's own and it felt like we were out in the country.

must have had 20 turtles on it basking in the sun. You can imagine our shock when this dusty statue started to move and we discovered that it was in fact a huge snapping turtle. Songbirds, woodpeckers and even a woodchuck lumbering along rounded out this riparian adventure along with the occasional fish surfacing. Wow, there still are fish in the Seine!

After three hours we ended up at Morier Park and I was so reluctant to leave the river world. We weren't the only ones enjoying the Seine either. We exchanged greetings with the lucky folks who live by the river, saw a church

way to spend a Sunday afternoon than immersed in nature and sharing the river with so many of our fellow creatures, feather, fur, and fin. How is it that having grown up and lived my whole life in the area that I had never before canoed down the Seine? Maybe I need to give myself permission to be a free range adult, to explore like I did when I was a kid, and come back full circle.

If you feel the urge to connect with nature and get away from the hustle and bustle of the day I highly recommend a tranquil float down the Seine, who knows who you will meet or what you will see.

# Biofuels: The “New Green Bio-Economy”...

...Not!

By Kevan Bowkett



An ethanol distillery in Kansas.

PHOTO: GREG GOEBEL/Flickr

**BIOFUELS (OR BIOENERGY)** is an approach that uses “green” carbon (plants, bacteria) to produce energy, replacing fossil-fuel (or, “black” carbon) whose use is contributing to global climate change. Biofuels can be burned directly as fuel, like ethanol, or can be burned and the heat turned into electricity, like woodchips.

These are widely considered to be “renewable” energy.

These approaches have many problems, to the point where they are not renewable or sustainable approaches. Humans are already using up as much of the Earth’s biomass as the planet’s ecology can sustain. We already consume so much biomass for food, fuel, fabric, and other uses that we cannot use much more without breaching ecological thresholds, which is an especially bad idea when ecosystems are already under stress from climate change/instability. We certainly cannot replace our fossil-fuel consumption with biofuels consumption without going far past these thresholds.

Crops grown for oil and electricity are replacing food crops, and replacing natural ecologies—areas many indigenous peoples rely on—in turn creating hunger, and displacing more people to urban shantytowns. Peasant agriculture and agro-ecology are what actually feeds most of the world, and these are threatened by biomass strategies. Growing new carbon for fuel is nothing like recycling already-used oil, like us-

ing recycled cooking oil to power engines in cars.

The stubble, stover and other crop “waste” left over after harvest is not really waste at all, but contain essential nutrients to maintain the health of the soil. This “waste” should be left on the land and ploughed back in. Leaving stubble in is essential for sustainable agriculture.

Proponents of “bioenergy” maintain the idea that reducing “black” carbon is the only or best way to reduce GHG pollution. Certainly, it is one way of doing so. But other behavioral changes may be more effective. For instance, industrial meat production creates more GHGs than the world transport system does. Cutting our meat consumption, provided this does not increase rainforest destruction to create soybean plantations, would go a long way towards reducing our GHG emissions.

Today’s focus on biofuels, combined with the focus on worldwide carbon “offsets” that corporations can buy to compensate for polluting, and on geo-engineering (planet-scale techno-fixes to attempt to reduce climate change) contribute to corporations, governments, and citizens erroneously thinking we’ve “solved” the climate and ecological crises and so we don’t have to stop consuming so much energy.

Now, this does not mean that using recycled cooking oil in one’s bio-diesel motor is a bad idea. That it’s recycled seems to make it sustainable. But growing crops directly for biofuels does not

appear sustainable, including the “new generation” of biofuels like cellulosic ethanol. Prairie jurisdictions like Manitoba should set their face firmly against expansion of biofuels production. The harm done by it in much of the world more than justifies this attitude. What Manitoba does affects Canada, and what Canada does affects the world profile of these technologies.

Halting the increase of biofuels crops is bad for farmers in the short-term. We could promote a shift towards organic crops, which commands higher prices. The province could offer transitional subsidies to encourage farmers not to spray the most toxic chemicals. Family farm hog production, community wind power projects, and micro-hydro generation are other options for supporting the rural Manitoban economy.

Another approach could be to increase solvent markets for Manitoba produce in Manitoba cities, which requires the development of cities and city-regions. This in turn means taking measures to promote innovation and import-replacement in all the province’s urban areas, including small but fast-growing cities like Winkler. One way to enhance prosperity in prairie regions is to turn them into flourishing city-regions (zones adjacent to cities into which all the major urban economic forces radiate). This may sound disconcerting, but as Jane Jacobs has been saying for decades, the catalysis of networks of cities whose economies are channelled into genuinely green, fair-trade production seems essential for a sustainable future. 🌱



For more info...

...on biofuels and the “biomass economy,” please see the ETC Group website:

[etcgroup.org/search/site/biomass](http://etcgroup.org/search/site/biomass).

Their report, *The New Biomassers*, which summarize the issues, may be of interest.

# thank you to our farmers



**Pollock Farms**  
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# Avoid Bike Theft

## Some helpful tips to outsmart pesky bike thieves

By Dave Elmore, Green Action Centre

**FEAR OF BICYCLE THEFT** keeps many people from riding their bikes. But, if you follow these tips, your favorite ride should be fine. Should your bike get stolen we also have some advice on how to improve the chances of getting it back.

**Get a good lock.** Got a \$50 bike, get a \$100 lock. A good quality U-lock is an absolute necessity, but remember that locks are not created equal. Check the quality carefully.

**Park in a secure area.** Find a secure bike cage or take your bike inside. If you don't have that option, park in an area where there is high foot traffic. Pick an area that is well lit, and look around to see if there are any security cameras. The Winnipeg Parking Authority operates a "bike corral" at the Millennium Library Parkade and the Albert Street Parkade also has a bike cage. Remember that you should still lock your bike even when inside a bike cage.

**Lock it right.** Use your U-lock to lock both the frame and one wheel to a solid object. If you have quick release wheels you'll need a cable to loop through the other wheel and lock it to the U-lock. Always make sure that the "solid object" you are locking to is in fact "solid." Signposts can sometimes be uprooted easily or may be secured to a bracket set into the concrete that can easily be removed.

**Take your accessories.** If you have a quick release on the seat post either take your seat (and the quick release) with you or carry another cable to secure it. While you are at it you might as well take off any lights or other accessories that you value.

**You could go high tech.** New technology has made it possible to purchase hidden GPS trackers that can alert you if your bike is moved. They are still pretty pricey, but if you have an expensive bike it might be worth it.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY GREEN ACTION CENTRE

**Say you took all the precautions and your bike still got stolen. There are things that you can do both before and after a bike theft to improve the chances of getting your bike back.**

**Know your serial number.** Find the serial number on your bike and keep a copy with you so that you can report your bike stolen immediately.

**Take pictures of your bike.** Photos can help to identify the bike and allow you to post pictures in ads, on social media, etc.

**Register your bike.** You can register your bike with the City of Winnipeg. If it is found you'll be contacted to get your bike back. There is also a national bike registry called "Operation Hands Off" which adds an international traceability should your bike leave the city/province. Regardless if you registered or not, report the loss immediately to Community Services Bicycle Recovery and call them regularly to see if your bike has been picked up.

**Get the word out.** Spread the word to your contacts and through social media. Let your local bike groups/shops know as well and post pictures.

**File a police report.** Finding your bike is not a top police priority but it can't hurt to report the theft. In Winnipeg you can even do this online although you would not be able to submit a picture.

**Check online.** Check e-Bay, Kijiji, Craigslist, etc, regularly see if your bike gets advertised for sale. 🍀

*For more information check out Green Action Centre's blog at [greenactioncentre.ca/living-green-living-well/how-to-avoid-having-your-bike-stolen/](http://greenactioncentre.ca/living-green-living-well/how-to-avoid-having-your-bike-stolen/)*



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