

ECO-JOURNAL



Volume 6, Number 2

March-April, 1996

Are we able to translate knowledge into action?

An alternative state of the environment report

In 1983 respected Manitoba biologist William O. Pruitt Jr. concluded his book about the threat to the habitat of northern mammals, *Wild Harmony*, by noting that our failure to deal with environmental problems is not due to a lack of knowledge.

We see these problems facing animals of the North today are not in the realms of biology or technical wildlife management or even science in general, but in politics. Technically we know what to, or at least what not to do. The problem lies in the translation of knowledge into action.

In this issue of Eco-Journal we look at how we are doing in terms of policy and in terms of action. We've tried to include the behaviour of individual Manitobans. Are we even contemplating the action that is needed in forestry, in food and farming, in waste reduction, and in preserving wilderness from development? Activists who work hard on these issues make their state of the environment report in this issue. The news is not good, but it's not all bad either.

Report from the homefront Are individuals doing their part?

by Toby Maloney

At one time it was fashionable to exhort individuals to "do their part," and it still is in some circles. Environment groups of late have tended to focus more on policy as it became apparent that individuals really don't have the tools they need to influence decisions and thereby results. For instance, that so many should drive in cities could be more a function of planning, where we put housing in relation to work and schools, and the extent to which we collectively supply options such as cycling or public transportation, than it is a phenomenon of individual preference for private automobiles.

Still, there are some actions, efforts that can only benefit all of us, that individuals can do. We've all heard the message, so how are we doing? Are we actually conserving energy, water etc.?

We're not doing too well in one area -- according to Statistics Canada from 1980 to 1992 we put an additional 3 million passenger vehicles on the road in Canada, about a 30 per cent increase. There was no similar increase (i.e., due to population increases) in the numbers of other vehicles, school buses, intercity buses etc. Fortunately, there wasn't also a 30 per cent increase in gasoline consumption, which peaked nationally in 1989, and then crept back down to 1986 levels. Manitobans used 1249 litres per capita per year through this period which tied us for sixth in Canada in gas consumption. (All figures from *Human Activity and the Environment*, 1994)

Water withdrawal and consumption in Canada has also increased over the last decade for several sectors including the municipal sector (residential and commercial). Eight per cent more water pumped through city and town water plants between 1981 and 1991. In the same

SOS for Eco-Network Funding shortfall serious

by Anne Lindsey, Executive Director

Many of you have noticed the For Rent sign in the window of our building. And yes, as of this writing, the Manitoba Eco-Network is moving. We aren't sure just where as yet, but we must move by April 15. It's not the best situation...nobody likes to move, and we have been very happy with this location in the Wolseley neighbourhood.

What it really comes down to is money. This year we have been spending more money than we have taken in, and have exhausted any surplus funds. Our budget projection for the coming year (April to March) shows a significant shortfall if we expect to maintain our current level of operations, and unlike government, we don't have the luxury of running a deficit.

This means cuts in every area, and rent was one line we felt we could reduce. Our hope is to find space to share with another group, thereby sharing some resources as well. We will keep you posted.

Meanwhile, keeping the Eco-Network alive over the coming year is going to be an enormous challenge - especially if our funding from Environment Canada (small though it is) is terminated. You will notice an insert in your *Eco-Journal* which contains a form for "Pre-Authorized Chequing" or PAC. It's a fairly painless way to make a monthly contribution to an organization or cause that you support. Please take a moment to read the insert and consider becoming a sustaining supporter of the Network, or to determine whether you know others who would consider this option. We have 11 or so members giving us PAC contributions every month. Our goal is to increase this number to 200. Please help sustain the environmental community in this province.

See SMALL STEPS page 14

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Editor puts away the pen

After 32 issues and a little more than five years, since I put together the first issue of **Eco-Journal** I've decided to do other things.

My goal, starting from the first issue in January 1990, was to accomplish three things -- to report, not just opine, on provincial environmental issues, to popularize ideas that deserve circulation, particularly alternatives that are ignored or belittled by mainstream media, and to serve as a record of achievement of grass-roots groups in this province.

In doing I insisted that it be sustainable, not a flash in the pan, but on time and responsible, if not slick.

I'm concerned, however, that **Eco-Journal** will be difficult to sustain, despite our best efforts or that the Manitoba Eco-Network itself can't be sustained over the long term. I think it is important to have institutions that try to develop a broader consensus, rather than enforce a narrow or purist ideology. I believe this despite my own tendency, on occasion, to dismiss approaches that are reformist.

I worry, however, that moderate approaches are doomed. Reason and principles are being observed by only one side -- the side which speaks for the trees.

I didn't ever think that civility in Canada would deteriorate to the point where our country would send troops overseas to join an international terrorist action against civilians. I didn't think we would ever again invoke the War Measures Act (or it's

replacement) let alone against a small group of aboriginal resisters.

I didn't think the O.P.P. would be able to get away with shooting someone from Stoney Point or beating up civil servants. I didn't think we would just go on with business as usual after hundreds of protesters, including elders, students and parents were dragged away and charged with "con-

tempt" for defending Clayoquot Sound. And I didn't think that the prime minister could choke someone, a protester with a legitimate point of view, in public on national television, and in so doing in-

crease his popularity rating.

I feel naive in retrospect and I'm dismayed that I seem to be trapped in an age when I'm frequently isolated politically from the people around me. I grew up in a company town where denial is the principal means of survival. I thought that this was a special case, that there was an unusual concentration of people who were deliberately ignorant, who refuse to face the obvious problems, and the obvious lies that are around them.

I have learned otherwise and have decided that Canada is one big company town, with all the same characteristics -- absentee multinational owners, local proxies who zealously guard our perpetual economic dependence, and a fierce adherence to myth over reality.

Over the past few years I've become concerned that even if government were to implement policies to environmentalists'

Continued on following page

SO LONG

95-96 Eco-Network Steering Committee

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Christine Common-Singh, Sierra Club Agassiz Group

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liking, they would be terribly unpopular with large sectors of our population. Many of our contemporaries prefer, and will defend, trivial luxuries over fair distribution of resources, or the return of stolen lands. Even fewer see a reason to share the wealth that continues to be extracted not from computers or the flatulently-named "knowledge economy" but from the forests and water and soil.

In the face of this I have difficulty deciding what my priorities should be, although they have definitely begun to lean toward trying to live simply myself rather than advocating alternatives to others.

I confess that I've never understood how people can keep on with one or two issues, forestry or parks or water, and keep at it so doggedly for so long, particularly in the face of constant public derision, and in the face of a global realignment, the assertion of corporate hegemony often contrary to the public good. I suppose others may have wondered the same about me, how do I keep working and writing for such obviously marginal media vehicles like *Eco-Journal*.

I've had the easy job, flitting from issue to issue as they've become "newsworthy" so I don't really see myself in the same group as those who slug away even when an issue subsides from the public view. I admire these people the most because, notwithstanding my own current pessimism, I believe their job is so critical that it helps preserve our collective dignity.

It's important to remember this when increasingly raising a voice in protest feels like we are only advertising our own powerlessness. Meanwhile government and industry work in tandem to dismantle even our ability to know what damage is being done. Virtual ownership of public resources has been ceded to private corporations. This is the history of our province from days of the Company of One Hundred Adventurers to Louisiana Pacific. We have not been able to stop this.

But what we've done to expose the self-serving lies is important on its own. There is value

in resisting even when we cannot stop the destruction.

And really, I don't think we ever are defeated. The moment someone decides to become an activist, to stop caring about what the neighbours will think, and act anyway, is the moment of success. At that point we have shrugged off our years of obedience training, we have stood up and decided to stand out, and no one can take that away from us, ever.

Thank you for your contributions to *Eco-Journal*. And thank you too for your criticism, although it was never as frequent or fierce as was probably deserved.

ECJ

"Free Mordecai Vannunu!"

Peace meetings in Winnipeg

Two veteran anti-nuclear activists on tour will speak in Winnipeg during April. David Morgan, president of Veterans Against Nuclear Arms (VANA) will meet with local peace activists on April 5, 6, and 7. A public presentation "Hey, Just a minute! Didn't You Guys Almost Blow up the World?" will be held at the Unitarian Church (Sargent and Banning) on Saturday April 6 at 1:30. The material for the talk is taken from Morgan's publication "The Sixteen Nuclear Crises of the Cold War."

Later in the month, Sam Day, the former editor of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, and coordinator of the U.S. Campaign to Free Mordecai Vannunu, will present a series of talks on his work. Vannunu is a prisoner of conscience in solitary confinement in Israel where he once worked as nuclear technician. Vannunu was kidnapped from Rome by Israeli agents after telling a British newspaper about Israel's secret nuclear weapons program. He is serving 18 years in a cell six feet by nine feet for alerting the world about Israel's nuclear threat.

Sam Day has himself been imprisoned, on four occasions in state and federal institutes, for civil disobedience at U.S. nuclear weapons installations. His talks will be held on April 11 at noon to a luncheon group at the Unitarian Church and later in the evening to a Project Peacemakers meeting (7:30 at Westminster United Church) and on April 12 at 7:30 to a meeting arranged by the World Federalists and VANA again at the Unitarian Church. All meetings are open to the public.

For more information call Cec Muldrew 452-6047
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Waste reduction elusive goal in Manitoba

Of any environmental issue, solid waste reduction has easily received the most attention. To some extent our ability to reduce or failure to reduce solid waste is an indicator of our collective progress.

So how are we doing and what should we do?

by Jan Westlund and Glen Koroluk

The mantra of "50% waste reduction by the year 2000" has been embraced with religious fervour by politician, environmentalist and bureaucrat alike across the nation. Established by the National Packaging Protocol, and endorsed by this province's Waste Reduction and Prevention Act in 1990, it uses a 1988 baseline of refuse to landfill to set interim goals such as 20% by 1992 and 35% by 1996.

Its guiding commandment is half of this 50% must be achieved by reduction at source and reuse (guaranteed to lessen the use of our natural capital) while the other half is achieved through recycling (with the possibility of lessening the use of virgin materials when diverting recoverable waste from landfill).

In Manitoba, figures from the province's STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT 1995 REPORT indicate we missed the national interim goal for 1992. However, government 'guesstimates' suggest we achieved the 'made in Manitoba' goal of 20% by 1995 adjusted to accommodate our slow start in comprehensive recycling. Supporting data is limited since

neither waste quantification nor characterization studies exist.

Volume to Winnipeg landfills has seen a modest decrease in the 90's with a further 12%-15% diversion of residential waste expected when all recycling programs, funded in part by the Manitoba Product Stewardship Program (MPSP), are in place. Industrial/Commercial/Institutional (ICI) waste, half of the overall total, is not included, however. And there are fears the creation of excess disposal capacity at Rosser, with its downward pressure on tipping fees, would limit the 3R activities in this sector fundamental to achieving reduction goals.

Current diminished aggregate tonnage to landfill across the province results from a blend of factors. These include rural recycling programs pursued through Manitoba Association for Regional Recyclers, Winnipeg's recycling depots, along with its leaf and yard waste composting program, the Used Tire Recovery Program (which has provided for the recovery of a million tires by the end of 1995) and marginal hazardous waste disposal. The results, if anything, have been exaggerated by the dampening effect of a struggling economy.

It's doubtful Manitoba will surge in the home stretch to attain its 50% reduction goal unless immense effort and dollars are mobilized to curb ICI waste and maintain current momentum: MPSP has enabled over 80% of Manitobans to participate in recycling programs. And it has also, according to WRAP Officer Rod McCormick, encouraged Manitobans to "start thinking seriously about waste." Composting is in its infancy while Winnipeg is awaiting an integrated waste minimization plan developed by its Waste Minimization Advisory Committee. The Used Oil Management Committee, a multi-stakeholder group set up by Manitoba Environment, is examining recovery incentives for used oil and filters. As well a proposal to recycle Winnipeg demolition/construction waste is under development.

None of these activities necessarily guarantees reduction at source or reuse (which can not be enforced under the National Packaging Protocol). Clearly, most of the power to ensure meaningful reduction (eg. lightweighting and package standardization) rests with manufacturers, usually located outside Manitoba. The same could be said for our recycling efforts.

According to Tony Kuluk, Solid Waste Disposal Planning Engineer for the City of Winnipeg, "It's difficult to make judgements on the value of local [recycling] programs without factoring in a global

The State of Waste Reduction

Composting is in its infancy province-wide

according to Rod McCormick Manitobans to seriously about Composting province-wide is awaiting an waste minimization developed by its

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Continued from previous page

marketplace. Downgraded end uses (eg. used newspapers shredded for animal bedding/plastic containers into plant pots) here may eliminate the need for virgin material somewhere else. We simply don't have the means to measure such exchanges today."

Some are beginning to view the show of overflowing blue boxes in Manitoba as more of an indication of two converging trends; our continuation of earth-shattering patterns of consumption and a well-deserved guilt about wallowing in waste.

In order to reverse our patterns of consumption and waste, both packaging and products must be priced to reflect not just recycling costs (as initiated by the MPSP) but the other full costs to the environment of pollution and waste due to extracting, manufacturing, disposal and the depletion of non-renewable resources. A daunting task.

Dr. Robert Fenton, of the University of Winnipeg Economics Department, believes a first step towards such full-cost accounting would be the establishment of a 'natural capital tax' factored against all firms using natural capital inputs. These new taxes would eventually change current practices or filter their way to consumers giving them pause at the cash register. Either way, both consumers and industry would feel tangible pressure to reduce waste.

In addition, stringent recycled content regulations are needed to produce the real reduction in virgin stock use now absent due to voluntary compliance and artificially low pricing of new materials. As little manufacturing is done here, this impetus must happen elsewhere, reinforced by the 'natural capital tax'. Taxing virgin materials indicates their real ecological value making secondary material appear vastly more attractive to end users;

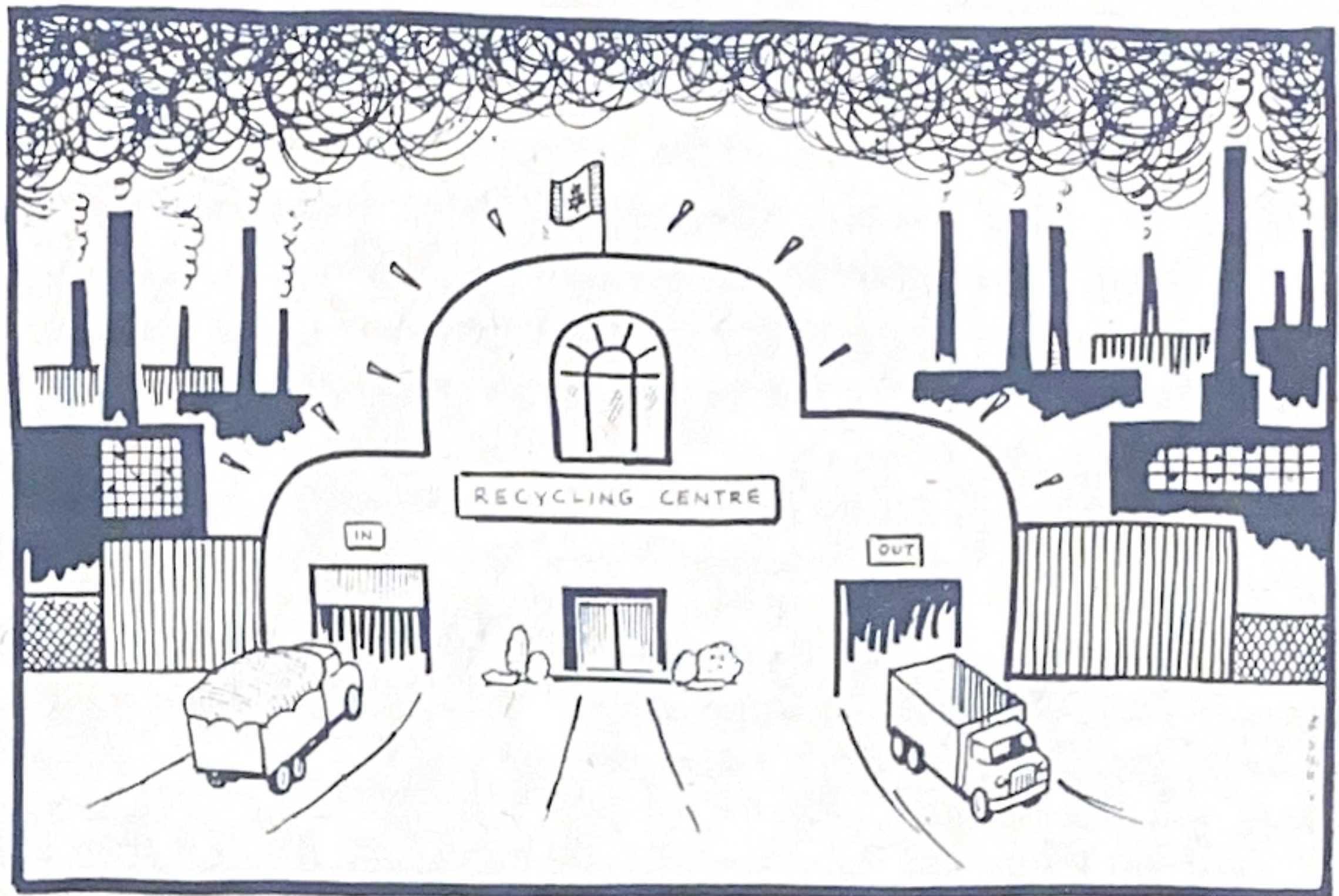
Green Lane of the prairies

A new Environment Canada Internet site is providing easy access for Manitobans to information about air, weather, wildlife, pollution and water.

The new Green Lane site for the Prairie and Northern Region joins a network of five other others operating in Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. The Green Lane carries weather reports and forecasts for the prairies and territories, regional news releases, brochures, department publications, reports and studies.

Users logging on to the site at <http://www.mb.doe.ca> will be able to follow links to the other five sites in Canada for additional publications, databases, and summaries of environmental legislation. Green Lane is also adding links to other government, university and commercial networks dealing with environmental information. The network of sites won Environment Canada a Canadian Internet Award for best government site in 1995.

The Manitoba Association of Regional Recycler's along with the Recycling Council of Manitoba host **Waste Reduction '96: The 50% Solution, A Manitoba Conference and Trade Show April 26 to 27 in Portage la Prairie.** Contact Glen Koroluk, Coordinator 925-3777.



thus pulling recyclables through the system. At the same time, subsidies to primary industries must be removed.

What can legislators at home do? At the very least, enshrine a no nonsense view of limitations. User fees on garbage will exhort householders to minimize waste volumes.

Our 400 landfills should be rationalized rigorously to avoid excess and environmental degradation. The Province ignores its endorsement of reduction by allowing the development of unneeded landfill capacity when a downward trend in solid waste, whether or not it meets national goals, is underway.

Jan Westlund is editor of the "R" Report. Glen Koroluk is Coordinator of the Recycling Council.



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Nutrition forgotten in pursuit of agri-profits

Sometime during the past ten years agriculture became the "Agri-food industry." While there has been a definite grassroots movement in Manitoba towards smaller farms, organic production and purer foods, this is set against a background of increasing bio-engineering of plants and foods, and increasing dependence on petrochemicals for fertilizer and pest control. In the following article an organic producer suggests we are sacrificing health and nutrition by chasing after technological "solutions" to problems that may have never existed.

by Celia Guilford

When we first decided to begin farming organically, it was in response to environmental concerns. Now, years later, both the environment and human health share top position as the reason for this choice.

For me, the more I learn about how most food is produced and processed, the less I am able to eat of it. We now grow most of our own food because I want to know that it was produced in a healthy system. Only certified organic food can give you this assurance.

In 1993, the US National Academy of Sciences reported that residues of pesticides on food pose a real threat to the health of children. Their eating patterns vary from adults. They eat fewer types of foods and thus concentrations of certain foods by body weight than adults do. This results in a concentration of chemical residue.

The state of food & farming

Also, these residue tests do not take into account the "chemical soup" we are consuming. The tests are done on one chemical at a time, but the cumulative effect is not known. I believe that chemicals with which our tissues have had no evolutionary experience should not be introduced into our environment.

I often wonder if consumers are totally oblivious to how food is being grown today, or if they really just don't know enough to be concerned. Do consumers realize, for instance, that some legumes (dry beans, lentils & peas) and flax, and most potatoes are desiccated with chemicals within two weeks of harvest?

Is it understood that a non-selective herbicide is registered for pre-harvest weed control, so it can be sprayed on crops to kill weeds just prior to harvest? The crops that this use is registered for include wheat, barley, canola, flax, lentils, dry peas, dry beans and forage crops.

This herbicide was temporarily pulled off the market after the discovery it caused the wheat seed to be unable to germinate after farmers were applying it incorrectly. How do these products get registered in the first place? How can this be healthy?

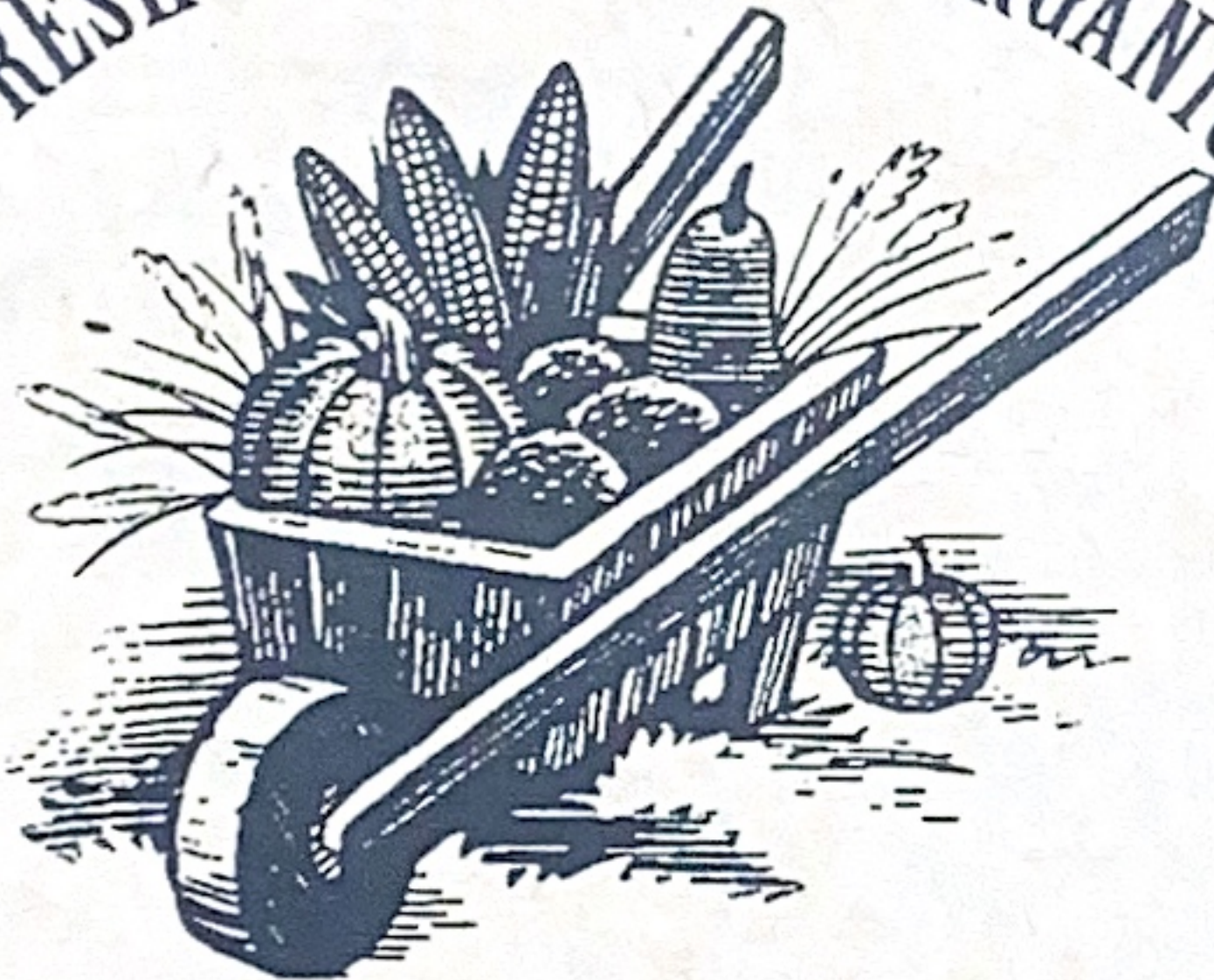
Food is supposed to provide us with nourishment, but the nourishing qualities of food are rarely evaluated. It is as though the consumer must be kept from discovering that volume and price are more important considerations to the producer than quality and health.

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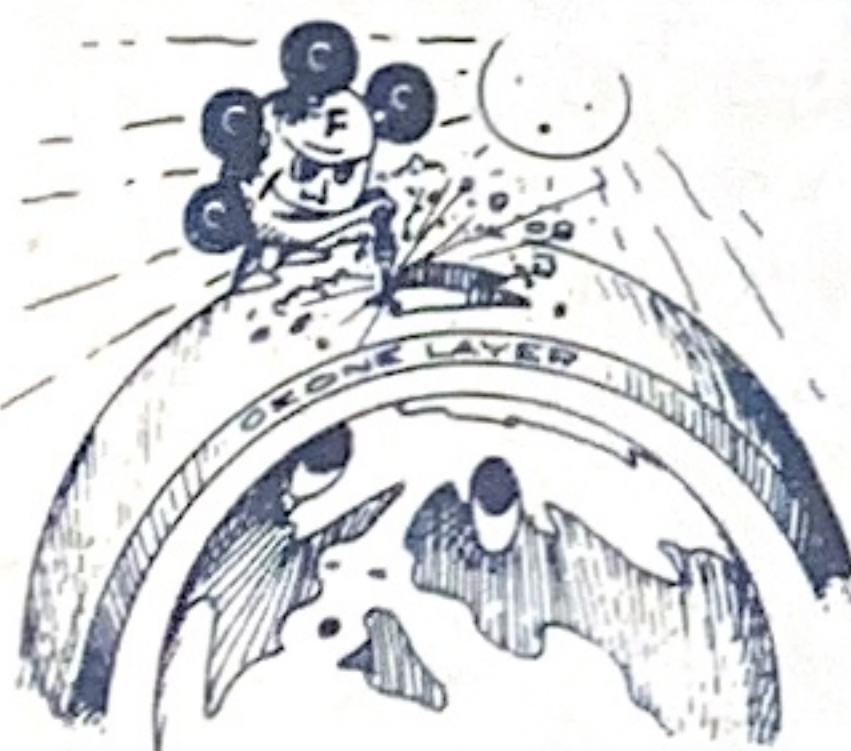
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Passive victims of long distance food industry?

Continued from previous page

New varieties of fruits and vegetables are developed according to how well they travel and how long they can be stored. New grain & oilseed crops are developed based on their resistance to certain herbicides.

So, instead of finding nutritious, tasty food, we are faced with tasteless impostors of their former selves. Most of the food that is consumed in Manitoba travels an average of 2000 miles to get here. It is grown on huge mono crop farms in places like California, where the farmers sometimes cannot even live where they grow their crops because the area is too toxic from the amounts of chemicals being used. We have a lot of mono-cropping here too. As a friend of mine says - "it gives me an eerie feeling to walk into a field of wheat that has no other plant life in it".

To quote Wendell Berry, "The industrial eater is one who no longer knows that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical - in short, a victim. There is a politics of food that, like any politics, involves our freedom. We still (sometimes) remember that we cannot be free if our minds and our voices are controlled by someone else. The condition of the passive consumer is not a democratic condition ... The products of nature and agriculture have been made, to all appearances, the products of industry. Both the eater and the eaten are thus in exile from biological reality."

Over 75% of genetic engineering research in Canada currently focuses on making crops resistant to herbicides. The push is from the chemical companies, who see it as an obvious market niche. More research dollars wrongly directed. More

insoluble uncertainties. This increases the reliance of the farmer on the chemical company, because now both the seed and the chemical must be purchased from the same company.

Why do we continue to work against Mother Nature? Are we so arrogant that we honestly believe we are doing a better job? In 1945, Sir Albert Howard wrote "Life and the natural universe hold mysteries that will never be reduced to a formula or manufactured in a laboratory. The crucial test of real scientific achievement is whether it recognises and respects the supremacy of Mother Earth, or ignorantly attempts to substitute the false for the true." As a society, we should all take responsibility for the care of our Mother Earth. Supporting and encouraging organic family farms is one way we can all show our concern.

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Dutch Elm Disease - Learn everything you need to know about this threat to the elms in your neighbourhood. **June 14 at 7 p.m.** 2799 Roblin Blvd.

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Increasing stresses on provincial parks

by Alice Chambers

The good news is that, despite all the pressures from industry and special interest groups, we still have Provincial Parks.

The bad news is that our Provincial Parks are under more and more stresses and should properly be called Integrated Resource Management Areas (IRMA) - areas which are managed for a multitude of values, including commercial forestry, mining, oil and gas exploration and development, quarrying, gravel pits, wild rice harvesting, minnow harvesting, haying, grazing, trapping, hunting, fishing, camping, wildlife viewing, swimming, canoeing, cottaging, motels/resorts, to name a few! All of these activities are acceptable in IRMAs but why are all of them acceptable in Manitoba's provincial parks?

In the yearly State of the Parks (National) from Parks Canada,

they list significant ecological impacts from sources inside and outside of the parks. I think we can safely say that we have all 29 of

their inside and outside stresses within our provincial parks, but not all within each park. The Parks System Review reinforced known stresses and resulted in enlightenment about unknown practices. Who would guess there was minnow harvesting - particularly when they scoop them from

"dead lakes" (as reported by the minnow harvesters themselves)?

During 1995, the pressures from forestry have increased dramatically as Louisiana-Pacific (L-P) gears up to take hardwoods out of Duck Mountain Provincial Park, while Repap and Pine Falls Paper Company (PFPC) continue to take softwoods out of the same Park.

While their modelling lacked credibility, the Environmental

Impact Assessment for L-P did voice concern over the long term sustainability of the softwood harvest. Concerns over the western parks have increased again with the revised forest management agreement with Repap, in which their softwood allowance increased from 1.1 to a maximum of 1.6 million cubic metres and a new hardwood allotment of up to 600 000 cubic metres was added. Since the agreement has the same withdrawal limits as that for L-P (0.05 %/year) and the same statement about logging in the parks within their forest management area, the hope for designating protected areas within or outside of provincial parks looks pretty dismal.

Just to complete the allocations, PFPC plans to more than double production so that should tie up the whole central and northeast side in a renewed forest management agreement and place additional pressures on eastern parks. Logging has already occurred along the narrow buffer along the Bloodvein, a Heritage River.

Then there is mining and mining leases! As anyone who looked at the parks maps will know, some of our parks are littered with mining claims and leases, Grass River having the largest number with Whiteshell coming close behind and Nopiming having the most activity. Even Atikaki Wilderness Park has mining leases, as well as a multitude of lodges! Manitoba has great mining incentives with millions of dollars of subsidies, and a mining sector that seems unaware of the support for protected areas in the Whitehorse Mining Initiative.

Oil and gas exploration and development are presently restricted to Turtle Mountain and Spruce Woods Parks. The recent announcement of further subsidies for exploration may or may not result in further activities in these parks. The problem with mining and oil and gas leases is that they are there forever, even if

The State of Manitoba's Parks

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development does not occur for many years.

The mining leases may not detract from our present park experience but they do mean that these areas cannot qualify for

protected areas status, which, as a minimum, excludes oil and gas, mining, forestry, and hydro development. Since there are very few areas within parks closed to mining or oil and gas exploration, the total area of the leases will increase over time.

Gravel pits and rock quarries permanently affect parks. How would people know that thousands of tonnes of rock to line the huge Deacon Reservoir came from Whiteshell Provincial Park? Wild rice harvesting may seem like a small intrusion vs. the major industries but it is only small if natural rice is harvested in a sustainable manner and water levels are not manipulated and fertilizers or other chemicals are not added. Minnow harvesting should be banned outright because it introduces exotic species into our lakes and rivers and has the added risk of transferring diseases.

On the positive side, we do have four new northern parks in which there will be no logging, mining or hydro development, albeit with controversy over the designation and boundaries. Nevertheless, they increased our protected areas from 0.6% (most of which is in Riding Mountain National Park) to 5.6%! The ongoing Parks System Review should result in protected status for Atikaki Park and, if the process is to have any credibility, for significant protected areas in other parks. Needed attention and dollars are being put into upgrading sewage treatment and landfill sites within parks.

Even with all of the stresses, we still have beautiful areas in provincial parks and as long as you are unaware of the line of sight rules around highways and canoe routes and don't explore too much, you could imagine you were in parks as they were

intended and as they are in all other provinces - places of refuge for humans and wildlife, places where biodiversity and endangered species are protected, places to get away from industrial development, places for recreation and renewal.

The year 2000 is quickly approaching and while other provinces are producing protected areas strategies, Manitoba is foreclosing on possibilities for reaching commitments to a network of protected areas representative of all of our natural regions.

So, after all, what is the state of the parks in Manitoba? In my view, they are under ever increasing stresses and it will take a major public outcry, in a province not known for environmental advocacy, to save these parks from the stresses to which they have been committed by our provincial government.

If our neighbour province of Saskatchewan can reach the state where even salvage logging in a Park after a fire was thwarted this year, is it possible that Manitoba could reach a similar state?

If change is to occur, it's up to each of us!

Alice Chambers is a board member for the Manitoba Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

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Living Lightly on the Earth has
its Rewards

Paper trail of broken promises

There's no doubt that individuals could do more to purchase recycled paper and reduce their use of wood products, but as the following article shows, if the public is left out of the decision-making, ignored in fact, then who is to blame for problems in the forest?

by Harvey Williams

In the latter half of the last decade in the century a yawning gap exists between Manitoba's words and deeds in forest management.

BONES of the FOREST

A film by Heather Frisc and Velcrow Ripper

Thursday / April 25
7:30 PM Only!

For one night only, THE CINEMATHEQUE presents a dynamically realized, poetic documentary about forestry practices and the environmental devastation in British Columbia featuring the stories of retired loggers, protestors, native and non-native elders, long time environmentalists, and a former logging executive with MacMillan Bloedel.

BONES OF THE FOREST features abstract nature imagery, time-lapse photography, blockade confrontations, and the devastating effect on the environment from 100 years of cut-and-run corporate logging.

The Cinematheque
100 Arthur Street/

While proclaiming support for the protection of biodiversity and the rights of First Nations people, the province continues to make forest management for profit its priority. For instance in Applying Manitoba's For-
cies (*Guideline Participation* the government "we shall establish appropriate forums courage and pro-
portunity for consultation and meaningful participation in decision making processes for all Manitobans."

The State of the Forests

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But unless the negotiations with Repap to give up 6,000 square kilometres of its 108,000 square kilometre Forest Management License (FML) to Louisiana Pacific could be considered public consultation, there was none prior to the granting of Louisiana Pacific's FML.

The after-the-fact Clean Environment Commission hearings on Louisiana Pacific could scarcely be called public consultation. Not only were they an inappropriate forum, they were not meaningful consultation.

Nor did public consultation precede the renewal of Repap's share-purchase agreement and FML in November of 1995. Worst of all, First Nations People, the most directly affected Manitobans, have discovered the signing of FMLs the same way the rest of us have, by reading about them in the newspaper.

Proof that Manitoba's forestry policy is to maximize Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) is the Forestry Branch's mission statement which reads, "other resource opportunities (will be) allowed within designated forestry lands, so long as such opportunities complement and do not conflict with, existing or future forest harvesting operations."

The government's perception of its forests is further revealed in The Round Table on Environment & Economy's *Workbook on Forestry* which defines Manitoba's wood fibre supply as "all of the standing trees in Manitoba."

Manitoba's foresters calculate AAC as the mean annual increment of wood (the average volume of wood that grows each year) minus 15% for natural causes such as fire, insects, and storms. Nothing is subtracted for biodiversity and other non-commercial values reflecting the aforementioned forestry policy. Withdrawals of "productive" forest lands for parks or preservation to meet biodiversity commitments are staunchly resisted by Manitoba's forestry

A thank you to our business supporters

Production of *Eco-Journal* has been greatly assisted by the contributions of progressive business owners in Winnipeg. Among them were Green Earth (with stores on Corydon and Westminster); Home of Instant Printing (at Princess and McDermot); Gavin Hay, Indigo Communication and The Hemp Exchange.

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officials.

Because most of Manitoba's parklands were created out of provincial forests, they continue to be managed for sustained forest harvest under the previously quoted policy. At present most of Manitoba's accessible productive forest land is under FML to LP, Repap, and Pine Falls Paper Company (PFPC), formerly Abitibi Price. Together this comprises approximately 40% of the productive forest in the province.

The last remaining unallocated, inaccessible productive forest land is north of Atikaki Provincial Wilderness Park. Now PFPC has applied for an Environmental License for the first phase of an all weather road to eventually gain access to that timber supply. The completion of such a road would open up Manitoba's last remaining large wilderness area to logging and mining and would inevitably lead to more conflict with First Nations over land entitlements. Once it has an assured wood supply, PFPC hopes to construct a 1200 tonne per day pulp mill at Pine Falls.

The process of privatizing forest management in Manitoba began in the 1970's, with the now infamous Manfor pulp and paper and lumber complex at The Pas. While Manfor, a crown corporation, created several hundred jobs, it was unable to turn a consistent profit so after nearly two decades of subsidized operation and exemption from environmental regulation the province began a search for a private sector operator. One was found in 1989, when Repap Enterprises ostensibly purchased Manfor—ostensibly purchased because so many financial and other incentives were used to entice Repap that an audit might show that Manitoba paid to get Manfor off its hands (\$90 million in road and highway upgrading, alone). Be that as it may, Repap seems to have done a better job of managing the complex than the government, by turning a modest profit while cleaning up the environmental mess left by Manfor. The closed-door deal included a Forest Management License (FML) of 108,000 square kilometres containing nearly 40% of Manitoba's productive forest. Repap was to close the saw mill, and increase production of wood pulp by 4-fold by converting the Kraft mill to wood pulp from aspen and building a new 1200 tonne per day pulp mill. Bleached raw pulp was to be shipped to the U.S., leaving Manitoba with clearcut forests and organochlorides (as much as 25 tonnes per day) in her streams.

The present confrontation between First Nations at Pukatawagan and Repap is a direct consequence of that deal. Fortunately for Repap and the province, the pulp and paper market collapsed before the expansion and conversion took place. Otherwise, the added billion dollar debt load on top of Repap's existing \$2 billion debt would likely have forced the company into bankruptcy. Moreover, the expansion would have consumed 2,400,000 m³ of softwood, mostly spruce and 835,000 m³ of aspen annually for a total of 3,235,000 m³ which it now turns out was in excess of the available AAC.

Although Manitoba is usually described

a prairie province, 51% is forested. Manitoba's forests are a part of the great circumpolar boreal forest, a mosaic of spruce, jack pine, tamarack, aspen and poplar that stretches across Canada, Siberia and the northern reaches of Scandinavia.

Only 38% of Manitoba's forest zone is considered "productive" meaning it is suitable for commercial harvest and 90% of that is owned by the province. Only 4% of Manitoba's crown owned forest is closed to harvest. Manitoba has disregarded a number of provincial-federal agreements as it continues to pursue its single-minded policy of maximizing the commercial harvest of its forests. These agreements include:

1. **The WWF Endangered Spaces Campaign** which promotes a strategy for protecting biodiversity by protecting representative samples of Canada's many and varied ecosystems;
2. **The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy** which Manitoba helped draft and which commits Manitoba to a strategy for the protection of biodiversity;
3. **Sustainable Development: A Special Role for National, Provincial and Territorial Parks** that calls on park lands to play a role in restoring essential ecological processes, maintaining biological diversity, and protecting wildlife from the adverse effects of roads and other developments;
4. **A Wildlife Policy for Canada** which expands the concept of wildlife to include all wild organisms and their habitats and calls for a comprehensive system of protected areas representative of all ecological types linked by wildlife migration paths with priority to the protection of endangered or limited habitats; and
5. **Our Parks-Showcases for Sustainable Development** which contains *Principles to Guide Park Management* that call for parks to preserve a comprehensive network of protected areas, to be managed to maintain and restore essential ecological processes and conserve biological diversity.

Taken together, these decisions and published policy statements show that the province has left a paper trail of broken promises through the forest.

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Intentional community based on respect for the land

Northern Sun Farm cooperative

by Janine Gibson

As North Americans we have the privilege of making many choices about how we live. For over 20 years, groups of friends have been chosen to visit and live on 160 acres of land south of Steinbach near the villages of Sarto and Pansy.

The area is marshy with a rocky, sandy soil that barely sustains the aspen forest covering most of the farm. White and black poplar trees, burr oak, hazelnut and choke cherry bushes, wild plums and hawthorn grow on wooded ridges that rise above the marsh. There are coyotes and deer, many rabbits and ruffed grouse and beaver. Sandhill cranes nest in the marsh, circling with their hauntingly beautiful cries every spring. Ducks nest on the stream that crosses the land.

Northern Sun Farm Cooperative is a limited co-op owning these 160 acres. A smaller group within the co-op owns another 80 acres adjacent to the west, making the

gives light in the dark evenings or when the days are cloudy.

The pattern of sunshine strongly affects the patterns of energy use, but this in turn reflects the aims of the people who prefer to live lightly on the earth, tending gardens organically, respecting the strengths and rhythms of nature.

Three cabins are weekend retreat homes for nonresident members, and five of the homes

are permanent residences. Some members have lived here for 17 years. The youngest member is 17 months old, there are a total of seven children and six adult residents.

The water for the homes flows from pumps worked by hand or by small electric motors recycled from vehicles. Saunas serve as bathhouses. Most of the lumber in the homes was recycled when unwanted buildings were taken down by small work crews of families and friends. Recycling and using locally-avail-

The pattern of sunshine strongly affects the patterns of energy use, but this in turn reflects the aims of the people who prefer to live lightly on the earth

total parcel 240 acres. There are no hydro lines here -- the nine homes use solar power for electricity.

The solar panels sit in clearings near the houses collecting sunshine. Stored as electricity in deep cycle batteries, this power

Continued on following page

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Households autonomous but interactive and interdependent

Continued from previous page

able resources are founding principles of the community.

In 1984, the cooperative was formed and membership responsibilities and privileges were clarified. This work of community building is ongoing, and co-op members meet regularly to discuss policies and to make decisions about the collective management of the co-op.

Each household runs autonomously, yet there is much interaction and interdependence. One family runs a bakery for the co-op members and friends. Another mills grain into flour for the bakery's use. The grain mill is powered by the Whisper 1000 windmill standing 80 feet above the little visitor parking sign near the workshop.

People visit here to learn more about simple living, sustainable energy sources and ending society's fossil fuel addiction. They visit to be with nature, to hear the silence and see the stars, to swim with friends in the pond, or pick sweet grass and sage as aboriginal neighbours have done for years.

One meadow near the stream has a circle danced into the soil. Years of traditional dancing by the Ojibway peoples now living near Roseau River, mark their tradition of sustainable harvest of the sacred medicines the earth provides. There is a simple power and beauty in this land.

Janine Gibson is a member of the Northern Sun Farm Cooperative



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Utilities report small steps towards conservation produce large benefits

Continued from page 1

period water use for mining and manufacturing was down, but water use for agriculture and thermal power generation (coal, gas-fired and nuclear plants) increased by 12.1 and 11.1 per cent respectively.

There are signs however that the upward curve in consumption is levelling off. Duane Griffin, who is in charge of water conservation programs for the City of Winnipeg's Waste Waterworks and Disposal Department says that forecasted increases in water consumption - residential and commercial/institutional - have failed to materialize.

Historically, residential water use has increased by about two per cent per year, but has instead remained level through the period from 1990 to 1994. It was declining in 1991 already, and then after the hot summers of '93 and '94 water consumption didn't come back to the

historical levels. Industrial and commercial consumption has been declining by about 3 per cent per year, although at least some of that is attributable to the loss of manufacturing and food processing businesses in the city.

The reductions on the residential side are

Average residential natural gas consumption
1990 = 3403 cubic metres
1995 = 3170 cubic metres

due partly to conservation measures by the City and by individuals in installing low flow tap kits, and fixing leaks etc.

The City's goal had been to "deflect" the increases by five per cent by 1997 and a further five per cent by 2005 in order to avoid expanding the infrastructure, particularly a costly twinning of the city's aqueduct from Shoal Lake. The City is now on pace to save more like 15 per cent, although Griffin says "we can't take credit for all of that in water conservation."

New plumbing codes in other provinces are starting to have an effect here, as six litre toilet tanks, for example, become the standard for manufacturers responding to stricter codes in Ontario and British Columbia.

And notwithstanding publicity about letting the water run to avoid freezing pipes in certain areas of the city this winter, Griffin says that the city itself has saved significant amounts of water by installing

equipment to detect leaks on water main valves.

In energy use, Manitoba Hydro is known to be exceeding its targets for conserving electricity and is postponing construction of new generating capacity - new dams - well into the next century. Hydro's Powersmart program is a combination of public education and occasional incentives to reduce consumption, such as rebates on block heater timers.

Centra Gas, which provides natural gas to Winnipeg and several other communities in Manitoba has been expanding its market here by adding trunk lines to its gas distribution system.

According to Jeanett Richter, the company's Communications Coordinator, "residential sales volume has remained level" since 1990. "It's interesting because we added about 2500 (new) customers."

She says that after factoring in changes in the customer base and adjusting for variations in weather from year to year, there has been better than a one per cent per year decline in average consumption by residential customers since 1990.

In 1990 the average residential use by Centra Gas customers was 3403 cubic metres, while the 1995 average was 3170 cubic metres. That's close to a seven per cent reduction over five years.

Some of the decrease in use is due to conservation measures, such as installation of new windows, caulking and weatherstripping, set back thermostats etc. But the most significant factor is probably increased efficiency in appliances, particularly furnaces. Many Centra Gas customers have moved to high or mid-efficiency furnaces, and for new homes, conventional gas furnaces are no longer available.

In one respect the results in water and energy conservation are heartening. They show that individuals are responding, even where incentives have been slight. But they also point out how easily Canadians can turn around our reputation as the world's worst wasters of water and one of the biggest energy spenders in the world.

We've got a long way to go, but at least we've set a course in the right direction.

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Astroturf crawl

A new term has been coined to describe phony "grassroots" organizations set up to deflect effective environmental protection legislation. According to the story "Public relations and private interests," an excerpt from "Toxic Sludge is Good for You" in the Winter edition of *Earth Island Journal*, these supposed third party defenders of agrochemicals and mining in federal reserve lands, are referred to as the "astroturf" movement in Washington.

The excerpt provides an overview of the efforts of public relations at greenwashing from the first attacks against Rachel Carson to the sabotage practised against Jeremy Rifkin's Beyond Beef tour, in which people pretending to be Rifkin's publicist cancelled or rescheduled appointments with media representatives.

The article, and the book, rely on secret memos and frank off-the-record-type statements about strategy by public relations company executives.

Check the same issue for a story about the "Earth's Least Wanted" congressional representatives and senators who are in the pocket of big forest products, oil and chemical companies. Idaho Rep. Helen Chenoweth got a dishonourable mention for her public statement to the effect that if "a species goes out of existence every 20 seconds ... surely a new species must come into existence every 20 seconds." Hmmm, speaking of endangered species ...

Planetary bigshots

Alternatives editor Robert Gibson has an idea that the species we should be emulating is the much maligned forehead mite. He says the forehead mites are rarely photographed or discussed, scientifically or otherwise, because they have "no noticeable effects, positive or negative." His editorial "Now that we are significant" suggests that we need to move from a "parasitical existence that is killing our host to a more compliant and cooperative symbiotic relationship that does something good for nature."

End of the line

Recycling Council of Manitoba president Alex Morrison worries that the Mani-

toba Stewardship Program may have delivered a wrong message when it delivered its blue boxes in the City of Winnipeg. She writes in the R Report that "feedback from many citizens indicates that now that they're part of the Stewardship Program, they feel their environmental responsibility is com-

plete." She decries the lack of public education attached to the program to indicate that waste reduction, and only waste reduction, will develop "a more sustainable economy."

because participants were told that "all existing resource commitments such as logging and mining in parks will be honoured."

The sorest point between parks/wilderness/forests activists is the Duck Mountain Provincial Park which is devoted almost entirely to Louisiana Pacific's wood supply "and the rest is dotted with cottages and recreation sites. Even a postage stamp size area labelled "Ecological Protection: is marked with two gravel pits" on the maps used for the consultations.

Williams calls for a process that will "recreate our provincial park system" rather than provide a "guarantee of protection for those who are currently using our parks for economic gain."

REREAD

compiled by Toby Maloney

plete." She decries the lack of public education attached to the program to indicate that waste reduction, and only waste reduction, will develop "a more sustainable economy."

Missed opportunity

TREE president and one-man multi-stakeholder Harvey Williams dissects the province's parks consultation in the March edition of the *Manitoba Naturalists Society Bulletin*. His conclusion is that the process is more than little flawed primarily

Ecological footprint

Green Teacher offers a great exercise for students or groups in its latest issue, a good outline of how to calculate ecological footprint. That's the land that would be required to support our current lifestyle forever. Includes great background material.

by Tom Tomorrow

IT'S TIME FOR YET ANOTHER LOOK AT HOW THE NEWS WORKS...STEP ONE: A CORPORATION WHICH HAS BEEN CAUGHT ENGAGING IN SOME ILLEGAL OR UNETHICAL ACT HIRES A PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM...



...AS WELL AS SENDING OUT SLICKLY-PRODUCED "VIDEO NEWS RELEASES" WHICH MANY CASH-STRAPPED LOCAL NEWS DEPARTMENTS AIR VIRTUALLY UNEDITED...GIVING CORPORATE PROPAGANDA THE APPEARANCE OF OBJECTIVE REPORTING...



STEP TWO: THE P.R. FIRM PROCEEDS TO MANIPULATE PUBLIC OPINION IN A VARIETY OF DEVIOUS, UNDERHANDED WAYS-- SUCH AS ANONYMOUSLY PLANTING OP-ED PIECES IN THE NATION'S NEWSPAPERS...



STEP THREE: PUBLIC OPINION IS SWAYED BY THIS ONSLAUGHT OF MEDIA MANIPULATION MASQUERADING AS NEWS...SINCE, AS P.R. FIRMS WELL UNDERSTAND, ANY LIE REPEATED OFTEN ENOUGH BECOMES TRUE...



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