

June, 1990

WINNIPEG GREEN PLAN CONSULTATION

Federal Environment Minister Lucien Bouchard's sudden resignation this month left many people wondering what was to become of the "Green Plan" consultations. It was "on with the show" according to Jake Epp, the Energy Minister who presided over the first meeting, here in Winnipeg. The results of the nation-wide consultations are to be compiled into a draft environmental action plan by early fall.

Approximately 180 people attended the consultation, 55 of whom were federal government employees. About 25 were environmental group representatives. The "general public" in attendance numbered only about 10. The remainder were provincial government employees, industry representatives, native groups, and other interest groups.

The whole consultation process was flawed from the start by a lack of sensitivity to the needs of the public who were to be consulted. There was also widespread criticism of the consultation document "A Framework for Discussion on the Environment", and concern that the agenda for

Continued on P. 7

ECO-NETWORK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM was held at First Mennonite Church on Sat. May 5. A new Steering Committee was approved with 8 members, leaving one space to be filled by any interested member group during the year. We're happy to welcome some new faces to the Steering Committee: Carolyn Kryschuk represents the Manitoba Naturalists Society; Harry Mesman represents the Manitoba Federation of Labour, and Rhoda Rempel is the rep. from Project Peacemakers (a church-based organization dealing with peace and environmental issues). The involvement of the labour and church constituencies in the Network is an exciting new development, and one which we hope will prove to be productive.

Continued on P. 8

Notice:

The Manitoba Network must select delegates for the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Environmental Network. This meeting will be in Montreal, Oct. 11 to 15. Please submit the name of your group's nominee to the Network Office by July 6!!!

- Thank you -

NEW FOOD CO-OP NEEDS OUR SUPPORT

Neechi Foods is Winnipeg's first native-owned non-profit food store. Located at 325 Dufferin Ave. between Salter and Main, the store was set up to better serve the nutritional needs of low-income North End residents, and provides a wide selection of foods at prices lower than the neighbourhood convenience stores where many people shop. Neechi is also working on nutritional programs in local schools.

Continued on P. 6

The Manitoba Eco-Network exists to facilitate communication among environmentalists, and to educate the public on environmental issues. Membership is open to any non-government, non-profit group that has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or carrying out environmental education.

COORDINATOR...Anne Lindsey

EXECUTIVE

CHAIR.....Jack Dubois
VICE-CHAIR.....Brian Pannell
SECRETARY.....Bill Goddard

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK
NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE
REPRESENTATIVE - Brian Pannell

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jack Dubois - Wildlife
Society, Manitoba chapter
Bill Goddard - Crossroads

Resource Group
Bryan Johnson - Citizens
Against Neurotoxins
Carolyn Kryschuk - Manitoba
Naturalists Society
Kate Maddigan - Concerned
Citizens of Manitoba
Harry Mesman - Manitoba
Federation of Labour
Brian Pannell - Manitoba
Environmentalists, Inc.
Rhoda Rempel - Project
Peacemakers.

The Manitoba Eco-Network
Resource Centre and Office is
located in Room 202-128 James
Ave. (behind the Concert
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949-9052.

The views expressed in the
Newsletter are not necessarily
those of the Eco-Network.

Inside

WINNIPEG GREEN PLAN CONSULTATION	1
ECO-NETWORK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	1
NEW FOOD CO-OP NEEDS OUR SUPPORT	2
NEW ECO-NETWORK PUBLICATION!	3
ATTENTION WOMEN	3
WE'LL SEE YOU....AND RAISE YOU!	3
MEMBER GROUP UPDATE	4
MANITOBA STUDENTS ATTEND YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE	6
UTILITIES BOARD	6
JUNE EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES	9
NEW ECO-NETWORK PUBLICATION!	9
PESTICIDES HOTLINE.	10
OZONE	10

Springtide:
A New Eco-NetWork Publication

We're proud to announce the publication of Springtide, a special magazine on environmental issues in Manitoba. Produced by Toby Maloney, who has been with us through the ON-SITE program, the magazine has been financed through sponsorship, and is available for free distribution around the Province. While it doesn't cover every issue of concern to Manitobans, Springtide has articles on a variety of current and controversial topics. We hope that Springtide will be used in schools, churches and in the community at large. Come down to the office, and pick up your copy.

ATTENTION WOMEN

Non-disposable cotton menstrual pads are now available in a kit from Women's Choice, a small company on Gabriola Island. Information is available at the Network office.

WE'LL SEE YOU....AND RAISE YOU!

For Environment Week, the province issued a challenge to folks to leave their cars at home, and use bikes, buses or feet to get to work. A GREAT IDEA!! The staff of the Eco-NetWork accept this challenge....and we want to extend it. We challenge the readers of our newsletter, and everyone else, to make a pledge to take alternative transportation to work at least 3 days a week for the

entire year. (Car pools are included). Give us a call, or drop us a line with your pledge!

MEMBER GROUP UPDATE

Groups present at the AGM gave brief updates on their activities, which are summarized here for the information of newsletter readers who were not at the meeting. Overall, there is a tremendous level of activity on the environmental scene, and though some groups are feeling the pressure of a large workload, the overall mood is positive and empowering.

Citizens Against Neurotoxins: Meet every second Monday. Have helped to initiate a civic task force to investigate the use of pesticides in Winnipeg, and are participating in the Federal Pesticide Review Process. Are distributing information on pesticides, and are particularly looking at Monsanto products. Volunteers Needed! Ph.788-1008

Greening the Forks: Are working to develop a citizen-empowered vision of city planning. They are focussing on The Forks as it exemplifies some key issues in this field. In the short-term their goal is the disbandment of the Forks Renewal Corp. and long-term they want to see the ecological renewal of Winnipeg, including social and economic ramifications.

Crossroads Resource Group: Focus on soft energy path promotion and sustainable societies, with an interest in economic models for restructuring systems. Recently made a submission to the Task Force on Passenger transportation regarding Via Rail. Don't meet regularly, but come together mainly for the development of policy papers.

Project Peacemakers: A relatively new member of the Network, with offices in Westminster Church. "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" guide this group's work. Currently working on uranium and low-level flight testing issues. Their subgroup, Building Peace Through Play has a new project on peace and environmental education for children.

U of W Students Acting for the Environment: Are raising environmental awareness on campus. Sell reuseable coffee mugs, and raise money for various concerns through coffeehouses and other events.

Mennonite Central Committee: Concerned primarily with international development. Have initiated the Eco-bags project, as a commitment to the reduction of garbage. Offices and Global Gift Store on Plaza Drive, off Pembina Hwy.

U of M Recycling and Environmental Group: are raising awareness at the U of M. Selling reuseable coffee mugs, and have initiated a paper project and recycling

depot on campus. Are working on integrating these projects into the maintenance infrastructure, but meeting with resistance. Have been speaking in high schools and getting a good response from students. Meet every Wednesday at 12 in University Centre.

Resource Recovery Institute: Main interest is the business side of recycling, rather than info. dissemination. Are approaching the end of the Blue Bag pilot project in Wolseley, and are hoping to continue and expand the program. Have just started curbside pick-up of newspapers in a number of neighbourhoods, and will be recycling telephone directories this year.

Recycling Council of Manitoba: Are looking at enhancing educational efforts on recycling, and joining together with regional affiliate groups around Manitoba. Are discontinuing the depots, and looking at permanent depots to serve areas not served by Blue Bag program. Regular meetings last Tuesday of each month, 7:30pm at Versatech Industries.

Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems (TREE): Continue to monitor the Repap developments, and to participate actively in environmental hearings about the project. Are looking to recruit new members, and to do some fundraising. Meet the first Tuesday of every month.

Westman Wilderness Club:
Recently were successful in opposing a Highways Department plan to reroute a road through the Douglas Marsh. Membership concentrated in Western Manitoba. Major activities are outdoors and wilderness oriented.

Sierra Club: Membership is approximately 200. Are participants in a variety of environmental issues in the province, particularly on the Endangered Spaces Campaign. Will participate this year in the Brandon Folk Festival to increase environmental awareness.

Westman Recycling Council:
Set up to foster recycling in Western Manitoba. Have organized depots all over the region in smaller communities, and are attempting to secure steady markets for materials.

Manitoba Federation of Labour:
Environmental committee is involved in a variety of issues including hazardous waste, emissions/toxic waste regulations, the Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy. The Occupational Health Centre is a good resource on substances and on health and safety issues.

Manitoba Wilderness Caucus:
Is a coalition concerned with preservation of wild areas. Working towards setting aside 12% of Manitoba's land to be free of any development or resource extraction. Are working together with the World Wildlife Fund. Contact Allison Elliot of the Naturalists Society's parks committee.

Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh:
A new group working to oppose the Ducks Unlimited proposal to build headquarters at the Marsh. Meet regularly, more info through the Network office.

Concerned Citizens of Manitoba: Continuing to work on the issue of nuclear power, particularly nuclear waste disposal. A federal assessment of disposal plans will start this summer. Involved with the Canadian campaign for nuclear phase-out, Friends of the Earth's global warming campaign, and the Uranium Transportation campaign. Ongoing monitoring and concern with food irradiation and city river pollution.

This is just a sample of the work being done by environmentalists in Manitoba, for more information on these and other groups, contact the Network Office.



Neechi Continued from P. 2
Patrick Falconer, of the Core Area Initiative, one of Neechi's sponsors, says the store is an exciting project that will contribute in a meaningful way to economic development in the Inner City and Native communities.

Neechi's clientele is growing, but as with any new development project, needs strong support at the outset in order to be successful. Why not check it out? Hours are: M-W: 8 to 6;

Th-F: 8 to 7; Sat: 9 to 6; Sun: 12 to 5. (Yes, they do sell "environmentally friendly products"!).

P.S. Don't forget Winnipeg's two other food co-ops, Harvest Collective, and Boni Co-op. Both are Eco-Network members.

MANITOBA STUDENTS ATTEND YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE by Sasha Kopelow

On April 26, Springfield Collegiate Institute sent Jennifer Burgess and me to Vancouver, B.C. for "In Our Hands", a youth environmental conference. On April 29, we came back to Manitoba with the memory of a wonderful experience, and a whole new perspective of the world.

The conference was hosted by the Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA) to which I will be forever thankful, because the time I spent in Vancouver was the most exciting and informative time in my life. It was composed of workshops, videos, slide presentations, and speeches. There, we met environmentally concerned kids from all across Canada, listened to speakers who told

us about issues from all around the world, and sang, danced, and rallied our way closer to an environmental understanding.

The focus of the conference was "the environment", which is, of course, a very broad subject area. So, we had lectures on many different topics. Jeff Gibbs, the founder of the EYA, spoke mainly about his trips to the Carmanah and Stein valleys and to the Sarawak rainforest in Borneo. Dr. Wade Davis, an ethnobotanist, also talked about his three-year stay in Borneo. Dr. David Suzuki spoke about thinking globally, and what we, as youth, can do locally. Some of the other speakers were environmentalists Elizabeth May, Guujaaw, and Thom Henley.

The lectures were all about serious topics, but somehow the spokespeople made their subjects inspirational and uplifting, so that the whole mood of the conference was one of hope.

We finished off with a rally through downtown Vancouver, and thus ended the conference on a feeling of unity, optimism, and above all, determination.

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS TO APPEAR BEFORE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

In what seems to be a precedent-setting action, several environmental groups have obtained intervenor status to appear before the Public Utilities Board (PUB) for the Board's review of Manitoba Hydro's capital plans for the next twenty years. These plans include the

construction of the Conawapa dam on the lower Nelson River and the associated transmission line, dubbed Bipole 3.

The mandate of the PUB for this review includes an examination of Hydro's "demand-side management program", in other words, how Hydro goes about ensuring that electricity is used most efficiently by consumers. The three groups joining together in the intervention, Concerned Citizens of Manitoba, Conservation Strategy Association, and the Manitoba Sierra Club, believe that much more can be done to make Manitoba more energy efficient, and that we may not even need to build the Conawapa dam.

The groups will also be considering Hydro's mandate with respect to building energy supply for export purposes, and the costs of mitigation of environmental and social impacts, amongst other points.

Energy efficiency is being hailed by environmentalists the world over as a bridge to developing environmentally-benign energy technologies, and as a sustainable alternative to megaprojects and global warming. Several jurisdictions in North America are taking up the efficiency challenge in a big way, with some very promising results. Can Manitoba join them?

Cross-examination of witnesses called by the Board, Hydro and intervenors will take place throughout the summer, with the actual public hearings scheduled for August.

Green Plan (Continued from P.1)

the meeting was too rigid for a meaningful discussion of ecological matters to take place.

That being said however, many of the workshops developed some strong recommendations. For example - that there be an Environmental Bill of Rights and a Safe Drinking Water Act, a policy of zero discharge of toxic and persistent substances, enforcement of environmental laws and regulations, immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strong support for sustainable and organic agriculture, prompt completion of Canada's National Parks system, greater public involvement in policy-making for Canada's forests - amongst others.

Many participants seemed to feel that the day was useful for meeting people with whom they do not often connect. In particular, several federal government employees commented that they benefitted from interaction with the non-governmental groups, and several commented that they do not often have the chance to step outside of their area of expertise to consider the wider implications of their work. Considering the need for integration and co-operation in policy making around complex environmental issues, this latter comment would seem to be a very serious problem.

Continued next page

Similar consultations are now being held across the country. The final results will be considered by a national meeting of "stakeholders" to be held in September. For information on how to attend that meeting, please contact the Eco-Network office.

AGM (Continued from P.1)

Some of the other items dealt with at the AGM: The Canadian Environmental Network, our "parent" organization based in Ottawa, has received some interim funding from Environment Canada, enabling it to maintain its services for the time being. A five-year plan for the National Network is being developed. Note that all member groups of our regional network are automatically considered members of the CEN.

Regional discussions are beginning to take place around the topic of the major United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in 1992.

Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to think about how they could have input into the development of both the official and unofficial agendas for the Brazil event.

The Manitoba Network is co-hosting a workshop on the subject with the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation on June 14. Please call the office for details.

The Network is working on a new set of by-laws and objects to more accurately reflect the work and nature of the organization, and to assist us in our application for Charitable Tax Status. A draft copy of the new by-laws has been sent out for review to all our member groups.

David Johns from Manitoba Environment gave a brief presentation about the mandate of the Public Utilities Board with regard to the Conawapa dam and related developments. The new mandate includes an examination of the potential for energy efficiency in contributing to Manitoba's energy future. Several groups have applied for intervenor status in the PUB's forthcoming public hearings.

=====Detach and mail to:=====

The Manitoba Eco-network, P.O. Box 3125, Wpg. Man. R3C 4E6

- _____ Please sign us up as a member* of the Eco-Network. Our cheque is enclosed for group membership and subscription of \$20/year.
- _____ Individual Subscription of \$10/year
- _____ Limited Income subscription of \$5/year
- _____ Organizations, agencies, government departments and corporations that do not otherwise qualify for membership.
- _____ Enclosed is a donation of \$_____
- _____ I would like to do volunteer work for the Eco-Network. Please call me!

Contact Person _____

Group _____ Phone # _____

Mailing Address _____ Postal Code _____

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JULY EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

July 4 to 8 Missouri Missile Silo Peace School, sponsored by Nukewatch. Call 775-8178.

15 Pull a Thistle, Plant a Cone, and Barbecue at Living Prairie Museum, call 832-0167 for details.

Aug 4 Fish and Loaves gathering in Northern Saskatchewan, more information at the Network office.

Aug 6-9 Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days, look for local events. More info. from WCCD at 786-8938.

* Throughout the summer: Volunteer days at Resource Recovery Institute, every second Saturday, 10-3pm. Call Connie at 586-7945.

* Household Hazardous Waste depots: Every Saturday 9-4pm. 745 Logan.

* Ecological Agriculture Assoc. Composting Displays, dates TBA, call 452-3877 for details.

* Greening the Forks will be holding protests against proposed arena development at the Forks, date TBA, call 775-4188.

* Greenpeace needs canvassers! call Rick at 475-7711.

* YM-YWCA's summer programs will focus on the environment...more information to come!

C.A.N.
Pesticides Education Line
Phone 788 - 1008

The Citizens Against Neurotoxins have opened an emergency call line. This line will provide information, documentation and action on pesticide use and abuse in Manitoba. This is a massive undertaking. C.A.N. needs both volunteer and financial support in its work for safer pest control practices in Winnipeg. For information or to volunteer call:

788 - 1008

OZONE-THE (W)HOLE STORY

Environment Week in Manitoba was kicked off by a panel on the Ozone Layer on June 4. Environment Minister Glen Cummings spoke about the Ozone Depleting Substances Act, legislation introduced by the province to phase out CFC's and other substances harmful to the Ozone layer. Public hearings on the legislation will be held later this summer. Jay Anderson of Atmospheric Environment Services gave an entertaining account of the chemistry of ozone breakdown, concluding that the evidence for the ozone "crime" is in, public and governments now have to decide on appropriate actions. Wayne Neily of the Manitoba Environmental Council stressed the importance of the ozone layer, and the need for public action.

The keynote speaker of the evening was Paul Brodeur, journalist with the New Yorker magazine, who wrote important investigative articles on ozone breakdown in the 70's and 80's. Brodeur was highly

critical of the "wait and see" attitude towards the use of CFC's adopted by governments in the past two decades, since the destruction of the ozone layer was discovered. He pointed to cover-ups and deceptions on the part of the CFC-producing industry which he compared to the activities of the asbestos industry in Canada and the United States, and stressed that the ozone depletion which has already occurred will lead to extremely high levels of skin cancer and eye disease over the coming years.

Brodeur called for an end to the "convenient and fatal assumption that technology is harmless until proven otherwise", and warned against blind acceptance of data furnished by industry with demonstrated conflict-of-interest.

The question and answer period revealed that Manitoba companies are beginning to take the CFC problem seriously, with training programs for refrigeration technicians, and reclamation and recycling programs. The need for dialogue on the issue was emphasized.

Paul Brodeur has also written of the dangers of electromagnetic radiation from video display terminals and high voltage wires in his book, Currents of Death, which can be ordered through the Network.

Special thanks to:

Harold Taylor

for the use of his laser printer in production of this newsletter!
