



ECO-JOURNAL

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GIS/Mapping Centre fieldwork Mapping the Manigotagan

By Liz Dykman

"The Manigotagan River is stunningly beautiful and a world-class example of how eco-tourism can help maintain wild places and boost local economies."—Ron Thiessen, Exec. Director, Manitoba Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Over the summer our GIS/Mapping Centre began a project to create a canoe map of the Manigotagan River, with the goal of promoting environmentally sensitive use of the area and raising awareness of its history and ecosystems. The field work for the project was comprised of three trips along the river. Starting near the Ontario border at Hwy 314, our route took us 100 km through Nopiming and Manigotagan River Provincial Parks to the community of Manigotagan on Lake Winnipeg.

Our mission was to gather information on geographic and cultural features, portage routes, campsites, rapids and access points. There were certainly challenges, but mostly I was hard pressed to remember that this was work—especially when I was swimming below a waterfall or just enjoying the gorgeous scenery.

Three trips needed to gather the data

The first trip started out in mid-July with unseasonably low water levels and high fire risk. Under the leadership of Anke Kirch, the manager of the project, we got a good start at gathering the huge amount of data required for the maps. Days were long, but this allowed us the opportunity to observe numerous beavers and otters that were active in the evening. We also spotted deer, moose and several bears, and had more intimate encounters with mosquitoes and leeches.

Trip two focussed on gathering photos and videos of the river, and trip three filled in information gaps and served to verify data. Although there were some close calls (which served to add to the excitement), there were no serious mishaps in the way of unexpected swims while running rapids. We also had plenty of chances to appreciate the local and migrating bird species, with

an impressive show put on by the swooping nighthawks at Sand River Falls. In addition to flocks of Canada geese, there were cormorants, plovers, ducks of all sorts (my birding skills are unfortunately rather limited!) and a Tundra Swan.

Due to the extremely dry conditions this summer, the river got lower with each successive trip, but wind and weather were generally in our favour, and allowed for thoroughly enjoyable trips while we gathered GPS data, photos, notes about the various campsites and other information, such as the relative difficulty or

ease of rapids and portages. The combination of lovely scenes, fun paddling and good company made for a memorable experience for all participants.

Besides a wide diversity of wildlife and natural beauty, we also noticed evidence of the impact that recreational use is having on some sites along the river. This speaks to the need for education about responsible use and low-impact camping that is a goal of the project. The river is a popular route for canoeists because of its accessibility by road and the variety of whitewater challenges it presents.

Stories behind the names

Along the length of our route we ran, lined or portaged around 25 rapids, falls and swifts. These features have colourful names such as Ruff Knuckle Falls, and Flour, Wendigo and Skunk Rapids. The stories behind these names are part of the information we hope to include in the maps, along with information about the geography, flora and fauna of the route. We will also provide information about trip planning, environmentally friendly behaviour, and safety, with a focus on the protection of the water resource and adjacent land areas.

see "Mapping the Manigotagan" on page 10 ►



Sand River Falls campsite. Photo by Tim Lutz

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New Protection for Woodland Caribou

By Ron Thiessen, CPAWS

In Spring 2005, I gave Manitoba Conservation Minister Stan Struthers a bottle of Caribou Wine and asked that it be opened to celebrate when Manitoba provides legal protection for its threatened woodland caribou. A year later, after an assertive campaign by CPAWS and the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the Minister and I raised our glasses to protected status for woodland caribou under the Manitoba Endangered Species Act.

Conservation biologists are concerned about the survival of Canada's woodland caribou as they have already been eliminated from three provinces, and their numbers are declining across their range. This is mainly due to habitat destruction caused by human activities that fail to plan for caribou's needs, such as logging, mining, and hydro projects. In Manitoba, the provincial government estimates its woodland caribou population has decreased by 50% since 1950.

Woodland caribou need immense sections of unbroken boreal forest to obtain an adequate food supply and avoid predators. Even low levels of industrial activity have negative impact on caribou ranges, so it's critical that we practice large-scale conservation. In protecting huge, ecologically intact regions of boreal forest, we also safeguard the ecological services we all rely on—Canadians depend on the boreal for clean water, clean air, jobs, food, or supplies. The boreal forest is the world's largest source of fresh water, regulates Earth's climate, and has been deemed the "northern lungs of the planet" due to its oxygen production.

Across the nation, caribou habitats must be protected through legislation. In Manitoba, we've won the campaign to have woodland caribou listed under the Manitoba Endangered Species Act, which mandates habitat protection. The next step is to ensure the law becomes reality on the ground through creation of large protected areas in Manitoba's boreal forest.

CPAWS is working to make certain the Manitoba government revises its provincial Caribou Recovery Strategy so that its primary objective is full protection of large intact woodland caribou habitats. Granting the land protection requests from First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg would go a long

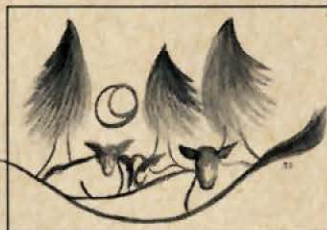


Illustration by Natalie Griller

way in achieving the Strategy's stated goal of self-sustaining boreal woodland caribou populations. This Manitoba government action would also increase the region's eligibility for the proposed 43,000 square kilometer World Heritage Site—that's over 1.5 times the size of Vancouver Island! The quest for this World Heritage Site is led by First Nations and officially supported by the present Manitoba government.

Manitoba's woodland caribou are in peril, but we can create a healthy future for them if the right decisions are made right now. It's time for the provincial NDP government to show the world that Manitoba is first-class when it comes to conserving wilderness for wildlife and people. Immense, healthy boreal forest protected areas will take the woodland caribou, Manitobans, and all Canadians another step toward a sustainable future.

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Municipal candidates: Steal these ideas!

By Randall McQuaker, Resource Conservation Manitoba

Seven actions to make Manitoba communities greener are among the highlights of an environmental platform that Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM) is offering to voters and municipal candidates this fall.

"RCM does not endorse or oppose any parties or particular candidates in any election," says Kenton Lobe, president of the non-profit group. "But our Board and Policy Committee have picked out a number of municipal actions that promote sustainability and that are linked to RCM's own work."

The resulting 'platform' is not a comprehensive policy on urban sustainability, Lobe notes, but rather a number of strategically selected 'do-able' measures in areas such as climate change, sustainable transportation, energy efficiency, and waste reduction. RCM's community programs promote composting, walking school buses, the Commuter Challenge, workplace trip reduction, Waste Reduction Week, and an Environmental Speakers Bureau for schools.

Seven major recommendations

Among RCM's top recommendations for all mayoral and council candidates in the province:

1. Climate Change

Commit to a community-wide reduction of 50 per cent in greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels by 2020. GHG emissions in Manitoba today stand some 6 per cent above 1990 levels, which is about 12 per cent higher than the agreed Kyoto targets. Scientific opinion-leaders now believe those targets must be not only met, but exceeded, if the earth is to remain habitable for human and other life. Prompt and purposeful action is needed to bring emissions down. At a minimum, this will require greater efficiencies in the use of energy and materials. The other measures listed here will also help. Municipal governments, which are close to where people live, can and must provide real leadership on this critical issue.

2. Active Transportation

Earmark a minimum 3 per cent of the municipal roads budget for active transportation. By "active transportation," RCM means self-propelled methods of travel (primarily walking and various modes of wheeling). Overwhelmingly, municipal budgets for construction and maintenance of streets and bridges are dedicated to conventional (car-centred) facilities. The needs of bicycle and pedestrian traffic are relegated to the margins. And where cycling and walking paths are developed, they are often for recreation (worthwhile on their own, to be sure) rather than for commuting. Many people say they would cycle if facilities were in place to make it safe. The multiple benefits of active transportation include less vehicle congestion, increased personal fitness and health, and community environmental improvements (cleaner air, greenhouse gas reduction).

3. Green Infrastructure

Dedicate a portion of shared revenues from the federal gas

tax to sustainable transportation. Make the most of these new dollars. When you strengthen transit services (rapid transit, for example), you ease congestion, increase transportation efficiencies, reduce road maintenance costs, and save taxpayers money. Employees commute efficiently to work. Shoppers get quickly to stores. A first-rate transit system adds value to the local economy.

4. Waste Reduction

Implement a user pay program for excess waste. No other measure is as likely to push up recycling and composting rates. Make sure waste diversion options are fully developed and readily available first, so people can recycle and compost conveniently. Incorporate measures, as needed, to ensure public confidence in the fairness of the system. Don't forget education to help residents avoid or minimize charges. Be prepared to save money, extend the life of your landfill and gain GHG reduction credits.

5. Composting

Implement curbside pickup and centralized composting of organics. Follow the lead of other municipalities like Edmonton, Hamilton, and St. Catharines-Niagara. Yard waste is probably a good place to start. Include leaves and pumpkins. Make a quality product that you can sell or give back to residents.

6. Methane

Capture methane at landfill sites. Colourless, odourless methane is produced when organic materials break down in the absence of oxygen (as in a landfill). The gas is about 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide as a contributor to climate change. Winnipeg's Brady Road site is an example of the potential benefits. This landfill generates 4 per cent of the total GHG emissions in Manitoba. It is largest single point source of greenhouse gas in the province, and the largest landfill in Canada that is uncontrolled for methane. Pilot studies have confirmed the feasibility of capturing methane at the site. This one initiative would substantially reduce community-wide greenhouse gases.

7. Green Buildings

Require new municipal facilities to conform to LEED building standards. LEED stands for "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design." The Province of Manitoba has recently pledged to adopt the LEED program's silver standards for new provincial facilities. The practice is in keeping with a life-cycle approach to the construction and operation of municipal facilities. Higher building standards mean lower energy consumption and increased efficiency. Taxpayers will save money and the environment will come out greener, too.

More recommendations and details are available on RCM's web site at www.resourceconservation.mb.ca.

Winnipeggers vote on October 25.



Illustration by David Henry

What's Happening

Oct. 12—National Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) Odyssey Day is a one-day event to promote advanced vehicle technologies, alternative fuels, and to showcase local successes. Presentations will include Alternative Fuels in Canada, Greening Your Fleet, and Local Initiatives. Canad Inns Polo Park, 1405 St. Matthews Ave. 8 am to 4:30 pm. Register by Oct. 6 by calling 297-9937 or emailing jstewart@cleancitieswinnipeg.org.

Oct. 14—Manitoba Naturalists Society Fall Garage Sale. Great deals on plants, electronic equipment, household items, books, and much more! 9:30 a.m. to Noon at Westminster United Church.

Oct. 18–19—Managing Nutrients within the Lake Winnipeg Watershed, a forum sponsored by the Canadian Water Resources Association at the Greenwood Inn 1715 Wellington Ave. Winnipeg. For more information contact Devon Danielson (204) 477-7615.

Oct. 22—Migration Magic Farewell Concert at Oak Hammock Marsh. Enjoy an evening of classical music as our feathered friends take flight. A wine and cheese will be featured during the intermission. Tickets are \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members. Call 467-3300.

Oct. 22–25—Canadian Wind Energy Association Conference and Trade Show at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. There is a pre-conference program on Sunday the 22 dealing with small wind systems. Registration for that event is \$100. See <http://www.canwea.ca/events/en/ConferenceAndEvents.html>.

Oct. 26–27—Parks and Protected Areas Research Forum, Tourism in Parks and Protected Areas: Opportunities and Challenges in the 21st Century. Registration is \$110 for one day or \$200 for both, \$85 for students. The event also includes field trip hosted at the Assiniboine Park Zoo, including a wine and cheese reception at the Assiniboine Park Conservatory. See www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/pparfm/index.php

Oct. 16, 30—Manitoba Naturalists Society Indoor Program, 7:30 p.m. at the Pauline Boutal Theatre, le centre culturel franco-manitobain, 340 Provencher Boulevard. \$2.00 for MNS members or \$6.00 for non-members. For further information, please call the MNS Office at 943-9029.

1) Oct. 16—*Threatened Grassland Bird Monitoring and Conservation Efforts in Manitoba, 1987–2006.* Presenter: Ken De Smet, Species at Risk Biologist, MB Conservation.

2) Oct. 30—*Growing Food Organically: Successes and Chal-*

lenges. Presenter: Dr. Martin Entz, Professor, Dept. of Plant Science, U. of Manitoba.

Oct. 27—Native Orchid Conservation Inc. Members' Night. Lawrence Smith and Carl Smith from Brokenhead First Nation, will speak on the Medicinal Plants of Brokenhead. 7:30 pm at the Manitoba Bowls Centre, 1212 Dakota Street in St. Vital. Door prizes and refreshments. Everyone is welcome. Contact Peggy at 261-9179 (leave message) or email bainardp@mts.net. More information see www.nativeorchid.org.

Oct. 21—Organic Producers Association of Manitoba Fall Marketing & Production Seminar—"Sharing the Vision". Knox United Church, Brandon, MB. For more information contact the OPAM office at 204-748-1315.

Nov. 5–8—Agricultural Institute of Canada Conference: Innovation for Growth—Trends and Successes Redefining Agriculture. Sessions on Best Practices, Environmental Farm Planning, Organic Production, and Conservation. At the Fairmont Winnipeg, \$420 or \$240 for students. Conference info can be found at <http://www.aic.ca/>.

Nov. 12—World of the White-tailed Deer at Fort Whyte Centre. This is the peak of the mating season, or rut, for the white-tailed deer. Join an interpreter on a guided walk to look for rubs and scrapes, and to attempt to 'rattle in' a buck. 2 p.m. Free with general admission. Call 989-8355.

Nov. 29–30—Manitoba Organic Milk Co-op Ltd. presents Organic Dairy Farming Opportunities in Manitoba. Victoria Inn, Winnipeg. Call 204-782-5035 for details or to register.

Dec. 1—Livestock Health Seminar in Forrest, MB. For more information call the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba office at 204-748-1315.

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Illustration by Natalie Griller

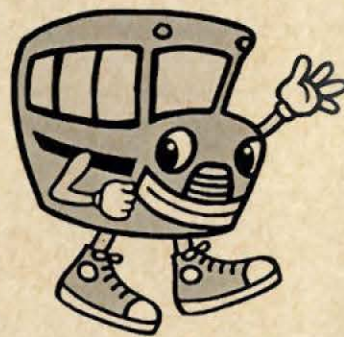
FREE Beginner Composting Workshops!

Resource Conservation Manitoba and Winnipeg Public Libraries are offering **FREE Beginner Composting Workshops!** These 45 minute workshops will give you lots of great information on how to compost effectively, thereby helping the environment and enriching your yard and plants! There will be a prize giveaway at each workshop, courtesy of Lee Valley Tools. Pre-registration is required. Call 925-3778.

- Monday, Oct. 16, 7pm, Millennium Library, 251 Donald St.
- Thursday, Oct. 19, 7pm, Sir William Stevenson Library, 765 Keewatin St.
- Saturday, Oct. 21, 1pm, Louis Riel Library, 1168 Dakota St.
- Monday, Oct. 23, 7pm, Munroe Library, 489 London St.
- Thursday, Oct. 26, 7pm, St. Boniface Library (French), 131 Provencher Blvd.

Get 'Off on the Right Foot' for fall!

Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) is a project of Resource Conservation Manitoba offered free of charge to Manitoba schools. Program components include walking/cycling school buses, neighbourhood walkabouts, walking clubs, traffic safety awareness training, no-idling zones and more.



Check out the Fall 2006 *Active & Safe Routes to School in Manitoba* newsletter, called 'Off on the Right Foot', at: www.resourceconservation.mb.ca

Learn the Top 10 Reasons to have a Walking School Bus, Warming Up Winter Walking, how to start a Walking School Bus, Clean Air Day results and information on the 2006 International Walk to School Week.

For more information, contact Jackie at Resource Conservation Manitoba by phone at 925-3773, or email us at asrts@resourceconservation.mb.ca.

News from the Eco-Centre

By Anne Lindsey

The Eco-Network is engaged in a wide variety of activities in different parts of the province as we move into the Fall. Here's an update on some of them:

Water Caucus members prepare for CEC hearings

Member groups of the Water Caucus, including Manitoba Wildlands, Concerned Citizens of the RM of Piney and Buffalo Point First Nation, and Save our Seine, are preparing to enter Clean Environment Commission hearings on a proposal by the Pembina Valley Water Cooperative (PVWC). The project aims to pipe groundwater from the Sandilands aquifer under Sandilands Provincial Forest in south-eastern Manitoba to Morris and then through the PVWC network, which supplies 45,000 customers in the south central area of Manitoba. The water is supposedly required to alleviate shortages "during periods of drought or contamination due to accidental spills".

The Sandilands region is an ecological gem as it is the source of four major watersheds in the province (Brokenhead River/Whitemouth River/Rat River/Seine River). It is also believed that the Sandstone and Carbonate Aquifers (two major bedrock aquifers in south central Manitoba) are recharged primarily from the Sandilands upland area.

The group, with the assistance of Water Caucus coordinator, Glen Koroluk, is working with a variety of experts to demonstrate that following a 'soft path' for water conservation in the area could avert the need for additional piped-in supplies, and to emphasize that much more needs to be understood about the Sandilands aquifer before any costly infrastructure is built. (Note: for a discussion of 'Soft Paths for Water' see the article in Eco-Journal, Vol. 16, No. 1 by David Epp).

Public hearing for Minnedosa water withdrawals?

On the other side of the Province, a coalition of groups including the Brandon and Area Environmental Council, Citizens for the Responsible Application of Phosphorous, Wolf Creek Conservation and Friends of Rivers Lake has been urging a public hearing for the Town of Minnedosa's application to increase their water withdrawal and to upgrade their drinking water treat-

ment plant. The town is supplying water to the Husky Oil Ethanol plant expansion, which is currently under construction. Apparently, when the plant went through provincial and federal environmental assessment, the adequacy of the existing water supply was not questioned, and is now in serious doubt. (Wheat based ethanol production is quite water intensive, requiring 9 litres of water for every litre of ethanol produced).

Minnedosa's proposal is to obtain the water from existing wells and in times of water shortage, augment flows downstream of Minnedosa, (on the Little Saskatchewan River) from surface water stored in Lake Minnedosa. In the Environment Act proposal, UMA Consultants admit that, "In general, the river is considered to have sufficient flow on an annual basis to meet the needs of this project, downstream users, and the environment. However, in the fall and winter flows in the river are low and any withdrawal may have an adverse effect." Glen Koroluk notes that the volume of 'instream flow

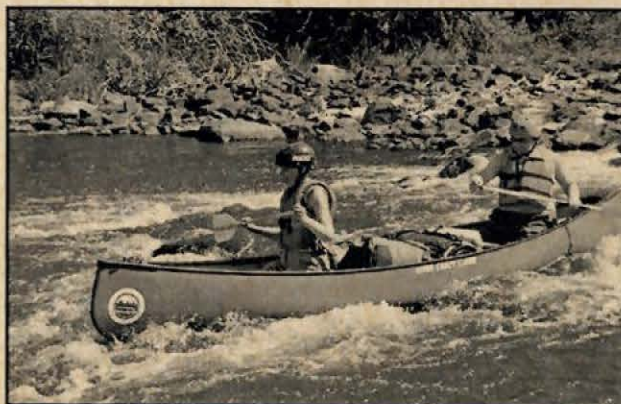
required to protect the aquatic ecosystem has not been identified on the Little Saskatchewan River. A diverse community of ranchers, farmers, cottagers, townspeople and industry depend on the Little Saskatchewan, which ultimately flows into the Assiniboine River upstream of Brandon.

Networking on inter-basin transfers

Yet another working group within the caucus is focussing on the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (North Dakota's latest attempt to resurrect the Garrison Diversion Project). The preferred option in the state is likely to be an inter-basin transfer of water from the Missouri River via the McCluskey Canal to the Sheyenne River (which drains into the Red River). The working group is networking with environmental and tribal organizations in the US, and wants to examine other options (including conservation) to enhance the State's water supply. The Water Caucus meets monthly, and welcomes new participants in its various projects. We are happy to report that we have just received confirmation of a further year of funding support from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation.

GIS/Mapping Centre gets on the river

The Geographic Informations System (GIS) and Mapping Centre here at the Eco-Network has also been spending time on the water of late--see Liz Dykman's article in this issue on the Manigotagan River Mapping Project. We've welcomed Erin Shay to the position of GIS Technician and she will be working with Manager, Anke Kirch, to organize and display all the data that was collected over the three summer trips on this backcountry river east of Lake Winnipeg. This project is groundbreaking as it will bring the new provincial park along the length of the river to the attention of the world via an interactive, interpretive web-site, as well as a weatherproof map.



Carolyne and Diana Epp-Fransen shooting the rapids, Manigotagan River. Photo by Tim Lutz

Manitoba's Lands & Waters

ManitobaWildlands.org
EnergyManitoba.org



MANITOBA WILDLANDS

see "Eco-Centre News" next page ►

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Eco-Centre News

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The GIS Centre will be embarking on a new project, starting this Fall, as we have just received word of the first grant for the Green Map of Winnipeg! The first phase of the project, supported by the Winnipeg Foundation, will involve converting and adapting the green map database as it has been developed to date by Dr. David van Vliet and students in City Planning at the U of M, for launch as a web-based, interactive map. Numerous layers will provide visual, locational, and interpretive data on a wide range of environmental and socio-economic features throughout Winnipeg.

Saving money and the climate

Climate Change Connection (CCC) developed a new tool for small and medium-sized businesses in Manitoba. Launched early in September with (then) Energy Minister, Dave Chomiak, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, and the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association, "The Bottom Line on Climate Change" promises to assist businesses in their quest for both economic savings, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The Chambers have distributed the guide to all their associate offices around the province.

Susan Lindsay, CCC's Public Education Coordinator, emphasizes the tremendous opportunity for savings that can be realized by some pretty simple and easy to implement options. View the guide on Climate Change Connection's website: <http://climatechangeconnection.org/pages/publications.html>

On the same website page is the report from the Community Consultation on Climate Change, held in June. This event was designed to provide a snapshot of community input to the Provincial government as it embarks on updating its climate change plan for the Province. Recommendations from the session focus primarily on Transportation, Agriculture and the City of Winnipeg. CCC has been funded this year by the Climate and Green Initiatives Branch of Manitoba Energy, Science and Technology.

We've officially bid adieu to Rachel van Caesele, CCC's Manager for the past 3 years, as she heads off to China in a new phase of her life. We are hoping to maintain CCC as a project to continue educating and motivating Manitobans on climate change issues.

Chemical-free interest

Finally, in the Project department, the Organic Lawn Care Project welcomed more participants than ever before to workshops throughout the summer months, despite a significant downsize in its budget. U of M student, Jennifer Sparling, delivered the often at-capacity workshops, and had displays at many community events. She reports a very high level of interest in moving away from the chemical fix for lawns and gardens. The City of Winnipeg once again helped to fund this project, and we were grateful for contributions from City Councillors Jenny Gerbasi, Harvey Smith and Donald Benham.

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Growing with the Community Since 1985

Overallocation of forests to Louisiana-Pacific Yesterday and today

By Dan Soprovich, Bluestem Wildlife

In an April 5, 2005 article ('Province cuts back on harvesting of forests'), Winnipeg Free Press reporter Ms Helen Fallding observed that Manitoba Conservation had "drastically cut back" the amount of wood that Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. could log from the forests of west-central Manitoba. However, the article was short on important detail and was misleading.

The Winnipeg Free Press article indicated that the Manitoba government had implemented a 25% reduction in the Annual Allowable Cut of hardwoods (deciduous trees) for the Mountain Forest Section. This reduction is of considerable interest in relation to the conclusions and assertions of Louisiana-Pacific and their 'environmental' consultants prior to the Environmental Licensing of the Louisiana-Pacific forestry development, and the assertions, conclusions, recommendations, and approvals of the government-of-the-day (i.e., the bureaucrat/politico symbiosis-of-the-day) and 'independent' Clean Environment Commission of the time.

Overallocation of the forest

The Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) represents the Manitoba Forestry Branch-defined 'sustainable' amount of wood fibre that can be cut on an annual basis. The primary focus of the AAC is to provide fibre to the forestry industry, as opposed to being designed to allow for the forest to be sustained. This point is perhaps illustrated by a statement in the recent report on the wood supply analysis for the Duck and Porcupine Mountains (Manitoba Forestry Branch 2004) ... "The Forestry Branch has adopted a more open and consultative approach, jointly discussing key modelling inputs with the industry prior to inclusion into the analysis model." There is no mention of seeking the input or approval of groups within Manitoba Conservation that represent interests other than the forestry industry, or consideration of the interests and input of ENGOs, First Nations, and the many other owners and users of public forest lands.

Furthermore, when one recognizes that the *raison d'être* of the Forestry Branch is principally to supply fibre to the forestry industry, when one understands the degree of decision-making power resident within the Forestry Branch, and when one observes present government practices (e.g., addressing protected areas needs within Forest Management License Areas subject to the collection of new inventory data to quantify implications to the forestry industry), one is left to conclude that the focus of the Department of Conservation, and by extension the political arm of government, is on fibre supply.

While the 25% reduction in the hardwood AAC for the Mountain Forest Section is factually correct, in terms of making relevant comparison, the number is misleading. The Mountain Forest Section consists of five Forest Management Units (FMUs), whereas the new AACs were calculated only for the Duck Mountain (FMU 13) and Porcupine Mountain (FMU 14). Therefore,

the relevant comparisons are to the government AACs at the time of the overallocation to Louisiana-Pacific for these two FMUs. When these comparisons are made, we observe that the initial government allocation for FMU 13 was 36.1% greater than the new AAC, and that the difference for FMU 14 was 30.4%.

While AACs have not been recalculated for the other three FMUs of the Mountain Forest Section, we can expect that these will also drop once calculated, because many of the problems inherent to the overallocations in FMUs 13 and 14 were also

inherent to the AACs for the other three FMUs (e.g., liberal assumptions respecting the size of trees that Louisiana-Pacific would use, ridiculously high growth and yield assumptions on the part of Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants). Indeed, in light of the major reductions for the two FMUs that have been examined, it would be irresponsible not to reevaluate the AACs of the other FMUs in the Mountain Forest Section.

It is important to understand that Repap Manitoba Inc. (now Tolko Industries Ltd.) was responsible for management of the two northern FMUs in the Mountain Forest Section, and that the environmental impact

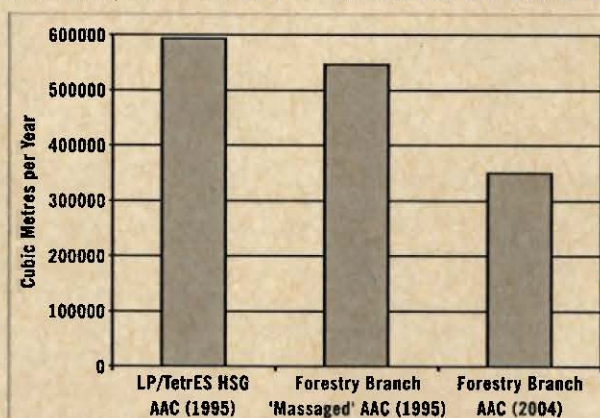
assessment and review process for Louisiana-Pacific's Forest Management License Area related only to FMUs 10, 11, and 13. It is therefore of greatest relevance to closely examine the numbers that pertain to FMU 13.

Closer examination of the numbers

For FMU 13, the 1995 government allocation ('Forestry Branch 'Massaged' AAC (1995)') was 545,691 m³ of hardwoods annually (i.e., Provincial AAC Crown Open Land and Crown Restricted Land; Table 8-1; TetrES 1995), and Louisiana-Pacific proposed to cut 542,530 m³ of hardwoods per year. Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants concluded that 597,125 m³ of hardwoods ('LP/TetrES HSG AAC (1995)') could be sustainably cut each year for the next 100 years (i.e., HSG Sustainable Crown Land; Table 8-1; TetrES 1995), with no 'significant' impact on the environment. Less than a decade later, the Manitoba government has now reduced the allocation to 348,823 m³ of hardwoods per year ('Forestry Branch AAC (2004)'; i.e., Net Harvest Volume; Table 14; Manitoba Forestry Branch 2004). This represents a 36.1% reduction, or, looking at this from another perspective, an original government allocation that was about 56.4% greater than what should have been allocated.

In relation to what Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants concluded was sustainable over a 100-year period (i.e., 597,125 m³ per year), the new Manitoba government AAC represents a drop of 41.6%. Or, looking at this from another perspective, the amount that Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants indicated

see "L-P Overallocation" next page ►



100-year 'sustainable' hardwood Annual Allowable Cuts for the Duck Mountain (FMU 13). Sources were TetrES (1995) for the LP/TetrES HSG and Forestry Branch 'Massaged' AACs, and Manitoba Forestry Branch (2004) for the Forestry Branch AAC.

L-P Overallocation

continued from page 5...

was sustainable over a 100-year period was about 71.2% greater than what should have been allocated (see chart).

The recalculated AAC establishes a number of matters. Of significant importance, it can now be considered a truth that the 'Concerned Citizens of the Valley', First Nation peoples, environmentalists, and the many other concerned citizens of the area and other parts of Manitoba were correct when they argued that the allocation to Louisiana-Pacific was a major overallocation, and that an allocation of that magnitude would result in substantive environmental damage to the forest ecosystems of the area. And it can now be considered a truth that Louisiana-Pacific, their highly paid consultants (e.g., some \$5.5 million for the development of Louisiana-Pacific's 'Forest Management Plan' per a presentation by Louisiana-Pacific's Mr. Barry Waito; Swan Valley Star & Times May 24, 2005), and government were very wrong in this matter.

Some nine years after the fact, the recalculated AAC represents tacit admission by government that 'the little people' were right. And implicit recognition that, in matters of trust, it was 'the little people' who were to be trusted. It is perhaps a positive development to witness that government is beginning to catch up to where many of us were almost a decade ago.

Some of the reasons behind the numbers

How could these highly paid quasi-professionals be so very wrong when so many average citizens were right? Those of us who have been 'around the block', or even a small part of the way 'around the block', will not be completely surprised by this outcome, and will be able to come up with a number of plausible explanations. And certainly, those of us who were there at the time understood some of the reasons. Given the sheer magnitude of the now established error for FMU 13, apparent so soon after public hearings on environmental impact and sustainability (especially soon in terms of 'forest' time), the need for some form of public inquiry certainly comes to mind and seems appropriate in the context of today's circumstances—e.g. to determine how the system could have gone so wrong, with the aim to make corrections to minimize the possibility of such things occurring in the future. Does not the wise stewardship of our forest ecosystems and the environment deserve this level of attention (e.g., at least comparable to the value placed on 'Gomery' and 'Crocus')? Further to this, the truth that Louisiana-Pacific's Environmental Impact Assessment was fatally flawed and essentially irrelevant can only lead to questions respecting the validity of Clean Environment Commission processes, and adversely influence the public's confidence in governmental management of the environment on our behalf.

Technical reasons for overallocation

In terms of the technical reasons for the massive overallocation by government, and the conclusions of Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants that the allocation would have no 'significant' impact on the environment, there were many problems with the original calculation of AAC by government, and the assumptions used by Louisiana-Pacific and their consultants—problems that were obvious to a number of independent observers. For example, Mr. Jim Ball, a Canadian Forest Service forester who sat on the Technical Advisory Committee on

the development, in his letter of December 15, 1995 as posted to the Public Registry, wrote, "How was the FRI massaged to double the hardwood AAC?" Some of these problems were communicated to the proponent and government, but were subsequently ignored by Louisiana-Pacific and its consultants, government, and the Clean Environment Commission. For example, the Manitoba Forestry Branch based its AAC calculation on the assumption that Louisiana-Pacific and other users of hardwoods would cut and process trees down to a 7.6 cm top for an ~2.4 m log, and would log in extremely low volume stands. These assumptions were obviously liberal and wrong to the independent observer. The new AAC calculation (Manitoba Forestry Branch 2004) more realistically assumes that industry will process to a larger top diameter (e.g., for trees of Diameter at Breast Height 21-40 cm, processing to a top of 12.7 cm), and excludes the low volume stands that industry would reject logging due to low or negative returns (i.e., where the road building and other costs would not justify the low available volumes). Almost a decade after it developed the Annual Allowable Cut for Louisiana-Pacific, Manitoba Forestry Branch has utilization standards that "... now recognize log processing limitations and mill delivery specifications" (Manitoba Forestry Branch 2004).

In the original overallocation by government, the Manitoba Forestry Branch effectively ignored the influence of a number of government policies (e.g., the Forestry Branch did not explicitly account for the buffering of streams and other 'waterbodies') and environmental limitations (e.g., the Forestry Branch included trees from steep slopes that could only be logged with substantive environmental damage). The new allocation accounts for some of these factors.

Part Two will appear in a later issue of Eco-Journal.

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What if energy rates and programs reflected sustainability principles? Thinking outside the energy box

By Randall McQuaker, Resource Conservation Manitoba

It's obvious. Cheap electricity is a terrific bargain for Manitobans and a great incentive to grow the provincial economy. It has been a cornerstone of Manitoba's energy policy for years. Nobody with any sense would propose anything different. *Would they?*

Just when you think you have heard everything, along come two environmental groups with a different idea. Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM) and Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems (TREE) are aiming to turn upside down the notion that heavily subsidized electricity rates are actually in Manitobans' best interests.

In fact, say RCM and TREE, rates that reflected the full cost of energy production, coupled with generous financial support for conservation, would not only save electricity, they would also ease energy costs for low-income households, generate new revenues for the province, and reduce environmental harm.

RCM and TREE have embarked on a series of research-based interventions at Public Utility Board (PUB) hearings, challenging energy planners and regulators with a deceptively simple question: What would utility rates and programs for customers look like if the principles of sustainability and social justice were really taken seriously?

To explore that question, the PUB has awarded RCM and TREE joint intervener funding in several recent hearings. The two groups have tabled reports by consulting economist Jim Lazar of Olympia, Washington, Steve Weiss, senior policy associate with the Northwest Energy Coalition in Salem, Oregon, and the non-profit Pembina Institute in Alberta. Their evidence has helped to quantify the scale of hidden subsidies, identify opportunity costs and climate change externalities, and, surprising to some, flag the risk to the provincial economy posed by energy-intensive industry.

Full cost accounting for electricity

A key argument of RCM-TREE is that energy should be priced to take full account of all costs, consistent with the principles of stewardship and conservation contained in the province's Sustainable Development Act. They contend that the full cost of electricity in Manitoba is obscured by the domestic rate subsidy from export power sales and by the failure to incorporate environmental externalities (ecological costs) into rates. As a result, rates are artificially low and unsustainable over the long term.

One of the problems with low rates, according to Peter Miller, a University of Winnipeg professor who directed a recent RCM-TREE intervention, is that they reduce the incentive to conserve.

"Energy is wasted, because the payback to customers for investments in energy conservation is lower, and thus the economic incentive to conserve, relative to other investments, is less," Miller explains.

Simply increasing rates is not the answer. Aggressive conser-

vation measures (sometimes called "demand side management") and special programs to assist low-income Manitobans are also needed. Explains Miller, "Social justice includes the recognition that a limited amount of energy is a basic need of Manitobans, which the energy system should make available at affordable prices."

Tools to assist lower-income customers include what are called "inverted rates," meaning that an initial block of energy is made available at lower rates, and subsequent blocks are priced to reflect the full social and environmental cost of energy production. As well, RCM and TREE have called for generous conservation programs to make efficiency upgrades affordable. And they have recommended consideration of special reduced rates for some customers, and even bill payment assistance as required. Evidence by Weiss in a hearing on natural gas rates showed that such programs not only benefit consumers, they can actually reduce costs for utility companies themselves.

Ending expensive subsidies

Miller cautions that making basic energy affordable for residential customers "must be separated from the idea of making unlimited amounts of energy available at subsidized prices, which is unsustainable and uneconomic." For example, economist La-

zar noted that luring energy-intensive industry to Manitoba (cited by some as a job-creation goal of cheap rates) could actually cost the provincial economy millions of dollars annually. Such losses would occur if surplus electricity were gobbled up at artificially low rates when it could be exported instead at much higher prices—with the resulting income used to benefit the province as a whole.

The RCM-TREE interventions have gained the attention of not only Manitoba Hydro but also the PUB itself. A recent Board Order instructs Hydro to research and report on environmental costs, climate change impacts, inverted rates for large volume customers, and implications of new energy-intensive industry, among other efficiency-related points.

Further research urged

A new approach to energy conservation and pricing will not be imposed overnight. Even the two groups urge further research and a gradualist approach to implementation. But in the end, say RCM and TREE, adopting full-cost accounting, accepting intergenerational equity, embracing social justice, and putting much more effort into conservation will not only help safeguard the earth for generations to come, it will also benefit Manitoba energy consumers in the here and now.

Documents prepared by RCM and TREE for PUB and Clean Environment Commission hearings are posted on the RCM web site under *RCM Speaks* at www.resourceconservation.mb.ca.

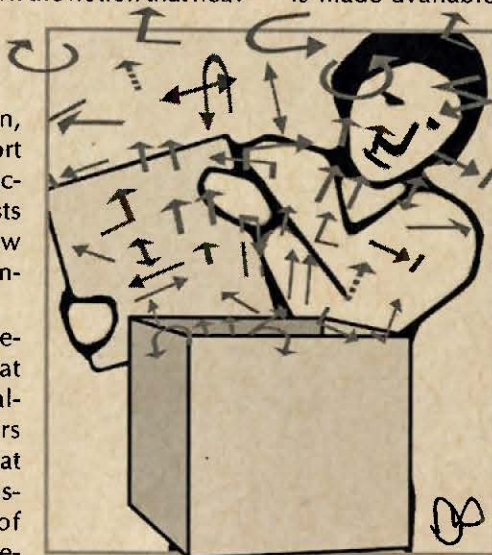


Illustration by David Henry

Mapping the Manigotagan

continued from page 5...

The final products of the project will be two maps, a waterproof paper map for orientation in the field, and a digital, interactive version that will provide additional information and allow for updates based on user feedback.

Information about the history and culture of the area has so far been provided by helpful folks in Manigotagan, including Charles Simard, who is the River Steward of the Manigotagan River. The river was a transportation corridor during the local gold rush and there are still some significant historical artefacts, including the 'Alligator', a steam engine that was used to move equipment up the river. Legend has it that it was abandoned in the spot where it still rests when the cook of the crew quit.

No such disasters marred our exploration of this beautiful river on Manitoba's east side. We hope that through the production of the canoe maps, we can help other travellers enjoy it in a sustainable way for many years to

come. The first drafts are scheduled to be published next spring.

Many thanks go out to the various volunteers and working holiday-ers who helped out with GPS readings, photography and videography, and the all important work of paddling all day and carrying heavy gear over portages: Tim Lutz, Ron Thiessen, Larry Laliberté, Trish Fitzpatrick, Carolynne and Diana Epp-Fransen, and Margerit, Madeleine and Lucas Roger.

Funding for the project came from Manitoba Conservation Parks Branch through the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund, EJLB Foundation and Mountain Equipment Co-op. Guiding services were provided by Northern Soul Wilderness Adventures.

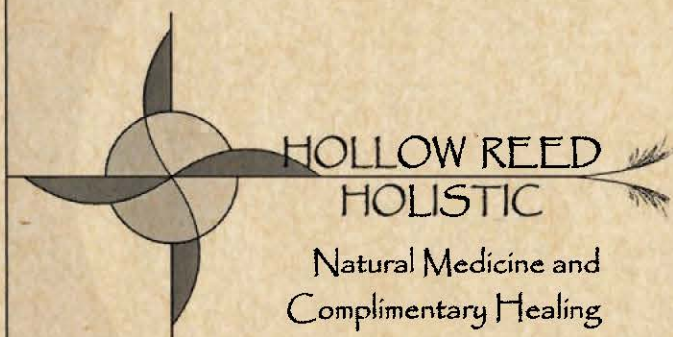
If you have questions about the project or would like to get involved by assisting with research, contact the GIS/Mapping Centre at 947-6511 or gismanager@mbconetwork.org.

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Gathering GPS coordinates of Manigotagan River features. Photo by Tim Lutz

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Winnipeg Workshop Contributes to Citizen Climate Plan Climate Tour Arrives

By Abby Penner, Manitoba Wildlands

Manitoba Wildlands hosted the Winnipeg stop of the Climate Action Network/Réseau Action Climat Canada (CAN-RAC) national tour on September 18, 2006. In a frustrated response to the lack of public consultation or input for the federal government's environmental plan, CAN-RAC snaked their way across Canada with a series of 25 climate focused workshops to ask what Canadians want in their Kyoto-Climate Crisis plan.

A demand for more regulation (of pollutants and green house gases) under Canada's Climate Change Plan was central to Winnipeg participants' comments. Brainstormed strategies focused on support at the community level for behaviour changes, and to solidify action in legislation. There was a common understanding of fostering lifestyle change and pressuring government to include emission reduction, and regulate green house gases through the Canadian Environment Protection Act (CEPA).

CAN-RAC hopes that workshop feedback from Canadians will be influential in Ottawa and evident in the federal government plan, expected to be released in October. John Bennett, executive director of the network, who facilitates the workshops, claims "With Environment Canada downgrading action on climate change, Stephen Harper's government creating a made in Canada plan, and the Liberal leadership candidates announcing their plans for action on climate change, we feel this is a perfect opportunity to hear what the public wants to do about the climate crisis."

Participants noted effects of climate change

Winnipeg participants from industry, First Nations, business, government, academia and environmental groups identified current climate effects. Shorter seasons for winter roads, stress on agriculture with reduced water resources, and more severe storms are already occurring. One participant involved in the greenhouse business notes that he has to vent his green houses earlier in the season than ever before because of increased temperatures in the winter and more direct sunlight earlier in the calendar year.

The government of Canada needs to provide a national strategy in clear and simple terminology, linking clean water, clean air and climate change actions. "We can all agree to change but we are not prepared, we need to be told how to enforce it" commented one participant. The workshop focused on generating

ideas from participants about what should be included in Canada's Climate Change Plan, which included:

- Stop subsidizing energy production from fossil fuels
- Investing in retrofitting, alternative energy sources like wind power, and rail systems
- Carbon emission credit trading for industry
- Regulate efficiency standards for cars, buildings, and industry
- Include First Nations—living in harmony with nature is part of their culture

- Encourage new renewable energy technology right through to production
- Sharing and acknowledging success stories
- Valuing and keeping intact the carbon stored in our natural systems.

Public education and social marketing is needed to shift Canadian behaviour. Recognizing and rewarding successes of individuals, companies and communities that are fostering change will motivate Canadians. The media needs to cover the climate

change news on a community basis. We need to convince corporations to become leaders in Canada, including for economic gains from best practices.

Voluntary measures not enough

Many at the workshop agreed that voluntary measures will not be enough and that retrofitting and technology development must be mandatory and emissions standards regulated.

It was generally thought that regulations will be the motivation for change and Canadians will learn to adapt.

Cleaner industry also means a cleaner environment. By conserving our natural areas, forests, and wetlands we will preserve natural carbon sinks. Various participants commented on the possibilities for fighting climate change with nature.

Climate Action Network members in Manitoba are Resource Conservation Manitoba, and Manitoba Wildlands. Climate Action Network Canada has 120 member organizations

and is part of Climate Action Network International. To follow the Climate Tour online, read workshop summaries, or the national synthesis, go to www.climateactionnetwork.ca. The CAN-RAC address is www.climateactionnetwork.ca.

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John Bennett, executive director of the Climate Action Network, presents the Winnipeg workshop. Photo courtesy Mb. Wildlands



In attendance were people from the business sector, government, environmental groups, academia, First Nations and Manitoba Hydro. Photo courtesy of Manitoba Wildlands

New Green Commuting Newsletter from RCM Active & Green

by Beth McKechnie, Resource Conservation Manitoba

To help keep people connected and informed about green commuting issues in Winnipeg and elsewhere, Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM) has launched a quarterly e-newsletter called *Active & Green*. Dedicated to sustainable and active transportation, the newsletter provides useful information with a dash of humour.

You can download a pdf version of the *Active & Green* newsletter along with the *Off on the Right Foot* newsletter for schools from the RCM website at: www.resourceconservation.mb.ca (see top of right hand column). RCM hopes that readers will share these newsletters widely with colleagues, friends and family. There is information for every aspect of you and your family's travel choices—to work, to school and for leisure. Please pass them on!

Features from the Fall 2006 *Active & Green* newsletter include:

- Transit Pass Tax Credit—learn about the new tax deduction available for monthly bus pass purchases and what you need to do to obtain the tax credit
- Fall Cycling Tips—prepare for wet and windy conditions
- Green Commuting Highlights From Elsewhere—find out what's happening in Edmonton, Ontario, Amsterdam, Halifax and Nova Scotia
- Profile on the folks at Natural Cycle—get to know the

people and purpose behind Natural Cycle, a full service bicycle shop and courier service guided by sustainable and ethical business practices

- Active & Safe Routes to School—learn how the ASRTS program encourages the use of active modes of

transportation to and from school

- Signs of Humour—take a walk on the lighter side of green commuting
- Event Notices & Info: Campus Commuter Challenge; Bike to the Future forum; Car Free Day; International Walk to School Week; Alternative Fuel Vehicle Odyssey Day

Automatically distributed to workplace coordinators with the Commuter Challenge and through a variety of email groups such as the Physical Activity Coalition of Manitoba, Workplace Wellness Alliance and the Winnipeg Bicycle Listserv, the *Active & Green* newsletter is also linked from a number of other websites including the University of Winnipeg's sustainability page and the Manitoba Cycling Association's recreation and transportation page.

Feedback, ideas and suggestions for future issues are welcomed. And if you do not have Internet access, contact RCM to receive a hard copy. Call the Green Commuting Helpline at 925-3772 or email: beth@resourceconservation.mb.ca.

DRIVE TO WORK / WORK TO DRIVE



Illustration by Andy Singer

The Manitoba Eco-Network

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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.

