

Hog Developments and Water Quality

by Anne Lindsey with Beth Peto

In the wake of the contaminated water tragedy at Walkerton, Ontario this past summer, the issue of water quality has been in the spotlight all over the country, especially as it is impacted by developments in rural areas in the livestock industry. Manitoba has been in the midst of a massive expansion in the hog industry, both in the construction of hog processing plants (Maple Leaf in Brandon, and the planned expansion of J.M. Schneider in Winnipeg), and of hog barns in the rural areas. Such expansion was touted by the former Conservative government, and continues to be supported by the current NDP under Gary Doer as a solution to the problems of rural depopulation and need for diversification of the agricultural economy in the province.

However, not everyone in rural Manitoba, or the urban areas, for that matter, agrees with this porcine strategy. In fact, one of the most important concerns with the hog expansion listed by citizens is its impact on water quality. Truly massive amounts of manure produced at the hog barns are regularly spread on fields as a fertilizer, leading in some cases to runoff and contamination of local surface and ground water. There are reports of wells becoming contaminated from manure. The processing plants themselves are vast manure factories, requiring dedicated waste water treatment facilities, which in the case of Brandon, is owned and operated by the City of Brandon.

Fecal coliforms limits exceeded

Dave Kattenburg, a Brandon activist, examined the monthly

reports submitted to Manitoba Conservation by the Brandon treatment plant and found that concentrations of fecal coliforms in excess of the facility's license limit were released into the Assiniboine River in June and July. Effluents of total ammonia in those months also exceeded license limits, and were in fact at a level which is considered to be lethal to fish, thus breaching the Federal Fisheries Act.

Kattenburg has written to Manitoba Conservation asking a number of questions on how these issues will be rectified. At time of writing, he has not received a response.

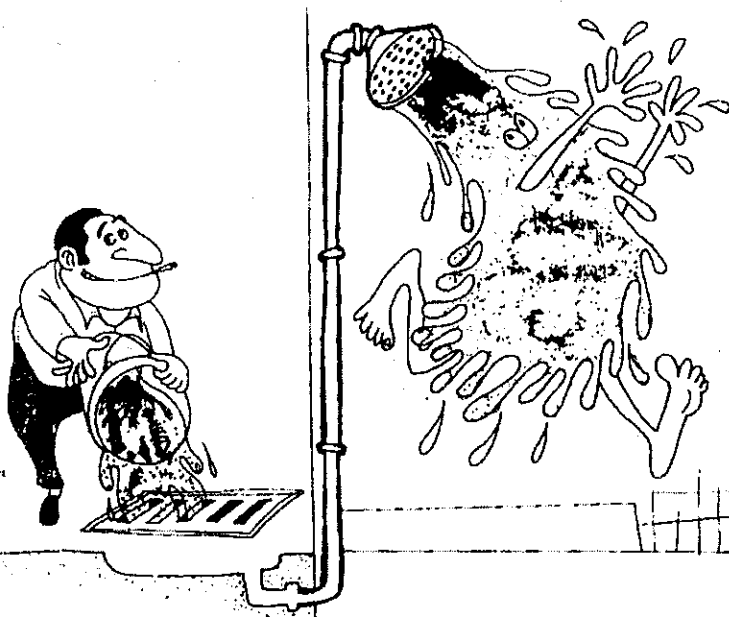
Hog Watch responds

Hog Watch Manitoba is a citizens' group born as a grass-roots response to the hog industry expansion. Environmental concerns are one of its platforms, along with animal welfare, economic issues, and worker health and safety (at the barns and in the plants). Hog Watch members hail from across the province, and include environmentalists, farmers, scientists, friends of animals, social justice advocates and trade unionists. Their aim is to foster the farming of hogs using sustainable, environmentally-sound and ethical practices.

Hog Watch participated actively in the hearings held this summer by the Livestock Stewardship Commission, a government-sponsored initiative to hear from Manitobans about the hog industry, whose report is expected at the end of October. They are also available to lend information and expertise to rural citizens facing new hog barn developments in their communities. And there are no shortage of calls for help from rural areas.

Glen Koroluk, a Hog Watch spokesperson, comments that companies are trying to establish themselves now, perhaps in anticipation of new regulations coming into play as a result of the Livestock Stewardship Initiative, leading to a flush of new licence applications, leading in turn to an even greater concentration of hog barns in many municipalities. (The record is currently held by Hanover). Meanwhile, an Environment Act License application is anticipated soon from JM Schneider for the

see "Hog Watch Workshops ..." on page 10 ►



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own and do not represent the views of the
Manitoba Eco-Network or its member groups.

New Eco-Centre Developments

Two years ago we wrote a proposal to
nurture the Eco-Centre envisioned for #2-
70 Albert Street. We imagined a well-
equipped office environment which
would meet the growing needs of the
groups already in place; while encourag-
ing other local environmentalists to take
advantage of facilities and the services we
offer. New equipment, signs, a modest
advertising budget, additional resources
for, and automation of, the Resource Centre
were highlights of that proposal.

Community buy-in was slow but
steady: The EJLB Foundation, The
Thomas Sill Foundation, The Winnipeg
Foundation, Manitoba Product Steward-
ship Corporation, The Sustainable Devel-
opment Innovations Fund, the
Assiniboine Credit Union and an anony-
mous donor have all stepped forward
over the last couple of years to give life to
the Eco-Centre concept.

Heartened by the response, a hiring
committee comprised of Anne Lindsey,
Jan Westlund and Catherine Taylor, li-
brarian at the Centre for Indigenous Envi-

ronmental Resources, interviewed a
number of well-qualified candidates be-
fore choosing Hamid Rahman as the Re-
source Centre's new librarian.

Hamid possesses a MA in Library Stud-
ies from the University of Karachi, Paki-
stan. He brings several years direct library
experience as well as teaching experi-
ence in Library Science at the University
of Peshawar, Pakistan. He has recently
worked in Westmont Illinois and as a Li-
brary Technician here in Winnipeg in
School Divisions 2 and 10. Even more
than his impressive credentials, Hamid's
sense of humour and enthusiasm prom-
ise to enhance this project immeasurably.

Our hope is that by upgrading the li-
brary we can attract new users from the
general public to give them useful, de-
tailed information on the environmental
issues affecting all Manitobans. You're in-
vited to acquaint yourself with the Eco-
Centre and our improving Resource Cen-
tre which will be open some evenings this
fall. Call Hamid Rahman at 947-6511 to
inquire about hours.

ECC

3rd Annual Organic Agriculture Conference

Planning has begun for the 3rd Our
Food, Our Health, Our Future Conference
on Organic Agriculture. The 2001 event
will take place on February 23 and 24 at
the University of Winnipeg, and will once
again feature generous opportunities to
learn and share information about the
state of organics in our province. This time
around, we're looking towards a "home-

grown" theme: exploring all aspects of the
organic food chain in Manitoba, from pro-
duction through processing, marketing,
retailing, and of course, eating! Mark your
calendar for this important event, and
look for registration information around
the month of December. Call the Eco-
Network office at 947-6511 with any
questions you may have.

ECO

Eco-Network Steering Committee, 1999-2000

Dennis Bayomi - Winnipeg Vegetarian Association

Beth Peto - CHOICES Coalition for Social Justice

Steve Rauh - Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg

John Sinclair - Resource Conservation Manitoba

Ed Scherer - Manitoba Naturalists Society

Christina Waddle - U.M. Recycling and Environment Group

Peter Walker - Manitoba Federation of Labour

Pesticide-Free For Health

Organic Lawn Care Education Project Pilots New Workshop

by Anne Lindsey

25 people attended our pilot Organic Lawn Care Workshop on September 21 at Robert A. Steen Community Centre. The project is based on the premise that good, green outdoor space can be achieved without the use of health-threatening pesticides.

Sometimes it seems like more and more pesticides are being used on our yards and public spaces. Indeed, it's tough to travel down a Winnipeg street during the summer and not see some of those little 4 inch signs warning us to "stay off the grass until dry". For some in the population, exposure to lawn care treatments can bring on debilitating symptoms (see Marg Friesen's article on page 6 of this issue). For others, exposures can be more subtle in the short term. But there is little doubt now that the chemical soup we live in is having its effects—increasing childhood cancers is one alarming sign, according to the recent report of the Canadian Institute for Child Health—on both human and ecosystem health.

Getting off the chemical treadmill

As awareness grows, there is beginning to be more interest in how to get off the chemical treadmill. Calls to our office this spring asking about the availability of non-chemical lawncare convinced us of the need for an educational project designed to assist Winnipeggers to help themselves to healthier lawns.

The EJLB Foundation responded to our request for financial support to develop and test a pilot series of workshops in the Winnipeg area. The Green Communities Association, based in

Peterborough, Ontario had just finished developing an excellent resource kit on green lawn care, and Dan Moroz, former co-owner of Greening Gaia Organic Lawn Care, here in Winnipeg, enthusiastically decided to lend his support and expertise to this project. Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Winnipeg and the Chemical Sensitivities Information and Exchange Network, Manitoba agreed to partner on the project and to add their considerable experience and information. (Thanks especially to CPR's Ian Greaves and CSIEN's Marg Friesen and Sandra Madray).

Lawncare conversion project

The workshop covers a brief history of the lawn and lawn care, a comprehensive overview of commonly used chemicals in Winnipeg and their health and ecosystem effects, the nitty-gritty of organic lawn care (complete with visual aids), a brief overview of alternatives to lawns, and a discussion of resources available to support your lawn care conversion project. Every participant takes home a copy of the Green Communities Lawn Care kit, which reinforces the information provided at the workshop. Initial responses to the workshop were very positive.

More sessions are planned for the Spring. Watch Eco-Journal and your local community paper for dates and times, or call us (at 947-6511) to ensure that your name is added to our list. Tell your neighbours! Together, let's make Winnipeg lawns "pesticide free zones".

ECO

Fight Against Climate Change

Visit www.clickforcleanair.org and click for clean air. This fall, at the UN Climate Summit in the Netherlands, the world will decide how to address one of the greatest threats to humanity and the natural world—global warming. Sadly, Canada is trying to weaken the integrity of the Kyoto Climate Treaty. But there are solutions! At <http://www.clickforcleanair.org> you can find out more and then personally fax the Prime Minister and your Premier with a couple of clicks. David Suzuki presents a dynamic flash forecast of a future with climate change vs. a community

with climate solutions. And whether you are a global-warming greenhorn, or an atmospheric scientist, you will enjoy the "Climate Quiz". There is also a creative Campaign Kit to take into cyberspace and onto the streets. Since the site's inauguration by Bruce Cockburn, The Tragically Hip's Gord Downie, and "Shift" publisher Andrew Heintzman, www.clickforcleanair.org is getting over 3000 unique visits and sending 500 faxes to the Prime Minister every business day. <http://www.clickforcleanair.org>

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Volunteer Appreciation

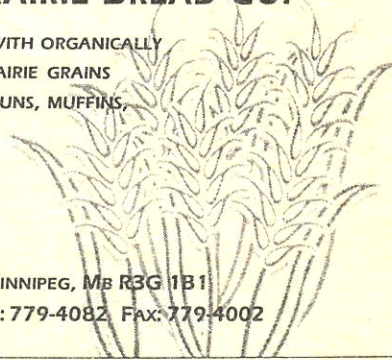
We often require specialized help in the Eco-Network office and this summer was no exception. Kevin Miller came to our rescue again, helping to troubleshoot our sluggish dialup service by downloading new modem drivers. Catherine Taylor, with the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, provided much needed expertise to the hiring process for our new librarian. Brian Proctor continues to nurture our website with timely information. Many thanks to all for your kind contributions!

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What's Happening

October 14 - SOS ANNUAL CLEANUP starts at 10 am. Park and meet in the parking lot at the Belgium Club, 407 Provencher Blvd. Bring work gloves, boots, dinner and dress for the weather. Raindate is Sunday October 15 at 1 pm.

October 18 - CUBA IN THE NEW GLOBALIZED ECONOMY. Hear Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, Ambassador of Cuba to Canada, speak on what Cuba has to contribute to the debate on MAI, WTO, world trade and the corporate agenda. 7pm at Eckhardt-Grammatte Hall at the University of Winnipeg. Sponsored by: Choices, CFS - Manitoba; CUPE MB International Solidarity Committee and the MB Cuba Solidarity Committee. Everyone welcome. Donations at the door.

October 19 - MOVING BEYOND CONSUMERISM, BY MARK BURCH. This is public lecture starting at 8 pm following Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Manitoba's Annual General Meeting from 7 to 8 on the 6th Floor at 63 Albert Street. Complimentary light refreshments will be served. Please bring your own mug. For further information, call CPAWS Manitoba at 339-0247.

October 23 - KAYAKING THE ARCTIC, BY JERRY ZASTE (sponsored by Wave Track Canoes, in memory of Victoria Jason). Join Jerry for a two month kayak tour with the Inuit at 70° 83N, 90° 83 W and Pelly Bay. 7:30 pm at Pauline Boutal Theatre, Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain, 341 Provencher Blvd. This is a Manitoba Naturalists Society Indoor Program. For further information, contact the MNS office at 943-9029.

November 6 - ON THE TRAIL WITH THE INUIT; BY DR. CLARENCE TILLENIUS, an Honourary Life Member of the Manitoba Naturalists Society, Fellow of the Explorers Club of New York and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London. Clarence traveled by dog sled with the Inuit on Southampton Island in the late '60s and early 70s. 7:30 pm at Pauline Boutal Theatre, Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain, 341 Provencher Blvd. This is a Manitoba Naturalists Society Indoor Program. For further information, contact the MNS office at 943-9029.

November 17 - Deadline for abstracts for oral or poster presentation to the **SIXTH PRAIRIE CONSERVATION AND ENDANGERED SPECIES CONFERENCE**, Sharing Common Ground, to be held February 22 - 25, 2001 in the Royal Crown Conference Centre, Winnipeg. For updated information, visit the conference website at <http://iisd.ca/wetlands/pcsc/default.htm>.

October 18 - FREE VERMICOMPOSTING (INDOOR COMPOSTING) WORKSHOP - 7 pm at Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM), #2 - 70 Albert Street (corner of McDermot and Albert). Call 925-3777 to register.

October-November - FREE COMPOSTING WORKSHOPS - Call 925-3777 to register: **Oct. 21, 10 am** at the Assiniboine Park Conservatory, 2355 Corydon Ave; **Oct. 24 and Nov. 16 - 7 pm** at the West Kildonan Public Library, 365 Jefferson Ave; **Nov. 2 - 7 pm** at the Henderson Public Library, 1050 Henderson Hwy; **Nov. 6 - 5:30 pm** at the Living Prairie Museum.

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The Goldeneye Research and Education Station: Dreams Turned to Reality

By Dave Kattenburg

In late August, the Mixedwood Forest Research and Advisory Committee (MFRAC) succeeded in its quest to acquire property on the shores of Wellman Lake, in the heart of Manitoba's mountainous mixedwoods, and to establish a forest research and education centre there.

The Goldeneye Research and Education Station, as it is called, will significantly advance MFRAC's mission: "the promotion of understanding about the ecological functions of the southern mixedwood forest, its biodiversity and its sustainable use".

Year-round base for research and education

Situated in Duck Mountain Provincial Park, the Goldeneye Station will eventually provide a year-round base for forest research and educational activities, undertaken by MFRAC and in cooperation with concerned citizens, forest scientists and groups across the prairie parklands.

Goldeneye Station sits at the end of Goldeneye Lane, in Wellman Lake's Regatta division, on 5.7 acres of land leased from the provincial government. In August, MFRAC closed a deal to purchase the structures on that site, including bunkhouses, kitchen, meeting room and washrooms.

The forest and lake are the MFRAC Centre's two biggest attractions. The Goldeneye Station will provide simple living accommodation to forest researchers, educators and interested citizens. It will provide researchers with a place to sleep, work and store equipment. With plenty of space to host and accommodate school groups, it will provide focus to MFRAC's education and curriculum-development activities. It will be an ideal location for MFRAC-sponsored forums and retreats.

Supported by volunteers

Goldeneye Station facilities and programs will be largely, if not entirely supported by volunteers. Programs will pay for services. The long-term development of Goldeneye will be facilitated by a volunteer advisory board established by and reporting to the MFRAC Board of Directors.

Goldeneye responds to a deep need. No other year-round facility exists within Manitoba's forested western escarpment which forest researchers can use as a base for their research, and where interested parties can come to learn about the mixedwoods.

In the past, forest scientists have pitched tents or been obliged

to secure local accommodation. An uninhabited farm house owned by one MFRAC member has provided a home to researchers working on MFRAC's tree cavity and golden-winged warbler studies. Another MFRAC member has provided her Wellman Lake cabin to owl researchers.

Highlighting the enormous demand for a facility of this type, this spring and summer—before MFRAC had actually raised the funds to purchase the station, and was thus renting it on a provisional basis—university research teams from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta used the property. Their rent provided for operating and purchase costs. MFRAC plans on publishing synopses of their forest research.

The establishment of the Goldeneye Station was the brainchild of Brandon entrepreneur and Wellman Lake cottager Nancy McLennan. Nancy's assistance was instrumental in securing charitable status for MFRAC—this past summer's other great event, and the culmination of four years of history for MFRAC.

MFRAC now completing fourth year

It's been almost exactly four years since MFRAC invented itself, in the cafeteria of Swan Valley Regional Secondary School. MFRAC's geographical scope of interest covers Manitoba's forested western escarpment, from Riding Mountain National Park to the Porcupine Hills. Its members come from up, down and across Manitoba, and from Saskatchewan and Alberta. Since its formation, MFRAC has raised over \$100,000 in support for community-based research on the southern mixedwood boreal forest. Two projects—on tree cavity habitat and golden-winged warbler abundance—were developed or co-managed by MFRAC itself. MFRAC has co-sponsored/facilitated research on wolf and owl populations in Manitoba's mixedwoods, and is currently developing an ecotourism project in collaboration with members of the Swan Valley community.

MFRAC has published an attractive booklet and launched a province-wide high school tour.

Raising money

With the establishment of Goldeneye Station, MFRAC is now raising funds to pay back the bank, and to reimburse friends who've provided long-term, no-interest loans. A new septic tank is being installed. The station will require upgrading in the short and medium term. Options have been put forward for sustainable heating (e.g. heat pumps), sewage and grey water disposal, composting, "green roofing" (vegetation on flat roofs to cycle water), paths and interpretive trails.

Those who wish to assist the Goldeneye Station with a capital donation should send a cheque, payable to MFRAC (with the words "Goldeneye Station" in the corner), to: MFRAC, Box 22021, Brandon, MB.

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Chemical Sensitivities Information Exchange Network, Manitoba CSIENM Update for 2000

by Marg Friesen, Co-ordinator, CSIENM

Chemical Sensitivities, often referred to as "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity" (MES) or "Environmental Illness" or "Environmental Sensitivities" is an acquired disorder where adverse symptoms occur in response to exposure to low levels of a substance or substances that do not seem to affect most people. Common substances such as perfumes, gasoline, pesticides, chlorine and household cleaning products can trigger reactions. There is often an overlap of symptoms with Fibromyalgia (FM) and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), also called Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

As reported last year in the Eco-Journal (September/October 1999), CSIENM members were preparing information for politicians, the general public, labour unions and the medical community. Here is an update:

POLITICIANS

CSIENM members met with several elected officials over the past year. Six members of the group presented the following goals and requests to Mr. Stan Struthers, MLA and Legislative Assistant to the Honourable David Chomiak, Minister of Health in regards to chemical sensitivities/chemical injuries. Also present at the meeting were Dr. Downs and Ms. Vivian Sandberg, Manitoba Health Services Commission (MHSC).

Short Term

- 1 Start a dialogue with the Minister of Health
- 2 Ongoing consultation as a group with an open-minded medical professional who is interested in becoming familiar with the current literature in environmental medicine and is suitable to both the Minister of Health and CSIENM.

Long Term

- 1 Access to appropriate evaluation, treatment and support of Manitobans with multiple chemical sensitivities/chemical injuries. The first choice is evaluation/treatment in Manitoba by an appropriately trained physician and, if necessary, out-of-province medical help. We desire 'patient-centered' healthcare which is funded by MHSC.
 - 2 Recognition by the federal and provincial governments that MCS symptoms can be disabling.
 - 3 Funding by the Federal and Manitoba governments to support research and treatment for chemical sensitivities. A widely accepted definition for MCS is needed.
 - 4 Prevalence studies of MCS.
 - 5 Access to complementary medicine—covered by MHSC.
- A good discussion regarding MCS generally, and Manitobans

specifically, led to the proposal of the formation of a working group, with CSIENM representation, to study MCS. We are hoping for formal notification soon.

Federally, two new Bills relevant to MCS were introduced in Parliament. Bill C-416 is an Act to amend the Department of Health Act with respect to environmental illnesses, CFS, FM and MCS. Bill C-417 is an Act to establish the rights of patients in



CSIENM members are looking forward to the establishment by Minister of Health, David Chomiak, of a working group to study Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Chemists Cathy Ford and Sandra Madray, veterinarian Dennis Murphy (not in photo) and biologist, Marg Friesen, hope one of the priorities will be a review of the current scientific literature they have compiled on this complex and controversial disorder.

relation to health, treatment and records.

GENERAL PUBLIC

The fragrance issue came into the public eye this summer. The following is a letter, as yet unpublished, that I recently sent to the Winnipeg Free Press in this regard:

Scents and Sensibility, Courtesy and Common Sense

The media in Halifax and Victoria have recently provided extensive coverage of how individuals in their province are being affected by Multiple Chemical Sensitivity. The Times Columnist in Victoria reported on May 16th that the fragrance industry freely acknowledges that some people do experience adverse reactions to some odours and scents. In Halifax, many articles have been written by both the Canadian Press and The Globe and Mail. Ann Landers in her column in your newspaper (dated May 10th), encourages chemical-sensitive folks to make their views known. The Winnipeg Free Press has also recently reported on this issue; most recently on June 21, 2000. (Battle wages in Halifax over right to bear scents).

People with MCS exist across Canada, including Manitoba. For example, the Chemical Sensitivities Information Exchange Network Manitoba (CSIENM) includes Manitobans who have this condition. Several have gone out-of-province, at their own

expense, for diagnosis and treatment by medical doctors who specialize in the field. One of our members with chemical sensitivities had a Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba (WCB) Medical Review Panel rule that her claim for benefits was acceptable and, "There is no question that the claimant sustained a personal injury which arose out of, and in the course of, employment". "... the opinion of a number of consultants are such that the Panelists agree that (name withheld) has developed a condition known as Multiple Chemical Sensitivity."

Also there are reports of teachers and clerical staff with Environmental Sensitivities in Winnipeg School Division One and other districts. At least one of our leading hospitals has a notice on the door of the Intensive Care Unit which encourages visitors to refrain from wearing scented products while visiting patients.

The library of the Manitoba Federation of Labour Occupational Health Centre has a file on MSC which contains many papers from the mainstream scientific medical literature which provides considerable evidence of an organic basis for MCS. Of particular relevance are research projects such as those of Dr. W. Meggs MD and associates who have studied aspects of nasal pathology/neurogenic inflammation with respect to allergies and chemical sensitivities.

Many Manitobans, I believe, would be interested in knowing that the CSIENM is in the process of writing a report on Manitobans with MCS as well as compiling a comprehensive bibliography on MCS from the peer-reviewed scientific literature. Our findings indicate that not dealing with MCS locally in a timely and appropriate manner is costing the Manitoba medical system and economy 'big time' as impacts range from mild to total disability.

MSC is manageable and often reversible with simple interventions. Avoidance, once symptoms become severe, is crucial. When in doubt, courtesy and common sense should prevail.

We can be sure we will hear more on that issue.

In other news, a national symposium on ME/FM/MCS is being planned for the end of March, 2001 by the National ME/FM Action Network and Environmental Illness Society of Canada. Sponsors include Health Canada/ Laboratory for Disease Control and Environment Canada.

LABOUR UNIONS

Some teachers have been active in this area. I include here an excerpt from the Occupational Health and Safety Manual published by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, Section Seven (Page 94 on Indoor Air Quality):

"According to the US Food and Drug Administration, fragrances cause 30% of all allergic reactions. When exposed to perfume or cologne, 70% of asthmatics develop respiratory symptoms. The trend toward scented teaching and learning materials, scented cleaning supplies, and scented personal products such as shampoos, deodorants, and colognes or perfumes is contributing to poor indoor air quality and ill health. Many of the chemicals and substances used in scented products are allergenic, even toxic. Prolonged exposure can lead to hypersensitivity and long-term health problems, particularly respiratory and skin-related. Teachers are encouraged not to expose themselves or students unnecessarily to scents. Children are more at risk than adults to this kind of exposure. The dra-

matic increase in childhood asthma and life-threatening allergies is of great concern."

I urge all those involved in the education system to follow up on this very important issue for our educators and children and their learning environment.

MEDICAL COMMUNITY

CSIENM members are continuing to provide information to our primary care physicians. Apparently many physicians do not know that some of the specialists to whom they are referring patients, are seemingly unaware of the large body of information in the scientific literature supporting a physical or organic basis for this disorder. In addition, there is evidence that the development of chemical sensitivities can be an early warning sign or symptom of other more serious diseases. We also have provided information about measures that can be taken to reverse and manage chemical sensitivities.

Last but not least, I want to pass on a note of thanks. Many people, with and without chemical sensitivities, have expressed to me their gratitude for those who have spoken out so articulately and knowledgeably about the known and potential adverse effects of chemicals used for pest control and cosmetic lawn care. As a biologist with a M.Sc. in Entomology/Toxicology and over 25 years experience in scientific research in university and government labs, I say, "Keep up the good work. Your efforts are appreciated by many!"

INFORMATIVE WEBSITES:

www.eisc@eisc.ca
www.auracom.com/~nsaeha
www.mcsrr.org
www.ciin.org
www.sympatico.ca/me-fm.action/

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Creative Writing and the Environment: Eco-Poetics

Contemporary Verse 2 is now accepting submissions for a special issue on creative writing and our growing awareness of environmental issues.

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CV2 is currently seeking submissions of poetry and short prose—including fiction, non-fiction and essays—which speak to the concerns we face in preserving a safe and ecologically sound environment for ourselves and future generations.

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Please enclose a SASE, cover page and three-line bio with your submission. CV2 pays for all work published.

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Turn-Off, Tune-Up, and Take a Friend

By Toby Maloney, Resource Conservation Manitoba

Resource Conservation Manitoba is wrapping up its two-year pilot Green Commuting Project, but retaining much of the same focus for its new related climate change and transportation project.

RCM plans to use funding from the federal Climate Change Action Fund, and the provincial Sustainable Development Innovations Fund to build on partnering and networks developed by the Green Commuting Project to reach out to the community with new campaigns. Campaigns to educate car owners to avoid unnecessary emissions from idling their vehicles, on ridesharing, on transit use and on vehicle maintenance and operation to prevent unnecessary greenhouse gas and other emissions are all in the works for this Fall and Winter.

RCM is hoping to use television and Internet promotion, along with print media and targeted direct organizing to get the message out about climate change prevention. The current round of campaigns will culminate with a second annual Winnipeg Commuter Challenge.

National notice

Winnipeg Commuter Challenge 2000 managed to put green commuting on the agenda in Winnipeg, by attracting 36 workplaces, and 1500 individual participants per day, for the five-day event in June. The challenge had a high profile in local media and was regarded with enthusiasm by participants and the workplace coordinators. Winnipeg's effort got noticed nationally, since as an upstart newcomer, Winnipeg placed 5th out of about 35 cities, ahead of all the other newcomers and even ahead of one veteran participating city.

"That has really helped with organizing the current campaign," said RCM project member Laurie Ankenman. "Company managers who were reluctant to jump aboard an unknown entity last year, then saw the bus boards and the TV coverage, heard the radio reports and even know people who participated. Having a strong first year track record is going to make finding and recruiting new sponsors and participants a lot easier the second time round and will help launch the integrated campaign."

Applied Sustainability

The new integrated campaign will invite Winnipeggers to Turn-Off, Tune-Up and Take a Friend, and integrate messages about responsible car ownership with messages about alternatives to single-occupancy car commuting. RCM is hoping its trademark applied sustainability approach, which involves direct organizing and hands-on involvement with target groups, combined with media messages, including television PSAs, posters, bus board advertising, pamphlets and news coverage of events and activities, will penetrate deep into the mainstream consciousness in Winnipeg.

One of the most successful aspects of the Green Commuting Project and Winnipeg Commuter Challenge 2000 was the net-

work of planning partners and endorsers that helped to get it established. Organizations and agencies dealing with health and fitness, worked alongside active transportation organizations, business associations, government departments, and RCM.

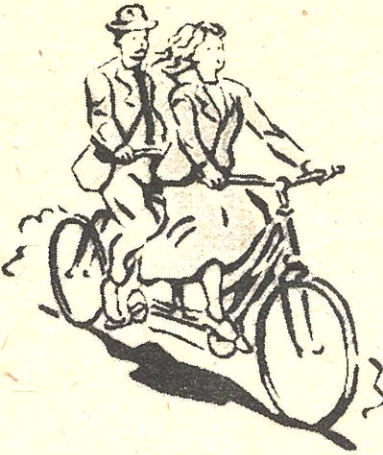
RCM plans to expand that network of partners for the coming Turn-off, Tune-Up, Take a Friend campaign, and stage a larger and stronger Winnipeg Commuter Challenge 2001, June 4-8.

Institutional decisions are key

Over the long term, RCM wants to expand its fledgling role as a clearinghouse for sustainable transportation and climate change prevention activities in Winnipeg. The organization is also keen to keep in touch with other organizations and individuals who are addressing climate change prevention in Manitoba, to explore links and areas of cooperation.

"Individuals can make a lot of changes, that reduce a lot of emissions," says RCM's Laurie Ankenman. "But system decisions about planning and infrastructure and workplace accommodations affect our behaviour. We also need to move our institutions so that they are on side or, even better, leading the challenge to prevent greenhouse gas emissions. That's why we need to see our work in the context of other climate change efforts, whether they are scientists looking at impacts and adaptation, or environmental groups engaged in political advocacy."

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Proposed Legislation: No Help for Manitoba Wildlife

By Anne Wittman, Sierra Legal Defence Fund

On April 17, 2000, Federal Environment Minister David Anderson unveiled the Species At Risk Act, Bill C-33. Overall it was very disappointing. While the proposed law includes some positive features (eg. Supporting private landowners' stewardship efforts), it falls far short of what is needed to effectively protect Canada's 354 species at risk and their habitat.

Manitoba's endangered and threatened species include the Burrowing Owl, Piping Plover, Western Prairie Fringed Orchid, and the Woodland Caribou.

Please let your nearest Liberal Member of Parliament, the Minister of Environment, and the Prime Minister know that you want strong, effective endangered species legislation.

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Fax, write, call or visit your nearest Liberal MP (or do all four!) and send copies of your letter to both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment. Let them know that the Liberal government's proposed endangered species law is too weak and needs to be strengthened in order to be effective. (See "Liberal MPs", this page.)

KEY POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Habitat Protection

Habitat destruction is the primary threat to over 80% of Canada's endangered species. A law that does not protect the habitat of endangered species will not be effective. Minister Anderson's proposal only provides habitat protection for endangered species on federal lands (which constitute less than 5% of Canada, outside the Yukon and NWT). Please indicate that the new law must give mandatory habitat protection to all species within federal jurisdiction wherever they live—and in particular

must protect all migratory birds and transboundary species. The federal government must show leadership by protecting all species within its jurisdiction—especially those that cross national borders.

Mandatory Safety Net

Under the current proposal, the federal Cabinet "may" step in and act in instances when a province is failing to protect the critical habitat of endangered species on provincial or private lands—but it may also choose to do nothing at all (and thus let the species go extinct). It is completely discretionary. The survival of a species must not be held hostage to federal-provincial turf wars. Please indicate that the new law must ensure that the federal government will (not "may") protect the habitat of endangered species whenever a province is failing to do so. In other words, the Act should provide a *mandatory* safety net, not a discretionary one.

Scientific Listing

Please indicate that the law should allow a committee of scientists, not politicians, to determine which species are endangered. Also, it is essential that the new law adopt the current science-based list of Canada's endangered species (which is based on 22 years of work by a committee of federal and provincial wildlife experts) as the initial list under the Act.

Stewardship

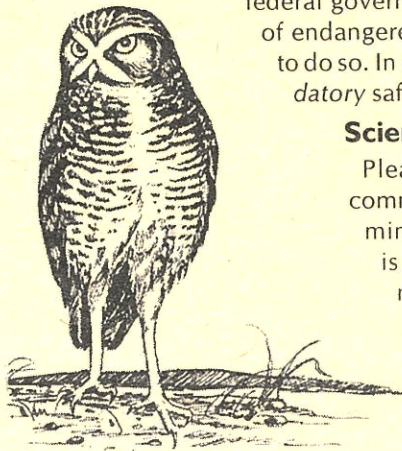
The government should be commended for its plan to implement a stewardship and incentives program in conjunction with legislation. However, the proposal provides no details of this program. Please indicate that you support the need for a stewardship program, and urge the government to ensure it is adequately funded (you may want to add that at least \$50 million/year is needed to support and implement on-the-ground recovery actions for all listed species).

Direct Harm to Species

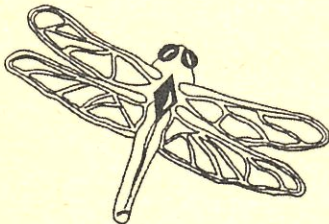
Please indicate that the federal law should prohibit the killing and harming of ALL endangered species and their "residences", wherever they are found in Canada.

You can also send a free fax to Minister Anderson and your Member of Parliament via the new endangered species web site. The site is all set up for instant personalized faxes (and has lots more info if you need it). It's easy! Just go to <http://www.extinctionsucks.org>

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Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, Winnipeg South
Centre (983-3292)
Hon. Ron Duhamel, St. Boniface (983-3183)
John Harvard, Charleswood St. James-
Assiniboia (983-4501)
David Iftody, Provencher (326-7545)
Rey Pagtakhan, Winnipeg North-St. Paul
(983-4729)

Hon. David Anderson, PC, MP
Minister of the Environment
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
Fax to: (819) 953-3457
email: david.anderson@ec.gc.ca

The Right Hon. Jean Chretien
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
Fax: (819) 537-6198
email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Hog Watch to Hold Workshops

continued from page 1

expansion of its plant in Winnipeg, an expansion which is being subsidized from the public purse by both the provincial and municipal levels of government.

The province has promised public hearings by the Clean Environment Commission for the Schneider expansion, but many fear that the results of the hearings are pre-ordained and that the plant will go forward with its attendant requirement to ramp up production in the surrounding area to a total of 10 million hogs—producing more fecal waste than the entire human population of Canada.

Hog Watch Manitoba held an organizing and educational workshop in September. Rural residents paint a picture which provides a very different view from the glossy video produced by the Manitoba Pork Council earlier this year. Beth Peto provides the following report.

Hog Watch Workshop

Fourteen new participants from eight different municipalities joined the organizers of the Hog Watch seminar at Delta Marsh. They told us their personal experiences which in many cases were very similar in all of the municipalities being discussed.

Many property owners who reside in close proximity to proposed corporate hog barn operations feel abandoned by the councillors they elected.

Property owners often feel that municipal councillors are inadequately prepared to assess these industrial hog barn proposals and do not provide the information that property owners need and are entitled to have. Often neighbours on adjacent land are never informed of proposed hog facilities and find out more or less by accident.

Feeling ostracized within their own community, a number of complainants from south-eastern Manitoba told of intimidation and threats of bodily harm. It was apparent that one couple was suffering a lot of stress but determined to withstand the threats.

Absentee owners

An out-of-province investor has submitted a proposal for a hog operation so large that the lagoon required will be the size of two football fields put together. Because of the nature of this enterprise, this appears to be a short-term investment with little on-going benefit to the community but great long-term environmental risks.

Many of the investors in industrial hog operations, as well as the barn workers, live away from the hog facility and do not care about the havoc being created on neighbours' lives from the odour emanating from hog barn operations and the lagoons.

One farmer suggested that the corporate hog industry can be described using two words: "greed and arrogance" with no regard at all for families living in close proximity to their hog operations. Absentee investors do not concern themselves with the impact of the hog industry on people living in the community.

One couple lives most of the time in Brandon in a small apartment, which they rented originally for the wife so she would not have to drive home to the farm in bad weather when working night shifts. The stench from the hog factory is so intense at their home, the farmer commutes to his own farm every day to do the chores, but returns to Brandon to sleep, primarily to get away from the odour of the neighbouring hog operation.

Baseline records

In areas where hog operations are being proposed, residents are establishing a baseline for the current value of their property and testing their well water to establish a baseline for their water quality.

The focus of the Manitoba provincial government is increased hog production regardless of the cost to the community or the impact on the environment.

Community outreach and public education will continue—keep posted! Hog Watch is giving assistance in a number of communities, where proposals are pending.

Hog Watch Action Line: 1-204-926-1914

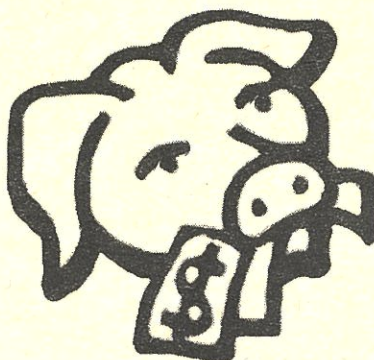
Hog Watch Email: info@hogwatchmanitoba.org

Hog Watch Website: www.hogwatchmanitoba.org

Hog Watch Fax: 1-204-947-6514

Hog Watch provides regular email distribution of news and reports on the various issues related to hog farming operations. If you would like to be included on this list, please email to info@hogwatchmanitoba.org with "subscribe" in the subject line and "subscribe to Hog Watch list - (your name, address and email address)" in the body of the message.

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Canada

Respecting the Life Blood of Mother Earth: Mitigating a Water Crisis with Composting Toilets

by Rodney McDonald

It is a major constituent of all living matter, it is home to the fish spirits and other aquatic beings, it is the universal solvent, it nourishes and sustains all life forms, it is used for ceremonies and healing, and although 71 % of the Earth's surface is covered with it, only a very, very small portion of it is fresh (without salt) and accessible. It is water, the sacred lifeblood of Mother Earth - the only planet (in this solar system) on which surface water exists in liquid form.

With such a sacred gift comes a responsibility. A responsibility to share the resource and hold it in trust for future generations of all life forms. Aboriginal peoples know this, but much of this knowledge is not with those who have grown up in industrialized societies. The result is two primary water issues that have, in some areas of the world, sparked a water crisis.

Not enough fresh water

The first issue is that there simply is not enough fresh water to go around. Urbanization, industrialization and intensive agriculture have significantly reduced or depleted its supply, especially in other countries. As a result several countries have come knocking on Canada's door wanting to buy water. So much so that countries are prepared to pay top dollar to have water shipped via pipeline or oil tanker to other parts of North America, and as far away as the Middle East and China.

The second issue is that the fresh water that is available is becoming increasingly unhealthy. The First Nation community at Gull Bay and the town of Walkerton (both in Ontario) have experienced the ill effects of drinking contaminated water. In Manitoba, a recent study shows that almost half of the private wells in rural areas are contaminated. One source of this contamination is human waste, a problem because of the methods used to dispose of and treat this waste.

Harming our Mother Earth

Those with the so-called privilege of using a flushing toilet exacerbate these water issues. In urban societies this is largely an unconscious action, and no thought is given to the effects of mixing human waste and fresh water. The reality however is that this mixture, and the act of flushing it away, is ultimately harming our Earth Mother.

In this chain of events potable water becomes sewage water, which travels through a costly maze of pipes to a multi-million dollar wastewater treatment plant, is stored in a septic tank, or is discharged directly into a river or ocean. Often locations of discharge, or leakage from these systems, are connected to drinking water sources through the water cycle. This system of human "waste" removal and treatment is contributing directly to

see "Composting toilets ..." on page 12 ►



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Composting Toilets Eliminate Waste

continued from page 11

contamination and depletion of fresh water supplies.

There are options. One way to mitigate this water crisis is to use composting toilets, instead of flush toilets. A composting toilet system addresses both water issues by requiring very little or no water and preventing the contamination (by human waste) of the water supply. By transforming human body waste into a resource (i.e.: compost), composting toilets eliminate the concept of human "waste". It is a system that completes the circle, returning what we take into our bodies back to the earth.

Minimizing the impact

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), eager to minimize our impact on Mother Earth, installed four composting toilet systems in our new office in downtown Winnipeg—currently only one of two composting toilet installations in an office building in Canada.

How does a composting toilet work? The process varies slightly with manufacturer, but ours work like this: A waterless toilet is connected to a composting unit below the floor via a large chute. Human body waste and toilet paper drop down into the composting unit. A fan attached to the composting unit continuously draws

air through the system to the outdoors, keeping the washroom odour-free and aerating the compost pile in the process. With the use of a system such as this, compost is made much more quickly than with an outhouse.

Mother Earth would approve of composting toilets because the two products of this toilet technology can be returned to her with no harm. The first, the liquid product called compost tea,

is an excellent organic liquid fertilizer. The other product is the solid compost, a rich odour-free material that resembles the best garden soil Mother Earth has to offer.

No water wasted. No water contaminated. Crisis mitigated.

CIER is currently completing a feasibility study of composting toilet system use in northern communities.

Reprinted with permission from The First Perspective, October 2000 (Taiga Communications, vol.9 number 10)

For more information please contact Rodney McDonald at rmcdonald@cier.mb.ca.

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources is a First Nation environmental non-profit company created by a Board of First Nation leaders from across Canada.

ECO

October is Environmental Illness Awareness Month

A national symposium on ME/FM/MCS is being planned for the end of March, 2001 by the National ME/FM Action Network and Environmental Illness Society of Canada. Sponsors include Health Canada/ Laboratory for Disease Control and Environment Canada.

Please see the article, "CSIENM Update for 2000", on page 6 of this edition. For further information, call Marg Friesen of the CSIENM at 261-8591.

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Mailing address _____ Postal Code _____

Area(s) of interest _____ Volunteer skills _____

Group members are entitled to nominate representatives for a position on the Eco-Network Steering Committee. Group membership is open to any non-governmental, non-profit group which has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or environmental education.

A supporting membership includes a subscription to **Eco-Journal** as well as notice of events and regular updates on issues and is open to any individual.

