



2021 Annual Report



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Environment North after a half-century

A Message from the President

Here we are, alive, well and more engaged than ever after 50 years of raising awareness of environmental issues in Northwestern Ontario.

Some issues continue to recycle, such as the idea of burying nuclear waste in an area full of lakes, rivers and wetlands. About 40 years ago, Atikokan Citizen's for Nuclear Responsibility, Environment North and others opposed this plan. A 24,000-name petition called for test-drilling to stop and for public hearings. The opposition to nuclear waste and nuclear weapons encouraged Thunder Bay City Council to declare the city a nuclear-free zone.

The test-drilling was halted and an Environmental Assessment Panel held public hearings. The Panel recommended that an arms-length agency manage the nuclear waste. In 2002, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) was established, by the producers of nuclear energy - not the independent agency the panel advised.

The NWMO has spent millions of dollars in communities considering waste disposal but Environment North does not believe the NWMO sufficiently discusses the associated risks.

Environment North has re-engaged. A new alliance has formed, We the Nuclear Free North, which includes Northwatch and Environment North. The message about the dangers posed by transporting, repackaging and abandoning nuclear waste in the ground is reaching the public via the website, a post-card campaign, radio interviews and much more!

New issues emerge. Since 2006 we have drawn attention to the threat of global warming. There are already detrimental impacts on the local environment. The science-based International Panel on Climate Change reports are increasingly adamant that use of fossil fuels needs to be curtailed if civilization and the natural world which sustains us are to survive. To this end, we helped fight the Energy East bitumen pipeline proposal, and the Synfuel plan to build a petro-waste electric generating station in Thunder Bay.

In 2013, the Experimental Lakes Area research station near Vermillion Bay was closed by the Harper government. Their climatic records dating back over 50 years can measure impacts of climatic change on lake ecosystems. Environment North, along with other environmental groups, helped to reopen the world-renowned facility.

Environment North provides important input on finding a sustainable balance between the environment and the economy. We are contributing to an environmental assessment of the proposed copper-palladium mine project near Marathon. In addition, eco-tourism and the protection of biodiversity including the threatened woodland caribou are top of mind.

COVID-19 protocols have forced us to adopt new communication skills, a mixed blessing as we do miss the friendly socialization in-person meetings afford. However, we have learned to appreciate the convenience and energy-efficiency of Zoom meetings as we continue to plan our initiatives.

Please join us at our 2nd virtual AGM! *Scott Harris*

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Join us on EARTH DAY,

**April 22, 2022 for a virtual
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

6:15: Business Meeting

7:00: Public Presentation

**TO REGISTER please send us an email
environmentnorth@gmail.com**

Visit environmentnorth.ca for more details

Join Environment North on Earth Day, April 22
For our virtual 2022 AGM and Public Presentation

Celebrating 50 years
of Environmental
Awareness, Advocacy and Action

With guest speakers:

Kerrie Blaine
Environmental Justice
Environmental justice and Indigenous rights lawyer.
Kerrie is currently with the Canadian Environmental
Law Association. "The Year's Voice" in energy, natural
resources and international trade law.

Maude Barlow
Still Hopeful
Maude Barlow is a Canadian author and activist,
whose latest book is *Still Hopeful: Lessons From a
Lifetime of Activism*.

Start times 6:15 pm Business Meeting
7:00 pm Public Presentation
To receive the meeting link send us an email environmentnorth@gmail.com
For more details visit www.environmentnorth.ca

Northern Waterways
Contaminated lakes, rivers, wetlands
and Lake Superior are at risk of
contamination from nuclear waste.

In 1972, Environment North arose
from a small group of citizens known
as "People to Clean Up Lake Superior",
who were concerned over toxins such
as asbestos and thorium being
released into Lake Superior.

Today we are concerned about the
proposed to transport radioactive
nuclear waste through Thunder Bay
and to bury the waste near Lake
Superior in thousands of containers -
containers that may not last. Now
Lake is facing between 15,000 and
20,000 tonnes.

Forestry and Mining

Wabadowgong Noopming Forest, Roads and CLUPA 2616

The Crown Land Use Policy Atlas (CLUPA) was developed in 1990s. CLUPA 2616 is an area located between Wabakimi Provincial Park and Lake Nipigon and provides critical habitat for caribou. Environment North had significant involvement in the expansion of Wabakimi Provincial Park in the mid 1990s and were disappointed at the time that this important caribou habitat area was not included in the park. Environment North was also involved in Lands for Life process in the later 1990s. This process merged with others to become CLUPA. The directions for land use in CLUPA 2616 state that forestry may occur but must defer to remote tourism, wildlife protection, and fisheries management. Board member Bruce Hyer has been a key participant in efforts to protect the Wabakimi area since the 1990s. Currently he is on the Local Citizen's Committee for the Wabadowgong Noopming Forest.

Environment North board has been engaged in the planning process for the Wabadowgong Noopming Forest. A major concern is road access. Environment North [responded to the Draft 2-year Contingency Plan](#) (2021-2023) for the Armstrong Forest (now part of the Wabadowgong Noopming Forest). Through the recent efforts of Environment North and other stakeholders, plans to develop a particularly problematic permanent road in the area have been abandoned. There is still more to be done in order to protect of caribou. See the Community Resilience Section on page 3 to learn about the contribution of Pro-bono law student Matt Suchan.

Marathon Palladium Mining Project

[This project](#) is located about 10 km from Marathon. In July, 2021 Environment North [submitted comments](#) to the Joint Review Panel on the Environmental Impact Statement regarding the climate impacts of the project (prepared by legal counsel, Kerrie Blaise of the Canadian Environmental Law Association) and socio-economic impacts (prepared by Dr. Karen Peterson, who stepped down from the board of Environment North in order to participate in the review of this project). They also [presented at the 2022 public hearing](#).

ENVIRONMENT NORTH WITH WE THE NUCLEAR FREE NORTH 2021

- Almost 9,000 signatures so far on the [Change.org petition](#) – Please sign if you haven't as yet!
- In April, WTNFN launch [website](#) and social media
- In April, 30,000 postcards were mailed to parts of Northwestern Ontario with information about the potential DGR for high level radioactive waste in the Ignace area (link to [FRONT](#) and [BACK](#))
- In April, Environment North members appeared on [Shaw TV's Community Conversation](#) and were interviewed by [Steve Mantis](#) about the nuclear waste issue.
- In April, members made a deputation to Dryden City Council
- In May, WTNFN launch [webinar](#).
- In August and October WTNFN holds informational events in Kakabeka, Ignace and Dymont.
- In December, members were panelists in the City of Dryden's first City Council Engagement Session regarding the proposed DGR
- Environment North has been distributing signs, bumper stickers and T-shirts – please contact us if you are interested!

Nuclear Waste

Ignace (northwestern Ontario) and South Bruce (southwestern Ontario) remain in the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) Site Selection process. Opposition to the NWMO's plan for a deep geological repository (DGR) is present in both regions. There are many similar concerns, in particular the contamination of water. In northwest the interconnected meshwork of lakes, rivers and wetlands would allow contamination to spread. In the south millions of people and a large agricultural industry depend on clean water. Transportation is a concern for many communities in the north since the waste, mostly located in southern Ontario - would be travelling thousands of kilometres.

Environment North is part of We the Nuclear Free North ([WTNFN](#)) formed in 2020. The insert on this page highlights some of the 2021 activities.

Board member Dodie LeGassick continues to be the tireless lead on the nuclear waste issue. The creation of WTNFN has been instrumental in expanding public awareness and engagement. Environment North acknowledges the invaluable contribution of Brenna Lloyd of Northwatch and many others on the team.

Environment North together with WTNFN have also sent letters to many of the First Nations in the northwest region. Many indigenous communities will be affected by this proposal, in particular Wabigoon First Nation, the closest to the proposed site in the Revell Lake area. In addition, many indigenous and non-indigenous communities will be near a potential transportation route.

Many questions remain about the concept of a willing and fully-informed host community. A DGR impacts a region and the numerous communities along the transportation route. Most of the nuclear waste is located in southern Ontario and some is as far as New Brunswick. Learn more about the related research by Redwan Majumder, Pro-bono law student, in the Community Resilience section on page 3.

Finally, many members may recall that last year we held our first online AGM. Our speaker was Dr. Gordon Edwards. He spoke about Canada's Radioactive Waste: Stewardship vs Abandonment. A Chronicle Journal article featured this topic.



The entire presentation is available as well as two new short summaries, created by *Lonely Tree Production*. Links are available on the Environment North website and right here (please share!):

**Gordon Edwards - AGM 2021
Canada's Radioactive Waste**

[Link to EPISODE 1](#)

(13 minutes)

[Link to EPISODE 2](#)

(19 minutes)

[Link to FULL PRESENTATION](#)

(90 min.)

Community Resilience

Lakehead University Law Students

Environment North is very pleased to again be participating in a program with law students from the Bora Laskin Law School at Lakehead University in association with Pro Bono Students and the Canadian Environmental Law Association.

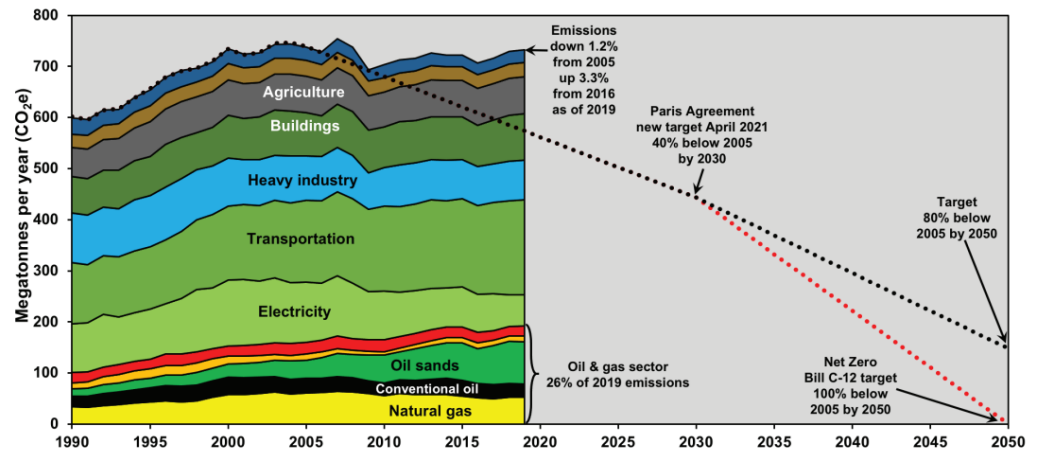
This year Redwan Majumder is building upon the work of a previous student on the legal aspects of a host community's approval of a deep geological repository for nuclear waste. He has researched how international and human rights laws can assist how community in making important environmental decisions.

Matt Suchan has been investigating the legal obligation of the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry to consider sustainability, in particular the protection of the endangered caribou, in forest industry operations.

The students gave online presentations on March 25, 2022 ([CLICK HERE TO VIEW Northern Focus: A two part webinar](#)).

The new Canada Water Agency

Board member Susan Grinstead participated in a workshop hosted by the newly created Canada Water Agency. This agency will work through the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to "find the best ways to keep our water safe, clean and well-managed". Through the [Placespeak](#) process the public was able to provide input. For example, suggestions were made to remedy blue-green algae blooms in Lake of the Woods such as limiting development and increasing natural growth on the shoreline.



Emissions in Canada by economic sector from 1990 to 2019 and emissions targets the Government of Canada has committed to for 2030 and 2050 [Source: Canada Energy Futures \(Figure 30 page 44\)](#)

Climate Change

Here is a quick update on the national scene. Transportation and the oil and gas industry are the two sectors with the largest greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Canada has yet to reconcile climate targets and plans for the oil and gas industry. Earth scientist Dr. David Hughes confirms this in his 2021 report [Canada Energy Futures](#) and notes that the International Energy Agency agrees.

"The IEA's report underscores the contradiction between Canada's commitment to achieving net-zero by 2050 and its policies of building export pipelines to facilitate increased production and the development of an LNG export industry."

The two main sources of GHG emissions in Thunder Bay are transportation and natural gas use. In June City Council has unanimously supported the [Net-Zero strategy](#).

EarthCare News (August 2021):

One of the early steps in the Net Zero strategy is to develop a community home energy retrofit program. The City of Thunder Bay was awarded \$116,000 to complete a HOME ENERGY RETROFIT FEASIBILITY STUDY on implementing a community retrofit financing program.

Weather Whys, by Board Member Graham Saunders, included reports on the following climate events in 2021. They are consistent with climate change impacts in the region:

- Average annual temperature of Thunder Bay 2.3°C above average.
- Worst wildfire season for Ontario
- More wildfire smoke affecting air quality
- First fall frost on October 18 (Th. Bay)
- Exceptional rainfall in December
- Warmer water temperatures in Lake Superior, delaying fall overturn to January 2022.
- Large 2-year decline in Lake Superior water level (44cm lower than in 2019)

Since 2013 Fossil-free Lakehead, supported by other groups including Environment North, have been encouraging the Lakehead University Board of Governors to divest from holding investments with companies involved in fossil fuel extraction. Efforts were rewarded in November 2020 when the decision was made to divest by 2023.

Environment North Board members attended Lakehead University's (LU) *Third Age Learning* seminars on climate change. Speakers included the former Ontario environmental commissioner Dianne Saxe, author Maude Barlow, author Seth Klein, indigenous environmentalist Vicki M. R Monague and LU faculty member Dr. Ellen Field together with youth climate activist Allie Rougeot.



2021 Financial Report

Receipts	2021	2020	2019
Donations: Individual	7,071.21	\$ 931.00	\$ 80.00
Donations: Corporate	338.00	373.57	126.71
Donations: Canada Helps	1,668.85		
Project Fundraising	1,724.20	868.60	475.00
Grants	25,643.36	0	6000.00
Memberships	680.00	400.00	1115.00
Other (interest)	242.08	247.23	117.78
Total Receipts	\$37,367.70	\$2,820.40	\$7,914.49

Expenditures	2021	2020	2019
Charitable programs	\$25,895.06	\$2,275.78	\$ 6,273.17
Meeting & Communication	29.76	45.48	261.03
Fundraising, Conferences	200.01	0	0
Salary & Benefits	0	0	0
Membership Fees Paid	0	0	0
Honorariums	0	0	0
Professional Fees	0	0	0
Banking Fees	53.50	46.74	66.54
Other disbursements	0	0	0
Total Disbursements	\$26,178.33	\$2,368.00	\$6,600.74

Assets	2021	2020
Bay Credit Union General	\$ 5,174.94	\$1263.88
Nuclear Waste	7419.66	1070.60
Lake Superior	392.11	392.11
Climate Change	440.46	440.46
Food Account	186.60	186.60
Lush Grant Remaining	932.74	0
Bay Credit Union Term	10,000.00	10,003.49
Profit Sharing Account	76.29	76.29
Total	\$24,622.80	\$13,433.43

Liabilities	2021	2020
Nuclear Waste	\$ 7419.66	\$ 1070.60
Lake Superior	392.11	392.11
Climate Change	440.46	440.46
Food Account	186.60	186.60
Lush Grant	932.74	0
Enduring Property	15,251.23	11,343.66
Total	\$24,622.80	\$13,433.43

2021-2022 BOARD MEMBERS

Scott Harris (president)
Graham Saunders (vice-president)
Lea Matyuska (treasurer)
Susan Grinstead (secretary)
Jim Bishop
Julee Boan
Luke Giroux
Bruce Hyer
Dodie LeGassick

Environment North welcomes new board members Jim Bishop and Luke Giroux.

Jim Bishop has been on a number of community boards and we are pleased that he has brought his experience to Environment North. His interest in environmental issues began in the 1970s. Recently, as a "research mule" for his daughter, he has become familiar with the permafrost, sub-arctic vegetation and talus in the bottom of Ouimet Canyon.

Luke Giroux is currently a student at Confederation College in the Environmental Technician program. He is also a program supervisor at Roots to Harvest. An outdoor enthusiast, you may see him around Thunder Bay, rock or ice-climbing, fishing or running. Luke helps to administer this great site about regional environmental issues on Instagram:

[Regarding: NWO \(@re.nwo\)](https://www.instagram.com/re.nwo)

Environment North would like to thank Lucy LaFramboise for her many years on the Board. She is dedicated to the climate change issue and has shared information on this existential problem, as well as the solutions, in many different forums. If the opportunity arises, ask Lucy about her electric car.



Acknowledgements

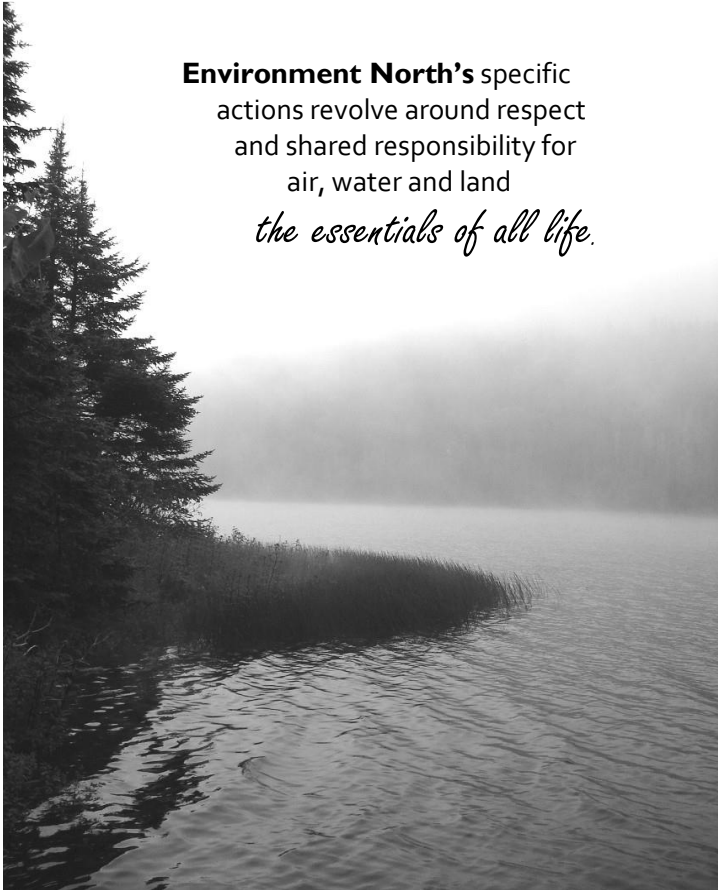
There has been an incredible response from members of communities in Northwestern Ontario and beyond to the campaign opposing a deep geological repository of high-level nuclear waste in the region. Environment North has received many donations dedicated to the nuclear waste issue. This inspires us to maintain our efforts, in alliance with *We the Nuclear Free North*, to share the risks associated with this proposal. In particular, Environment North would like to thank [LUSH](#). The company, which hand-makes personal care products, awarded Environment North with another generous grant in 2021 to support this campaign.

The partnership with the [Canadian Environmental Law Association](#) and the [ProBono](#) law student program has been

one of the most rewarding programs Environment North has been involved with. We thank the organizations involved and especially the enthusiastic law students from Bora Laskin Law School at Lakehead University.

We also thank the Chronicle Journal for their support by publishing our articles on environmental issues – although we should write more of them. 😊

Finally, we thank Environment North members for their support over the years. We look forward to celebrating Environment North's 50th anniversary – "50 years of Environmental Awareness, Advocacy and Activism" - in the summer of 2022. Stay tuned for details!



Environment North's specific actions revolve around respect and shared responsibility for air, water and land
the essentials of all life.

We welcome new members!
Or maybe its time to renew your membership.

For details go to:

[Environment North Membership](#)

Included with your membership:

"Weather Whys"

A regional weather, climate and environmental newsletter by board member, Graham Saunders.

Weather Whys is delivered right into your electronic mailbox!

Online payments are possible!

We welcome donations!

Let us know if you wish your donation to be dedicated to the nuclear waste issue.

Visit environmentnorth.ca for details.



A regional non-government charitable organization focused on environmental sustainability

Environment North
P.O. Box 10307
Thunder Bay

environmentnorth.ca