

EXPOSURE: ENVIRONMENTAL LINKS TO BREAST CANCER

Manitoba Eco-Network is joining with the Women's Health Clinic and the Hope Breast Cancer Resource and Information Centre in the Winnipeg launch of the new Canadian film "Exposure: Environmental Links to Breast Cancer".

"Exposure" examines the effects of our contaminated world on the health of women. It explores the impacts on public health of ionizing radiation, synthetic chemical pesticides and a host of other commonly-occurring substances to which we are routinely exposed, with a focus on breast cancer, rates of which are increasing worldwide.

Long-Term Connections

It is narrated and hosted by breast cancer survivor, Olivia Newton-John and features physicians, epidemiologists, activists and other survivors discussing the little understood, long-term connections between environment, health and disease prevention. This is a powerful film, with an important message for all women. But its implications extend beyond women. Breast cancer is not the only disease on the rise. Non-Hodgkins lymphoma, prostate, brain and bladder cancers, multiple myelomas and childhood leukaemia (amongst others) are also increasing, especially in industrialized countries. (See review of Living Downstream, page 12).

This film's message is shocking and compelling. It is a call

to action, for women, and for everyone else in our society. And action is possible. A panel presentation to assist the movement to local preventive action will follow viewing of the film. It will feature Dr. Annalee Yassi, Epidemiologist, Physician and Director of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at Health Sciences Centre, Jackie Wasserman, breast cancer survivor and activist, and Anne Lindsey, Executive Director of Manitoba Eco-Network. We hope also

to have Dorothy Goldin-Rosenberg, associate producer of the film, on hand to speak about why and how this film was made, and the role of the Women's Network on Health and the Environment, which sponsored the film. The evening will conclude with an informal reception, including organic baked goods from Tall Grass Prairie Bread Company, and an opportunity to visit a number of display tables from community organizations involved in health care, environmental action, and alternatives to the chemical treadmill. We're also hoping to conduct a series of more intensive workshops around the film and local action in February and March.

Eco



Are We Exposed?

Exposure - A Call to Action!

Tuesday, January 27 at 7 pm

Jubilee Place at Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute

181 Riverton (across the Disraeli Bridge from downtown)

Admission: \$3. Parking, wheelchair access, and ASL interpretation available.

What's Inside...

Plutonium Highway?	Page 4
Sustainable Community	Page 6
Toxic Perfume	Page 9

Volume 8, Number 1
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1998
(date of issue: January 1998)

Eco-Journal

is published five times per year by the
Manitoba Eco-Network/Reseau
Ecologique du Manitoba Inc. at
2-70 Albert Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 1E7

phone (204)947-6511
fax (204) 947-6514
Email men@web.net

Editor
Anne Lindsey

Contributors this issue:
Caroline Chartrand, Anne Lindsey,
Colleen Pawlychka, John Sinclair,
Don Sullivan, Jan Westlund

Layout
David Henry

Manitoba Eco-Network Executive

Chair
Harry Mesman - MB Federation of
Labour

Vice Chair
Dennis Bayomi - Wpg. Vegetarian Assoc.

Treasurer
Val Klassen - Concerned Citizens of MB

Secretary
Lyle Barkman - Organic Producers Assoc.
of Manitoba

Individual Subscriptions to **Eco-Journal** are
available at a cost of \$20 or as part of a
supporting membership to the Manitoba
Eco-Network at a cost of \$25. Group mem-
bership dues are \$40. Advertising rates are
available upon request.

Canada Publication Mail Sales Agreement
#0530212, Postage paid at Winnipeg, MB.

The opinions expressed by contributors are
their own and do not represent the views of
the Manitoba Eco-Network or its member
groups.

A NEW YEAR

SOME GOOD NEWS, SOME BAD ... by Anne Lindsey

New Year's Greetings to Eco-Journal readers. 1998 begins with both good and bad news on the environmental front. What's good is the emergence of some new and exciting organizations in Manitoba, including the Metis Horticultural and Heritage Society, the Campaign for Pesticide Reduction, Winnipeg (see below for info), and a possible "Green Community Association" for Winnipeg. Also, the Eco-Network is happy and grateful to report a grant of \$1,000 from the Civic Employees Charitable Fund, to support our Environmental Resource Centre. Also good: It's possible and even likely that the Federal/Provincial Environmental Harmonization Agreement will not go forward - the Commons Standing Committee examining the accord came to many of the same conclusions as the environmental community about the advisability of such an agreement, and recommended against it. The Fine Art of Manitoba's Wilderness Project is concluding its first stage. Marek Zaleski's stunning photos of special Manitoba places will be on public view sometime in February. And we are moving forward with an exciting new project on connections between environment and health, beginning with the Winnipeg launch

of the film "Exposure: Environmental Links to Breast Cancer" on January 27. (see front cover).

What's bad? Well, this could take up the rest of the issue. Here's a sample. The awarding of a license to Tolko Industries for its huge forest and mill operations in The Pas (see Don Sullivan's article); the Kyoto conference - a mixture of good and bad, but the targets for greenhouse gas emissions are nowhere near what they need to be; the real possibility that Winnipeg will provide a liquid subsidy to urban sprawl by selling water to Headingly; the continued expansion of the hog industry in Manitoba and the rest of Canada. No need to continue, the list can go on and on. What does it all mean? Simply that we all have lots of work to do to make our communities and the earth a safer and healthier place to live - for all species.

Our heartfelt thanks to all who responded so generously to our Annual Appeal, even in spite of the mail strike. As always, your support is deeply appreciated, and is what enables us to continue our work. We hope to see you at the launch of "Exposure" on January 27.

Eco

COMBATTING URBAN PESTICIDES

A group of concerned Winnipeggers recently came together for the inaugural meeting of the newly-named Campaign for Pesticide Reduction, Winnipeg. Affiliating itself with an established national coalition (which includes Sierra Club, World Wildlife Fund and the Canadian Labour Congress Environment Committee as well as a host of smaller groups across Canada) will bring the benefits of networking and resource-

sharing, the group believes. Its goal is a drastic reduction of pesticide and herbicide use in Winnipeg, and a conversion to safe alternatives in lawn and garden care and civic greenspace maintenance.

In the short term, the group believes that education is the key. "Winnipeggers need to become more chemical-literate" says Ian Greaves, who spearheaded the formation of CPR Winnipeg. See *Impacts* page 11 ►

1997-1998

Eco-Network Steering Committee

Lyle Barkman - Organic Producers Association of Manitoba
Dennis Bayomi - Winnipeg Vegetarian Association
Ray Burns - Manitoba Naturalists Society
Lindy Clubb - Western Canada Wilderness Committee
Val Klassen - Concerned Citizens of Manitoba
Harry Mesman - Manitoba Federation of Labour
Alexandra Morrison, Resource Conservation Manitoba
Steve Rauh - Harvest Collective
Karen Turner - Sierra Club, Agassiz Group

ASSESSMENT PROCESS IGNORES DEFICIENCIES IN 13-YEAR FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Don Sullivan, Manitoba's Future Forest Alliance

The Manitoba Clean Environment Commission (CEC), which is composed of government hand-picked appointees with no particular scientific or policy expertise, recently concluded public hearings on Tolko Industries' 13 year Forest Management Plan (FMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Tolko, a B.C. family-based business, recently purchased Repap's operations in The Pas, Manitoba. The Repap Forest Management Licence Area (FMLA) which was transferred to Tolko by the government of Manitoba, covers some 11.4 million hectares and is the largest Forest Management Licence Area in North America. Despite the mammoth size of this project, however, the Manitoba media reported only one story on Tolko's intentions to expand its mill operations in The Pas and to increase harvesting activities by 100%.

Interestingly, one of the persons who sat on the CEC public hearing panel as a commissioner is a current employee of the Winnipeg Free Press. One would think that the Winnipeg Free Press should know by now that they are in the business of reporting news not making it.

For its part, the government of Manitoba was not in the least bit interested in ensuring that a fair and creditable process was in place to review Tolko's plans. As it has done in past public hearings into large scale forestry plans, the Manitoba Future Forest Alliance (MFFA) requested the government provide intervenor funding as per the Manitoba Environment Act, to hire third party experts to assess independently the scientific credibility of Tolko's FMP and EIS, but were once again denied. To add insult to injury, the CEC also refused repeated requests at the hearings from MFFA and others, as provided for under the Manitoba Environment Act, to expand the Commission's panel to include experts to assist the the CEC in making their final recommendations to the Manitoba Minister of Environment.

The refusal to add experts to the Commission's panel came as no surprise, as the Chair of the CEC was also the former Deputy Minister of Natural Resources for the province and was heavily involved with the initial Repap Forest Management Licence Agreement back in the late 1980s.

The bias of the CEC was further demonstrated when it denied four separate motions to suspend public hearings from MFFA and First Nations communities affected by Tolko's forest activities. The various motions tabled at the CEC hearings made legitimate requests that the hearings be suspended until clarification was

sought from the Manitoba Minister of Environment on certain legal matters, and that the myriad of deficiencies identified in Tolko's FMP and EIS by various federal departments be rectified by the proponent prior to the reconvening of the public hearings. For example, MFFA asked for clarification as to whether the CEC even had the mandate to conduct public hearings, as there was originally a decision under federal EARP Guidelines (in 1989) to conduct a joint federal/provincial environmental review of this project. Draft guidelines were even prepared and issued for the joint review process. However, the joint process in 1989 never got underway because the company at the time (REPAP) had announced that they did not intend to proceed with the proposed mill and harvesting expansion due to a downturn in the economy and a poor fiscal performance by the company.

The present FMP and EIS before the CEC, even though it is from a new company, called for the exact same expansion plans as the one proposed back in 1989 by REPAP. MFFA contended, in its motion to suspend hearings, that the reasons for the decision made in 1989 to conduct a joint federal/provincial environmental review still apply and therefore, the CEC should suspend their hearings until clarification was sought from both the federal and provincial Minister of Environment.

The most disturbing aspect of this provincial environmental assessment process was the complete lack of respect shown by the CEC in dealing with the concerns raised by the affected First Nations communities in Tolko's FMLA. Many First Nations in northern Manitoba recently signed a Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement (TLE) to ensure that their treaty rights were being protected for future generations. Most had seen this agreement as an end to a long and often difficult process of negotiation with the two levels of government and were horrified to see that many areas selected under the TLE agreement were slated for clear cutting by the company in the first few years of the 13-year FMP.

Despite clear language in the TLE Agreement, for protecting areas selected by these communities, the company contended - at the hearings - that they have a right to harvest in the areas selected under the TLE Agreement. The CEC again refused motions tabled by the affected First Nations communities to postpone the public hearings in order to seek clarification from the Manitoba government surrounding the protection of selected areas under the TLE Agreement.

See Fair Assessment page 10 ➤



Greening Gaia
Organic & Non-Polluting
Lawn & Garden Care

A complete ecosystem approach to lawn & garden care.

For information call
475-7805

"What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not been discovered." - Emerson

- weekly cutting of lawns using non-motorized reel mowers
- bio-intensive garden bed preparation using double-digging techniques
- manual aeration and weeding
- spring clean-ups and thatch removal

TALL GRASS PRAIRIE BREAD Co. and Deli Inc.

A neighborhood bakery specializing in breads, cinnamon buns, muffins, cakes, tortes, and pies. All made with organically grown Prairie grains ground right at the bakery.

859 Westminister Ave. Winnipeg
783-5097

WARHEAD PLUTONIUM TO PASS THROUGH MANITOBA?

by Anne Lindsey, Concerned Citizens of Manitoba
with information from the Campaign for Nuclear Phase-Out

Ontario Hydro and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) are hoping to gain a potentially lucrative contract with the US Department of Energy and the Russian Federation, to "burn" the plutonium resulting from the dismantling of Cold War nuclear weapons. And if the proposal goes forward, southern Manitoba could be one of the routes through which the plutonium travels. The plan involves fabrication of nuclear fuel rods (most likely in the US) incorporating the plutonium, and utilizing them in Canadian CANDU reactors in this country. AECL says that CANDUs are well-suited to the task as they can use a variety of fuel types.

No Debate

The Canadian government has decided without any parliamentary or public debate to approve in principle the importation of plutonium fuel, despite the fact this would likely compromise Canada's nuclear non-proliferation agreements by integrating the Canadian nuclear industry with the nuclear weapons programs of the US and Russia. The government has not committed to undertake a comprehensive environmental assessment before a final decision to proceed with the project is made. The plutonium fuel is being proposed for use in the Bruce Nuclear Power Development in Ontario, which would imply a complete refurbishment of the aging reactors there. The resulting high level nuclear waste would remain in Canada, adding to our own growing stockpile.

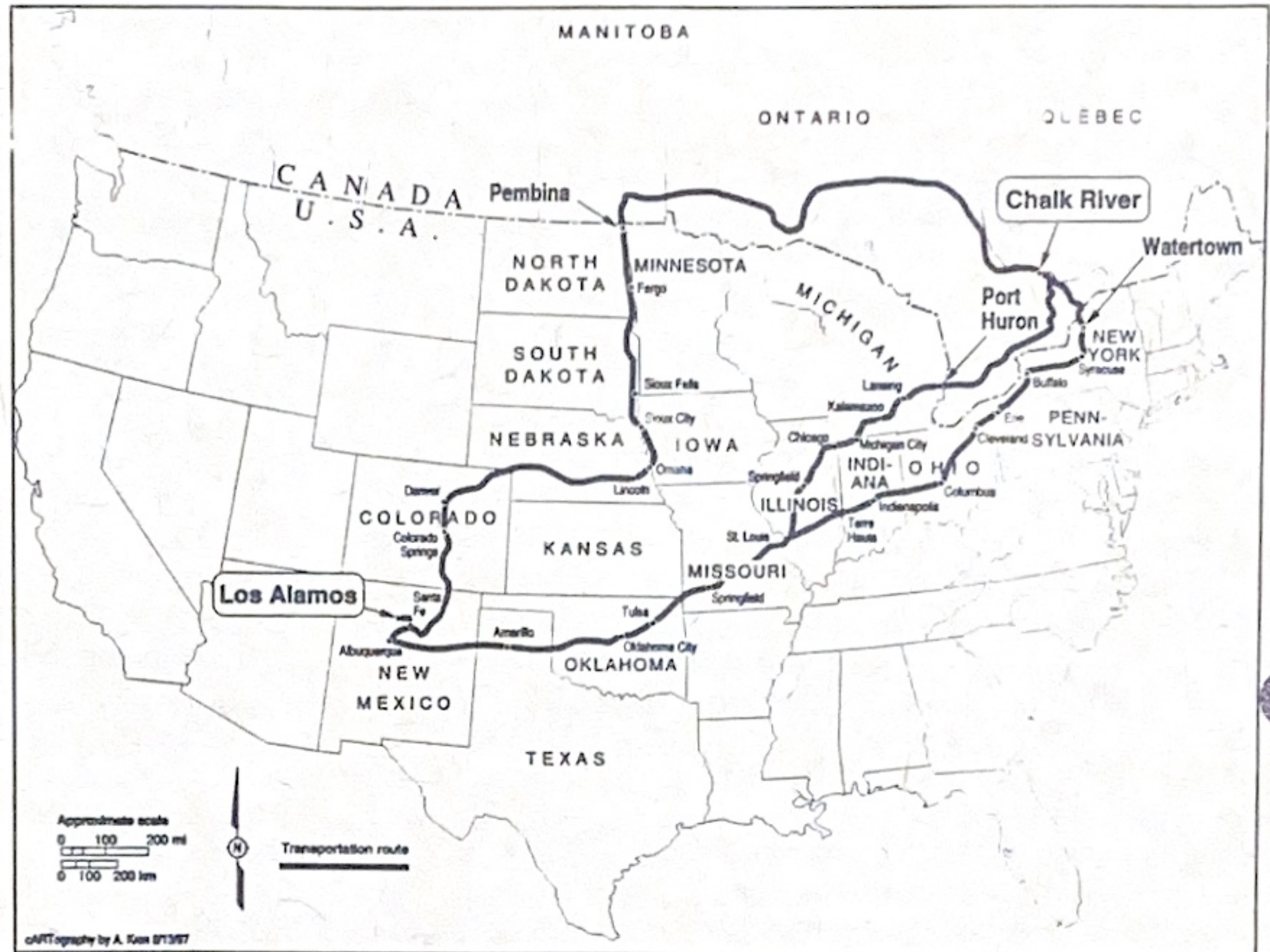
Plutonium Economy

The government characterizes the plan as one of "swords into ploughshares", but critics such as Dr. Gordon Edwards of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, believes Canadian agreement to use the plutonium fuel will encourage the development of a dangerous "plutonium economy". Edwards, and the Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Phase-Out advocate isolating the plutonium which has already been produced and guarding it to the best of human ability, while at the same time ending all production of the material. (CANDU nuclear reactors are an extremely efficient producer of plutonium as a result of the nuclear fission of natural uranium).

Civil Liberties at Risk

The first step for the Canadian proposal is a planned "test burn" to take place at Chalk River Nuclear Labs, near Ottawa. Originally scheduled for December, 1997, the test has been delayed by the US Justice Department as a result of concerns expressed by many Canadian groups and individuals to the environmental assessment

process being conducted in the US. (It's ironic that Canadian citizens have to contact the US to express their views on this project). However, the test will likely take place sometime this Spring and as the accompanying map demonstrates, this first (albeit small) shipment may travel through southern Manitoba, north on Highway



Possible US Weapons Plutonium Fuel Routes into Canada

Source: Parallax Environmental Assessment, US Dept of Energy, Aug. 18, 1997

Note: when this map was published in the US, the routes stopped at the Canadian border.

75, and east along the Trans-Canada Highway. If AECL eventually wins this contract, large-scale shipments of plutonium fuel will enter Canada at least once a month for 20 or so years, along one of the 3 potential routes. The hazards and security risks of transporting plutonium fuel would require unprecedented security measures and may compromise the civil liberties of Canadians.

Concerned Citizens of Manitoba has written to the municipalities along the proposed route as well as to the Province of Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg Fire Department, and the United Brotherhood of Firefighters to express our concerns about the potential shipments of plutonium being allowed to enter Manitoba. The Campaign for Nuclear Phase-Out is asking all Canadians to contact the Prime Minister, and their MP, telling them to cancel the test "burn" and withdraw their support in principle for CANDU plutonium fuel imports. For more information, or to get involved contact Concerned Citizens of Manitoba at 284-4400. To order copies of an excellent brochure on this subject, contact CNP at 412-1 Nicholas St. Ottawa, K1N 7B7 (50 copies for \$10).

Eco

WINDS OF CHANGE MAY BE JUST HOT AIR AROUND PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

by Jan Westlund and John Sinclair, Resource Conservation Manitoba

While most Manitobans quietly go about their now-ingrained recycling routines, a small group of interested insiders is hotly debating the next three year business plan for the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation (MPSC). At stake is the opportunity to tune up the Manitoba Product Stewardship Program (MPSP) so that it may situate itself amongst international stewardship initiatives. Otherwise it will remain simply a vehicle for funding a portion of the costs for residential and some school recycling programs province-wide through the collection and distribution of the current two cent 'enviro levy' on beverage containers.

In the view of Resource Conservation Manitoba (formerly the Recycling Council of Manitoba), an environmental non-government organization which participated in the Implementation Team negotiations to create the MPSP three years ago, several problems need to be addressed before ours could be considered a fledgling stewardship program. These problems were identified by RCM during the creation of the Product Stewardship Program but have not yet been remedied.

More waste reduction needed

An essential improvement needed is a much greater emphasis on waste reduction and reuse, the first two of the 3 R hierarchy. In the first instance, some of the program's current \$6,000,000 surplus could be used to reward municipalities which initiate substantial plans to reduce waste as well as divert it from the landfill. More fundamentally, means need to be established within the program that encourage the packaging industry to reduce the amount of materials used in their packages. European packaging programs achieve this in part through weight and volume based levies: as the amount of material used in a package decreases so does the levy charged the packaging industry. No such incentives to reduce are currently part of the MPSC program.

Meaningful targets for the recovery of recyclables and consistent monitoring of progress towards such goals must also be put in place to measure the environmental benefits of the recycling component of this made-in-Manitoba program.

Additionally, many believe that industry needs to show that they are accepting some part of the program costs rather than simply passing them through to consumers in the form of the two cent 'enviro levy' which is currently itemized on cash register check-out receipts.

Public should be more involved

In order to be considered a full stewardship program, a further fundamental

change is needed to build transparency and accountability into the MPSP. Currently, a handpicked, government approved Board is allowed to dictate new developments with little or no public input or review. In fact, Manitoba Product Stewardship Board meetings are closed to the public despite the fact that, while technically the beverage container industry writes the cheque to MPSC in the amount of levys collected, all indications are that the consumer actually pays for the program.

Today, only one of these 10 Board members represents the public (the Consumers Association of Canada representative) without carrying any other vested interest. Fully four of the Board members are industry reps while the remaining members are from government or the recycling sector. In actual fact, only one of the industry players represents a form of packaging against which a levy is charged (the beverage container industry). Other industry representatives sit at the table and make decisions about the program even though their packaging or products as yet carry no levy. And, indeed, may not in the foreseeable future unless they will it.

Hostility to government intervention

This inherent lack of public scrutiny and transparency of a program essentially funded by consumers is a glaring problem which could be addressed by the Environment Minister during this business plan review with no need to tamper with supporting regulation. However, government insiders indicate there is very little willingness for legislators to force-feed any program changes in the

prevailing nation-wide climate of hostility toward government intervention. The government, apparently, is waiting for progressive recommendations to rise spontaneously from the current Board carrying aloft notions of full stewardship. Something which seems unlikely.

The distribution of the current two cent levy should also be reconsidered. Many Manitobans are unaware that levies are paid on beverage containers only although they comprise just under 5% of the recyclable stream. The basket of goods collected for recycling under the MPSP contains, however, at a minimum: P.E.T. plastic, steel, glass, aluminum, newsprint, magazines, catalogues, boxboard, gable tops and may also include other types of plastic, cardboard and tetra paks depending on the program. (Some funding is provided directly to the City of Winnipeg by the tetra pak producers to help push their packaging through the system).

Cost of doing business

In the view of RCM, the cost of recycling in Manitoba should be shared through differential levies on all items in

See MPSP page 8 ►

Mondragón
Bookstore & Coffee House

Alternative books & Zines:

- Ecology
- Indigenous Issues
- Radical Politics
- Human Rights
- Animal Liberation
- Gay & Lesbian
- Alternative Fiction
- Children's Books
- Posters & T-Shirts

We do Special Orders...

Daily Lunch & Dinner Specials:

- Vegetarian & Vegan Food
- Fair Trade Coffees
- Capuccino & Herbal Tea
- Smoke Free Atmosphere

946-5241

Open: Tues - Sat 9 am - Midnight
Closed: Sundays & Mondays

91 Albert Street
(in Winnipeg's Exchange District)

Book Launches & Speakers

Fund-raising Benefits for Local Organizations

CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

In late November, the Eco-Network convened a conference on Sustainable Communities as part of our work on the Community Animation Project. The conference was convened for two purposes: 1. to examine and discuss the diversity of views that exist in Manitoba on what "sustainability" means, and to learn about mechanisms and processes which work in building more sustainable communities, as well as those that act as barriers, and 2. To give guidance to the development of a Sustainable Communities infrastructure or network in the province, providing support to communities undertaking sustainability initiatives.

Defining Sustainable Communities

At the outset, several assumptions were made. First, that there are many definitions of "community", but in this instance the focus would tend to be more on geographic communities. Second, that there are differing ideas on what "sustainability" implies, and while no one explanation can be considered the defining view, we were particularly interested in looking at the interconnections between health, the environment, and the economy. The final, and perhaps more contentious assumption is the one which underlies the Community Animation Project - that in all cases, sustainable community development implies the necessity of including or working with, all sectors of society. It's controversial because what most often happens, either implicitly or explicitly, is that key groups are left out of decision-making, for both good and bad reasons.

For example, some would argue that we don't need government to move ahead with progressive community work. But the reality is that sooner or later, we'll encounter by-laws, zoning regulations, and a whole range of public policy precedents which can either be major impediments to our work, or in some cases, important avenues to improvements in civic life - if we know how to access and use them.

Conversely, big industry with access to money and political influence may feel immune to the protestations of eco-activists when the new plant is being built, which puts it in the position of discounting potential future hostility of nearby and global neighbours, as well as denying itself the creative energy and ideas of the environmental community.

The Process

In this conference, we aimed to create a kind of microcosm workshop of the community, bringing together people from many diverse sectors, but with interests and backgrounds in thinking about and involvement in some form of sustainable development work.

Our plan was to provide fodder for discussions through the keynote presentations and plenary panel, and then to encourage a small group process of working together to uncover areas of commonality, and areas of irreconcilable differences.

Enthusiastic presentations from Paul Chorney of the West Broadway Alliance, and Sue Crockett of the Healthy The Pas and Area Round Table, two community organizations on the path of striving for sustainability, opened the afternoon. In the following small group sessions, groups were given a hypothetical community scenario (loosely based on real Manitoba situations) and asked to work through how some of the problems could be addressed. The groups were asked to pay particular attention to enabling mecha-

nisms and barriers, and to draw upon their own experience.

Was the conference successful? In most ways, yes. The mix of participants was good, in particular many connections were made between people from the health sector, and those from the "environmental" and community development sectors. At the same time, however, the mix was somewhat disappointing in that it did not include as many participants from business and industry as we would have wished to make the event more of the envisioned "microcosm" of the community. Thus, the discussion contained perhaps less diversity or disagreement than might have been expected.

In spite of this shortcoming, however, the overall response from participants was enthusiastic, and indicated significant benefits had been gained. In particular, many participants noted that they had come away with new ideas to incorporate into their own work, and many had concrete suggestions for follow-up and future work. The keynote speakers, William Rees and Mark Roseland, made excellent presentations which are being made available in video format.

Interestingly, the small group discussions focussed in on many of the social aspects of communities, such as forming trusting relationships within the community, fostering empowerment, focussing on strengths, and new forms of group process for working on problems. Synopses of the small groups' work may be found in the full conference report which is available at the Eco-Network Resource Centre.

Eco

Search the Green Lane for Environmental Information!



<http://www.mb.ec.gc.ca>

- Weather
- Climate
- Ozone Depletion
- Wildlife
- Air Quality
- Flood Damage
- Habitat Protection
- Legislation/Policies
- Science & Research
- Water Legislation
- Water Monitoring
- Action 21
- Pollution Prevention
- Publications/Brochures
- Environmental Protection
- Environmental Assessment



Environment
Canada

Environnement
Canada

Canada

TALKS ON ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINTS AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OPEN CONFERENCE

by Jan Westlund

Dr. William Rees of the University of British Columbia School of Community and Regional Planning was in Winnipeg for one evening in late November to speak to a crowd of about two hundred to launch the Sustainable Communities Conference. What he had to say rekindled recognition of our wasteful ways and set the stage for Dr. Mark Roseland, Director of the Community Economic Development Centre at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, BC, to suggest ways we can live more sustainably.

A Crisis of Culture

According to Dr. Rees, "Sustainability is not mainly an ecological, nor economical, nor technical problem as commonly perceived. It is mostly a crisis of culture, generated by commonly held values, facts and assumptions that do not accord with biophysical reality". A major part of this cultural dysfunction is reflected in our failure to see ourselves as ecological entities. This is due to our expansionist world-view which endorses the separation of humans from the environment and rest of nature. He points out that we lack a cross discipline to see ourselves in relation to other species and our eco-systems.

Dr. Rees put forward the fundamental notion that our non-growing, finite ecosphere contains the ever-expanding economy; that they are not equal links but that the former contains the latter.

This view contradicts the Venn Diagram of intersecting economic, human health/well being, and environmental interests the provincial government uses as a graphic model to discuss sustainability. He suggests a more accurate graphic of the association between these three would be concentric circles, the largest of which is the environment holding a smaller circle, society, which surrounds the smallest of all circles, the economy: the economy is dependent on society which is dependent on our healthy environment.

As a basis for this argument, he points out that green plants are the only primary producers on earth. Humans are secondary producers using nature's resources to create both goods and waste. Clearly, only nature is responsible for producing the concentrated resources which we dissipate. Thus the ecosphere is both source and sink.

Is remaining natural capital sufficient?

Dr. Rees concluded that it is inevitable that growth and use of these resources must result in disordering of the ecosphere. Our economy, in his view, is parasitic to the ecosphere. He believes it can't be any other way as he argues that humans are a 'Patch Disturbance Species'. This term can be applied to any organism which, by central-place foraging, degrades a small 'central place' greatly and a bigger area somewhat less as hunter/gathers do.

At this stage in world development he challenges us to ask this fundamental question for sustainability:

Given that we are as dependent on Mother Earth as on our own mothers when we were *in utero*, are remaining stocks of natural capital adequate to produce resource needs and life support for all?

One way to answer that question is to use Dr. Rees' own 'ecological footprint' analysis to picture exactly where we stand today.

Ecological footprint analysis is a tool used to measure the resources necessary for food, transportation and energy needs as well as the waste assimilative capacity of any given population base, regardless of where in the world those resources and sinks are found. According to Dr. Rees' calculations, we have 1.5 to 2 hectares per capita available on the planet to meet these needs. This amount is considered to be our 'Fair Earth Share'. (Whether everyone agrees to give more than lip service to the idea of sharing earth's resources equally is a volatile topic avoided by Rees at this point in time).

See Ecological page 11 ►

Think about where you bank.

As a natural foods co-operative, Harvest Collective has its roots in a food buying club started in a community club basement nearly two decades ago. Today, Harvest provides consumers with high-quality organic foods in a community atmosphere out of two different neighbourhood stores.

At Assiniboine, we invest in home-grown ideas like Harvest to help our community prosper and grow.

What does your bank do with its profits?

ASSINIBOINE
CREDIT  **UNION**

*Banking the way
it should be.*

*"Assiniboine was very helpful when
it came time for us to expand.
We couldn't have done it without them."*

METIS ROOTS GROWING

by Caroline Chartrand, Executive Director

It was only a short 150 years ago the 'grocery stores' of the Metis of the Red River were just out our back doors: the prairie, our gardens and the wildlife supported by prairie habitat. Today in our urban setting, our children are growing up with little or no interaction with or awareness of our relationship with the natural surroundings once provided by Mother Earth. Only by revitalizing this relationship and restoring and preserving our local habitat in collaboration with our elders, community and neighbours will we be able to nurture and be sustained by the vital connection between our natural surroundings and our Metis heritage.

Neighbourhood Gardens

The Metis Horticulture & Heritage Society Inc., is a new community-based initiative in the process of developing youth training and community workshops with a focus on living history gardens, heirloom seeds, community gardens, indigenous prairie plants and wildlife restoration, water conservation, etc.

Our summer project, known as *The Metis Roots Cultural Garden Project*, was launched this past June in the midst of the planting season. Community gardeners, neighbours, volunteers and some students from the Adolescent Parent Centre all pitched in to dig, till and plant, turning vacant lots at nine city sites into neighbourhood gardens reflecting past and present Metis culture.

In July and August, The Metis Resource Centre sponsored five

Urban Green Team youth. The Brookland Community Centre's Green Team and other youth, and three groups of 10 - 14 year olds from the Rotary Circle Program participated in training, workshops, and field trips as well and made huge contributions to the project. Volunteers, gardeners and youth planted vegetable gardens, trees, shrubs, flower beds, herbs and indigenous plants and wildflowers of the Tall Grass Prairies. Many thanks to The Metis Employability and Training Initiative Strategy, Inc. who provided the funding for this project.

We are now in the process of developing our program for the 1998 growing season with funding from The Aboriginal Single Window Initiative through Human Resources Development Canada. This year we are looking at collaborating with Riel House National Historic Site in the further development of a period garden and contributing to the streetscaping of the North Main Development. We are welcoming anyone interested in volunteering in a number of different ways. We are looking for researchers, help in locating heirloom seeds originating from local Metis communities, office help, and anyone willing to share their knowledge or experience in any aspect of the project.

The Metis Horticulture & Heritage Society has a growing resource library available for use weekdays at our office in the Aboriginal Centre, 408A - 181 Higgins. Call us at 956-5480 or fax 943-7214.

Eco

MPSP LEVIES UNFAIRLY DISTRIBUTED

continued from page 5 ...

the basket to provide a much talked about level playing field for industry.

This is in line with the concept of Polluter Pay which requires that all producers accept responsibility for the waste their products may create. This redistribution would likely reduce levies on individual items to less than a cent, which would create some challenges for computing and collection but make it more reasonable that the producers of the waste absorb those levies as a cost of doing business rather than foisting them off on consumers.

While even the Manitoba Product Stewardship Board agrees that in fairness the levies should be redistributed, it remains to be seen whether that suggestion holds up through the Board's own planning process to create a business plan to present to Manitoba Environment by the end of the month. Newspaper producers, who generate 40-50% of the recyclable stream, have dragged their heels over the last several years - understandably reluctant to voluntarily participate in a program which, on paper at least, would require them to cough up cash for each newspaper sold. (They've only recently accepted the burden of paying provincial sales tax on each of those same papers.) One can only speculate on the political ramifications of the province forcing this responsibility onto unwilling editorial boards. Other forms of packaging will be equally challenging to levy, facing historic reluctance from brand owners whose products/packaging do not originate in Manitoba and the daunting task of devising a system to track and collect levies on each kleenex box, soup can and yogurt container.

While such programs have been successfully created in Europe involving many of the same multinational corporations that our program would impact, the MPSC steadfastly refuses to model their success claiming the uniqueness of our situation on the prairies (few actual manufacturers and low unit volumes) and a desire to devise a distinctly made-in-Manitoba approach. This despite the fact that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has brought together a number of heavyweights to strategize on a way of entrenching what they call 'Extended Producer Responsibility' through 'Producer Responsibility Organizations' which do basically the same work our MPSC is struggling to achieve here. There's no doubt, however, that Manitoba's job would be easier if a Canada-wide packaging stewardship program was established.

Eyes on Manitoba

For many municipalities around the province, which have either been able to implement completely new programs or had their share of existing recycling program costs diminished to only 20% because of this 'stewardship' initiative, things appear to be working just fine. However, the eyes of many North American governments, recyclers and producers are focused on Manitoba to see if we manage to concoct an equitable plan that gives the tenets of global stewardship a toehold on this continent, furthering efforts to hold multinationals accountable for their packaging choices and disposal world-wide. To do less would be an unacceptable waste.

Eco

INDOOR ENVIRONMENT - MYTHS vs. FACTS

By Colleen Pawlychka, Allergy and Environmental Health Association, Manitoba (second in a series)

More and more television documentaries and entire magazines are devoted to environmental diseases, advising as to common triggers, treatments and side effects. As a society we are seeing an increasing number of seminars, lectures and presentations to assist us in dealing with the difficulties of adjusting our lives around our respective diseases and disabilities. With statistics as alarming as they are, it's no wonder!

One in four people suffer from allergies and/or asthma. In most homes, at least one person is suffering to some degree from the environment. Acute asthma is the most common medical emergency in children and is responsible for increasing death rates. Ten Canadians die from asthma each week and it is estimated that 80% of these deaths could be prevented with appropriate education. (1) Allergies, which can develop into asthma, bronchitis, ear and sinus infections attack some 40 million people in the US. (2) In Canada, the prevalence of allergies has increased by more than 40% from 1978-1991 (3). "The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that indoor air pollution kills 11,400 people every year!" (4)

Despite the increasing media attention raising consumer awareness of toxics, a number of myths pertaining to indoor air quality and health remain. While addressing air quality issues, as with all issues, we must first dispense with the myths and "clear the air" as to the real facts. The following clarifies some of these.

Myth: Poor indoor air always produces acute symptoms, affecting a person's breathing.

Fact: Symptoms range from as mild as fatigue, headache, eye

irritation, throat clearing, eczema, hives and rashes, frequent colds/flu to as severe as liver and kidney damage, nervous system depression, cancer.

Myth: Poor indoor air will affect all occupants of a building.

Fact: When a small number of people in a building are affected they should be regarded as "canaries in the coalmine". Investigate - they are your early warning system.

Myth: Poor indoor air will have the same effect on all occupants of a building.

Fact: Indoor air affects everyone in a building differently. Some people experience symptoms while others remain seemingly unaffected.

Myth: If a person is not affected immediately, they are safe.

Fact: Cumulative effects have been documented by scientific researchers for years. A toxic assault on the body may not manifest itself for years or decades. (5)

Myth: People who experience adverse health effects due to indoor air probably had other health problems to begin with.

Fact: People most likely to be affected by poor indoor air include ALL children and elderly people, people with any illness, autoimmune deficiency (including asthma, allergies, diabetes, migraines, heart disease) and anyone else who breathes.

Myth: Asthma and allergies are the result of high outdoor air pollution.

Fact: Allergies and asthma have increased even in places where outdoor air pollution has decreased. (6)

Myth: Building codes protect us from unhealthy buildings.

See *Indoor* page 10 ►



NO PERFUME MEANS HEALTHIER AIR

(Reprinted courtesy of the Allergy and Environmental Health Association Manitoba newsletter)

Perfume today is not made from flowers but from toxic chemicals. Perfume today is about as romantic as hazardous waste.

More than 4,000 chemicals are used in fragrances of which 95% are made from petroleum. And as many as 600 separate chemicals may be used in one fragrance product.

Some toxic chemicals found in fragrances: toluene, ethanol, acetone, benzene derivatives, formaldehyde, limonene, methylene chloride and many others known to cause cancer, birth defects, infertility, nervous system damage and other injuries. As well, chloroform has been found in fabric softeners.

As Romantic As Hazardous Waste

Toluene was found in every fragrance sample collected by the US Environmental Protection Agency for a 1991 report. "Toluene was most abundant in the auto parts store as well as the fragrance section of the department store."

Toluene has been proven to cause cancer and nervous system damage and is designated as hazardous waste.

There is a dramatic increase in people who are made sick by fragrances because so many products are now scented. Babies and children are most vulnerable, as are people who are trying to recover from cancer and other illnesses.

Chemical fragrances are present in most laundry detergents, fabric softeners, laundry starches, dish-washing liquids, disinfectants, soaps, shampoos and other hair products, deodorants, cosmetics, sunscreen lotions, aftershaves, skin bracers, colognes, incense, analgesic creams, lip balms, shoe creams and waterproof sprays. Even products marked "unscented" often are falsely labelled and actually contain toxic fragrance products.

Perfume Politics

Using environmentally safe products is as important as recycling. If everyone stopped buying unsafe chemically scented products (which includes plastic garbage bags), companies would stop making them. This would end a lot of unnecessary pollution.

Eco

FAIR ASSESSMENT UNLIKELY

continued from page 3 ...

First Nations and environmental groups have come to realize that a fair and independent environmental assessment in Manitoba is highly unlikely under this current government. The federal government, on the other hand, certainly should have played a much stronger role during the provincial public hearing process than it did.

Even though the federal departments of Environment and of Fisheries and Oceans had written lengthy reports on the various deficiencies contained within TOLKO's FMP and EIS, and requested that the company provide an Addendum to their EIS to address these concerns, the departments failed to exercise the full extent of their powers under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

The response to these federal concerns by the proponents, the government of Manitoba and the CEC was even more shocking. The CEC determined that the public hearing was a provincial process and not a federal one and hence was under no obligation to address federal concerns. This despite Manitoba having signed a joint federal/provincial environmental assessment harmonization agreement with the federal government three years earlier.

At this stage the only option that seems to be available to address the legitimate concerns raised by MFFA and the affected northern First Nations communities is through the Canadian judicial system.

It is also now incumbent upon the federal government to follow the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) and conduct its own independent public assessment of the various impacts associated with Tolko's FMP. For example, the FMP calls for the construction of some 860 km of new all weather roads, along with the construction of 16 bridges and 2 causeways over some of Manitoba's most pristine northern wilderness waterways. A good number of these new bridges will require federal permits under the Navigable Waters Protection Act, which is considered an environmental assessment trigger under Section 5 of CEAA.

Also, the impacts of all the new road construction and the correlating loss of habitat from increased harvesting (activities associated with Tolko's operations) need to be determined by the federal level of government for 9 of the 14 herds of woodland caribou that exist in Manitoba - herds considered vulnerable under COSEWIC.

Finally, the federal government has a legal responsibility, under the Migratory Bird Convention Act, to ensure the proper level of habitat protection is accorded to the large populations of neo-tropical birds that are under threat not only by Tolko's FMP but also by the forestry activities of Louisiana - Pacific's operation in Swan River, Manitoba and the proposed harvesting activities associated with Saskfor/McMillan Bloedel operations in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. All three of these forest operations are or will be harvesting large volumes of trees on an annual basis in the last remaining North/South wildlife corridor along the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border.

It is high time that the federal government step in and conduct at minimum a joint federal/provincial environmental review - as originally agreed to in 1989 - that would address these and the more recent concerns expressed by Sergio Marchi, then federal Minister of the Environment, when he stated in a letter to his counterpart in Manitoba in September of 1996 that; "some species of neo-tropical migrant songbirds are known to breed almost exclusively within the Canadian southern boreal forest. Other species have the most productive component of their range within these Canadian forests. Continent-wide consequences of potentially significant adverse effects to the populations of these birds and other wildlife are possible given the vast majority of their habitat is under forest management licence and will be affected by forestry operations."

Editor's Note: A licence was issued to Tolko on December 30, 1997, prior to the public release of the CEC's recommendations.

While this would seem to be a blatant slap in the face to public process, there is nothing in the Environment Act which precludes such a practice.

Eco

INDOOR AIR QUALITY CAUTION

continued from page 9 ...

Fact: Building codes focus on worker safety and structural safety of the building.

Myth: Legislation/Provincial health/safety departments protect our health.

Fact: ASHRAE Standard 62-1989 (the main benchmark by which air quality is assessed) accepts adverse health effects for 20% of a healthy adult population. Children, elderly, and individuals with compromised immune systems are not considered or protected.

Myth: All chemicals are tested and proven safe prior to use in our various products.

Fact: Of the 50,000 most commonly used chemicals, there is no toxicity data for 4 out of 5 of them. Almost nothing is known about this 80% of common chemicals. Actually one thing is known: Some are fatal (7)

Myth: Poor indoor air is found in buildings where products are manufactured and is caused by faulty mechanical systems and cigarette smoke.

Fact: Poor indoor air is caused by faulty mechanical systems and cigarette smoke, however it is also caused by various toxic building materials and furniture, fabrics, paints, cleaning solutions, carpets, solvent and disinfectants as well as various toxic personal care products.

Remember, unpolluted, healthy indoor air is an integral part of reaching and maintaining optimum health. It is only once the myths have been dispelled that we are in a position to work together to improve the indoor air environments in which we live, work and learn.

Sources:

- (1) Asthma Society of Canada - Asthma Facts
- (2)(6) Life Magazine, May 1997
- (3) Lets Clear the Air, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. 1997
- (4)(7) American Formulating and Manufacturing, Technical Manual
- (5) Deborah C. Rice, Research Scientist, Toxicology Research Division, Health Canada

Eco

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINTS

continued from page 7 ...

He states that the per capita footprint of rich nations was about 1 hectare in 1900, 5 hectares in 1993 and 7-9 hectares currently. We need 2 more planets just like earth to bring the present global population up to western standards. Something which clearly can not happen.

"De-materializing the economy"

All of this leads Dr. Rees to the conclusion that we must have a 90% reduction of material/energy throughputs by the year 2040. The market alone won't stimulate this. He suggests governments must regulate to 'de-materialize' the economy. If we want growth in the economy we must achieve it with a reduction in the consumption of energy and material. In his view, we must reduce payroll and income taxes while displacing capital with labour. However, this is yet another technological fix which still assumes growth.

Dr. Rees noted, as did Alan Durning from the World Watch Institute in his groundbreaking book, *How Much Is Enough*, that in North America there is no correlation between happiness and income. Studies have shown that after an individual reaches approximately \$8,000 per annum income level, public health benefits,

morbidity, mortality, and birth rates find their optimum levels. Increased income has no further positive affect on these important factors.

Sustainable Communities: Roseland

Rees concluded we must create common unity around values other than material wealth and offered the creation of social capital as a worthwhile endeavour. He laid the groundwork for Mark Roseland who stated unequivocally that sustainable development will not happen without the creation of sustainable communities which draw heavily on this 'social capital' rather than traditionally tapped stocks of 'natural capital'.

Focus on Quality of Life

Roseland used the controversial term 'sustainable development' as development which is qualitative (doing more, and better, with less) not quantitative. He put forward a reasoned argument for the necessity of focusing on quality of life indicators which are basically public interest factors (health, education and social safety net programs) versus standard of living indicators which basically projected private interests in acquiring material goods.

Roseland sees the need to integrate home and work, to develop a rural bioregionalism which contravenes the tendency to urban living, to demand sustainable forestry and agricultural practices and to use space efficiently.

He described sustainable communities as those which:

- protect natural capital by permitting us to live off its interest
- build on and nurture social capital (networks, partnerships and programs in community built on trust, responsibility, knowledge and communication independent of state or large corporations)
- use space efficiently
- encourage the mobilization of citizens to participate in politics and peace, equity, environmental and other movements to effect change in local governments.

According to Roseland, fresh thinking is critical. Having proven the inefficacy of 'trickle down' approaches in the economy, we now need to try for 'trickle up' effects.

The Eco-Network is grateful to the Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit, Manitoba Natural Resources, for the sponsorship of Dr. Rees' presentation.

Eco

CHEMICAL IMPACTS OF PESTICIDES

continued from page 2 ...

In other words, we need some basic information on what is actually being used all around us, and what impacts all these chemicals may have on public and ecosystem health. The group will be publishing a brochure with some basic facts about the most commonly used chemicals, and plans in the future to hold educational workshops in community settings. A "Pesticide Free Zone" lawn sign campaign, suggested by the Allergy and Environmental Health Association, will be a key activity this coming summer. CPR Winnipeg will also be working closely with the Manitoba Eco-Network Youth Caucus in their continuing campaign for youth education and action around urban pesticide use. Everyone is welcome to become involved. For more information, or to find out about forthcoming meetings, please contact Ian Greaves at 889-6021, or Anne at the Eco-Network office, 947-6511.

Eco

UPCOMING COURSES ON VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

FEBRUARY 17 - Eight week course on VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY.

Consecutive Tuesday evenings from 7 - 10 pm at #200 - 107 Seventh Street, BRANDON, MB Cost, \$150. Call Mark Burch at 204-727-7253 or Patty Clarke at 204-786-9857 for more information.

FEBRUARY 28 - Introductory Workshop on VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY from 9 to 5 pm at Menno Simons College, WINNIPEG. Students \$50, others \$75. Call Jerry Buckland at 786-9104 for details and registration.

MARCH 14 - SIMPLER LIVING FOR THE EARTH - from 9 to 5 pm a workshop at St. Benedicts Education Centre, WINNIPEG, on the environmental impacts and benefits of simpler living. Call Mary Coswin at 339-1705 for costs and registration.

MARCH 21 - INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY - from 9 to 5 pm at Assiniboine Community College, Parkland Campus, DAUPHIN, MB. Call Jim Gilles at 622-2230 for costs and registration.

CANCER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A Review of "Living Downstream" by Sandra Steingraber, Addison Wesley, 1997

by Anne Lindsey

Rachel Carson's seminal work "Silent Spring", published in 1962, signalled an emerging awareness of the impact of chemicals on the health of wildlife and humans. "Living Downstream" takes up the story where Silent Spring left off, and the ensuing thirty five years do not tell a pretty story. Sandra Steingraber opens this book with a parable she heard at a conference, about a village along a river. The residents who live here, began noticing increasing numbers of drowning people caught in the river's swift current and so went to work inventing ever more elaborate technologies to resuscitate them. So preoccupied were these heroic villagers with rescue and treatment that they never thought to look upstream to see who was pushing the victims in. Such is the case, she argues, with today's epidemic of cancer. Little attention is being paid to its causes, yet the evidence is mounting for the culpability of exposures to industrial chemicals and pesticides. With a scientist's careful attention to detail, (she holds a PhD in biology) Steingraber uses data on toxic releases and environmental contamination, publicly available through US federal right-to-know legislation, and data from cancer registries to begin to explore the possible connections between these two areas. She draws on a wealth of preliminary studies from around the world which suggest that, particularly in industrialized countries and heavily agricultural areas, we may be paying a very high price in public health costs for an increasingly chemicalized way of life.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer, a branch of the World Health Organization, estimates that 80% of cancer incidence today is due to environmental causes (including tobacco smoke). This shocking and little-known statistic fits with the equally little-known fact (revealed in the film "Exposure") that seventy to

eighty percent of women with breast cancer have none of the "official" risk factors: family history, hormonal and reproductive factors, and a high fat diet. Clearly something is going on, and the sheer quantities of known carcinogenic, or probable carcinogenic substances that have been produced, spilled, used, dumped, incinerated, inhaled and ingested since the end of World War 2 should give us pause.

Steingraber gives a clear overview of some complex issues like the problems with epidemiological studies, the ways that various chemicals work within the body, and the ways in which "lifestyle" and "environment" interact. She also spends time on the issue of how hormone-mimicking chemicals can influence cancer.

Steingraber brings a very personal perspective to this work: she herself is a survivor of bladder cancer in her twenties. And her humour and naturalist's love and knowledge of her home place - central Illinois, permeates this book with a down-to-earth, poetic feel which makes it a pleasure to read.

This book concludes with three key principles which Steingraber feels can assist us in beginning "to imagine a future in which our right to an environment free of such substances (carcinogens) is respected". These are: the precautionary principle, dictating that indication of harm, rather than proof of harm, should be the trigger for action, especially if delay may cause irreparable damage; the principle of reverse onus, requiring that the burden of proof of safety be shifted away from the public and into the arena of those who produce, import, or use the substances in question; and finally, the principle of least toxic alternative, which presumes that toxic substances will not be used as long as there is another way of accomplishing the task.

Eco

The Manitoba Eco-Network, 2-70 Albert Street Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E7

Sign me up as a member of the Manitoba Eco-Network

Enclosed is a cheque for:

- ☐ \$25 Supporting member (individuals)
☐ \$40 Group membership
☐ \$50 Other organizations (businesses, government departments and corporations that do not otherwise qualify for group membership)

I'm also enclosing a donation of _____ to help with your public education activities.

[Charitable tax receipts available for amounts over the cost of membership]

Total Amount enclosed _____

I'm interested in volunteering for the Eco-Network. Please call me! ☐

Name(s) _____

Group (if applicable) _____ Telephone # () _____

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.