



ENVIRONMENT north

2012 Annual Report

A Message from the President

It's always interesting to look back over a year, and remind oneself of the work that has been accomplished – particularly in the life of an environmental non-governmental organization. I don't think many of us who are involved in this labour of love actually take the time to congratulate ourselves on jobs well done. Instead, I think we too often focus on the bleak, the battles lost. And this past year it seemed like one battle was lost after another. We watched the precious environmental protections, fought for 30 or 40 years ago, get erased, like they were some error made by a school child.

But even in the face of this blatant disregard by government for our collective futures, we also saw an incredible groundswell of people taking action, rising up, taking to the streets, putting pen to paper and writing—all part of the growing awareness of a system in crisis.

Last year, Environment North (EN) celebrated its 40th anniversary. Over these years EN has seen the ebb and flow of environmental issues in our region, in the province, in Canada and globally. Its members undertake projects based on interest and expertise – sometimes with very little “people-power” to help see them through.

As we look back over 2012, we note just how busy we've been and what we've accomplished, including the positive changes to the Marathon PGM mine project and Provincial Bill 55.

Looking ahead to 2013, we anticipate lots of exciting things happening – and we



Early spring flowers

are inspired by the increasing level of activism on environmental and social justice issues.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Environment North, thank you for your ongoing support and hope to see you in the trenches! ... And at our upcoming AGM on April 19th!

Charlene Rogers

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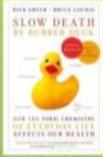
Looking Ahead 6

ENVIRONMENT north & ecosuperior
are pleased to present:

Detoxing Your Body and Our Economy

By Dr. Rick Smith
*Co-author of "Slow Death by Rubber Duck" and
Former Executive Director of Environmental Defence*

Friday April 19, 2013 at 7:30 pm
Thunder Bay Centre of Change Auditorium
96 High Street North



BOOK COVER - DR. RICK SMITH
**SLOW DEATH
BY RUBBER DUCK**
HOW DO TOXIC CHEMICALS
AND ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS
AFFECT OUR HEALTH?



There are toxic chemicals in the products we use everyday. Learn how to avoid them and how we can help to make these products safer. Dr. Smith was involved in banning bisphenol A from children's products and he helped develop Canada's Chemical Management Plan. He obtained his PhD in biology from the University of Guelph.



All are welcome
Admission is free



www.environmentnorth.ca


*Come early and
join us for the*
2013
Environment North
AGM
Also at the
Centre of Change
Auditorium

6:30 Business Meeting:
Year in Review
Select new Board
Plans for next year

7:30 Presentation:
Detoxing Your Body
And Our Economy
by Dr. Rick Smith



March 30, 2013: Rally at entrance to the ELA on Highway 17 west of Vermillion Bay.

Photo by Jay Caldwell

Frequently used Acronyms

EN Environment North

EFN Environmental Film Network

ELA Experimental Lakes Area

" You cannot prove that a problem has been solved, simply by pointing to all the efforts that have been made to solve it."

- Nobel-Prize winning physicist Dr. Hannes Alfvén, 1972, quoted in "Nuclear Energy and the Environment" (1976), UK Royal Commission on the Environment, Report #6

The Experimental Lakes Area

Last year it was learned that the federal government plans to close the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA), a research station near Vermillion Bay. The ELA has conducted vital environment research since 1968. Their research has contributed to finding solutions of environmental problems and guiding government policy. Experiments are conducted on complete freshwater ecosystems and it is the only such facility in the world.

Mary Veltri, member of Environment North, first alerted the board to this development. Since that time EN has taken a number of initiatives to help spread the word of this travesty. Board members Scott Harris and Graham Saunders wrote an article "Save the Fish, Save the ELA" for the Chronicle Journal. EN hosted a public meeting with speaker Diane Orihel, founder of the Save the ELA coalition. Board

member Scott Harris was involved in sending requests to many municipalities asking them to sign resolutions supporting the ELA. EN was part of a press conference announcing support of the Northern Ontario Municipal Associations for the ELA. Efforts have continued into 2013.

Some of the current and recent projects include the following topics: building on the long-term record (40 years) of various aquatic ecosystem measures and climatic factors, acidification recovery, eutrophication, hydroelectric reservoir impacts and mitigation, impacts and recovery from long-range atmospheric mercury deposition, dry conditions, endocrine disrupters, freshwater aquaculture, barium uptake in otoliths, flame retardants and nano silver particles. We cannot let the ELA disappear!

Nuclear Waste (an update)

Two years ago the nuclear waste disposal site selection process began. Twenty-one communities expressed an interest and underwent an initial screening process. Red Rock was judged not to have suitable geological conditions for a disposal site. So far seven communities have moved to "step 3" and five of these are in Northwestern Ontario: Ignace, Schrieber, Wawa, Ear Falls and Hornepayne. In "step 3" communities will undergo a more detailed "preliminary assessment" of two or more years. Local liaison committees assist in communication between the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) and the community. Ear Falls is scheduled to have a public presentation by the Nuclear Safety Commission of Canada on April 16, 2013. Environment North encourages communities to seek out other opinions and access the funding provided by the NWMO for independent advice.

Communities along a transportation corridor need to be aware of the costs and risks. The greater the distance of travel the greater the risk and the cost. Some town councils along potential corridors have declared resolutions to prevent transportation of nuclear waste through their areas.

The NWMO estimates that the cost of the disposal project is \$17.9 billion (2010 \$) or a present value of \$7 billion (2010 \$) based on the inventory from our current reactors. These costs are paid by the producers of nuclear energy and are likely transferred to consumers of electricity. Environment North believes these cost estimates will increase. The nuclear industry has a history of underestimating project costs by 50 % or more.

Atomic Energy of Canada recently announced that its liability costs for nuclear waste disposal and decommissioning of reactors will increase from \$2.4 to \$5 billion. This amount is added to the federal government's deficit.

Environment North is against further development of nuclear energy. Future investments should be directed to conservation, innovative efficient technology and to renewable energy in order to achieve truly sustainable communities.

Environment North is concerned that the creation of a disposal site for Canadian nuclear waste will ease the path for acceptance of nuclear waste from the United States.

[click here for step 3 communities](#)

[click here for open house in Ear Falls](#)

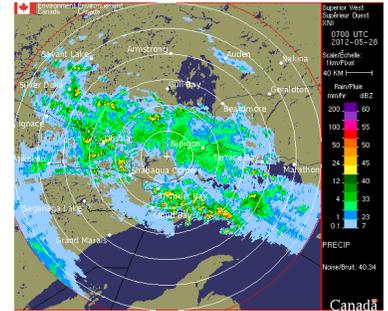
Climate Change

The year 2012 was the warmest on record for Thunder Bay. In addition record heavy rain-falls were broken in a flood event May 28 and May 29. Environment North would like to commend city officials and the many volunteers in handling the aftermath of the event. This year EN established a **Victims of Climate Change Fund** and made a donation to the Thunder Bay Disaster Relief Fund.

Member Kerstin Muth represents Environment North on the **Earthwise Energy Group**. The city's greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory was updated this year. Generally greenhouse gas production had been decreasing in the community due to a reduction in industrial energy demand and also due to the reduction

in the carbon intensity of electricity production due to minimal use of coal plants. The challenge for Thunder Bay and other communities is how to manage increases in economic activity while continuing to decrease GHG emissions to safer levels as recommended by science.

The future of the **Thunder Bay Generating Station** was discussed by EN member Kerstin Muth in her article published in the Chronicle Journal in November 2012. Natural gas is a fossil fuel and needs to be used very efficiently otherwise our GHG emissions will increase. Examples include heat and power co-generation or together with an extensive complement of renewable resources.



Copy of Environment Canada Radar Image
May 28, 2012, 3:00 am local time

Forestry and Mining

FORESTRY

Environment North has partnered with Ontario Nature and the True North Community Co-op on a **Forest and Freshwater Food project**. The goal of this two-year project is to ensure the resiliency of forest food systems. We are working with northern community residents to assess the importance of forest foods to the community and the local economy and to include these values in broader land-use planning. Forest foods, or "wild foods" include moose, deer, geese, fish, blueberries, wild rice, tea, fiddleheads and mushrooms.

Protection of forest food systems is crucial :

1. Forest foods provide many benefits, most notably to First Nation communities. They underpin the traditional economies that permit self-reliance. They have provide health benefits through improved nutrition and promotion of active lifestyles. Forest foods reduce the environmental costs of food grown elsewhere and transported large distances to reach northern communities.
2. Forest food systems can serve as an indicator of the ecosystem integrity. Instability in game populations, loss of water-filtering wild rice beds, and other changes to forest food systems can lead to instability in natural food webs and ecosystem functioning.

MINING

Environment North has intervener status at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's (CEAA) Joint Review Panel for the **Marathon Platinum Group Metals and Copper Mine Project**. Karen Peterson prepared comments on behalf of EN regarding the technical merit and sufficiency of Stillwater Canada Inc.'s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Several gaps were identified including detailed predictions on the number of direct and indirect jobs to be provided, the types of employment required and impacts to transportation infrastructure and traffic. Karen made specific and detailed requests for further socio-economic information. The Review Panel received approximately 500 similar requests from government agencies, non-government organizations, Aboriginal groups and the public. The Review Panel determined that the EIS had insufficient information to proceed to a hearing. The Panel provided a list of deficiencies to the proponent and requested further documentation regarding the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts before the project could proceed. A copy of the EN submission can be found at the CEAA website at www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca or on the EN website (under ISSUES: Forestry and Mining).

**International Day
of Forests,**
observed
for the first time
on March 21, 2013



Blueberries



Current and past EN presidents
From the left: Bruce Hyer, Charlene Rogers,
Maurice Grinstead, Julian Holenstein,
Graham Saunders



"The Hole Story", a film about the history of mining in Ontario and "Kanawayandan D'aaki" (Protecting our Land) a film from Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nations

"We seem to be accepting as a society that it's acceptable to load up our next generation with chemicals in an unregulated manner and hope they're not bad. We need to change that entire culture."

– Thomas Zoeller, UMass Amherst Professor and co-author of a joint report by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Program.

Community Resiliency

40th Anniversary

Last year Environment North (EN) members and friends celebrated 40 years on effective environmental activism. Many people from different communities in the northwest have contributed various campaigns over that time and again we thank all of you for your efforts.

Environmental Film Network

Community awareness, inspiration and motivation for change are the goals of the Environmental Film Network (EFN). In 2012 they featured 10 films and held the third annual film festival. They have become a part of the fabric of the community. In partnership with EN, EFN received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to develop the monthly film screening series. With this funding EFN has been able to hire a part-time coordinator for the film series, present films at the historic Paramount Theatre and raise the profile of EFN and EN with regular advertising and increased social media presence.

Omnibus Bills

Sweeping changes to many pieces of legislation are being achieved through omnibus bills, both in federal and provincial parliaments. Board member Julee Boan discussed some of the changes proposed by the provincial Budget Bill 55, in her article "Budget Concerns Grow" published in the Chronicle Journal. Environment North was granted standing to make a submission on Bill 55. The bill pro-

posed amendments to 11 laws which impact the environment and economy of Northwestern Ontario, including the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, the Endangered Species Act and the Public Lands Act. On behalf of EN, board member Karen Peterson presented to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs in June, 2012. We noted that, without due consideration, impacts from resource development would threaten the ecological integrity of the boreal forest and ultimately, the sustainable development of the region. We requested that all environmental amendments be removed from the Bill and be subjected to the processes available through Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights and the Environmental Registry. We also raised concerns regarding the broader implications and tight timeframes of utilizing Omnibus Budget Bills. As a voice among many, we saw government re-visit these proposed changes and many were removed from the budget bill.

Participation ... President Charlene Rogers has been representing Environment North on **EcoSuperior's Endocrine Disruptors Advisory Committee**. Board member Scott Harris has been attending **Provincial Policy Review Sessions**. A key issue is whether northern wetlands will be better protected under a broadly administered provincial system or a more regional approach.

2012-2013 Board of Directors

Julee Boan
Sue Grinstead (secretary)
Scott Harris
Lucy Laframboise
Lea Matyuska (treasurer)
Karen Peterson
Charlene Rogers (president)
Graham Saunders (vice-president)

New to the Board in 2012 was Karen Peterson who contributed to the Environmental Assessment process for the Marathon PGM-Cu mine project. Thank you Karen for joining Environment North. During her time under contract to Environment North, preparing comments to the Marathon PGM-Cu mine project, Karen temporarily stepped down as board member.

Unfortunately Barry Beapre could not remain on the board because of other commitments. We wish him well in his other volunteer efforts revolving around the environment and social justice.

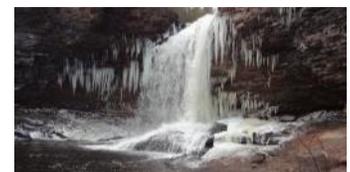
If you are interested in becoming involved with Environment North please contact us by email.

2012 Financial Report

	December 2012	December 2011
<i>Receipts</i>		
Memberships	\$590.00	\$330.00
Donations: Individual	1009.08	55.00
Corporate	926.73	250.00
Grants and Project Funding	19,800.00	11,090.10
Project Fundraising	404.00	1000.00
Other	169.39	0
<i>Total Receipts</i>	\$22,899.20	\$12,725.10
<i>Expenditures</i>		
Charitable Programs and Donations	\$14,849.08	\$7521.39
Meetings and communication	1,858.42	2,284.15
Fundraising, conferences	0	2,933.77
Salary and Benefits	0	0
Membership Fees Paid	0	85.00
Honorariums	0	0
Professional Fees	0	0
Banking Fees	15.50	18.00
Other	0	0
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$16,723.00	\$12,842.31
<i>Assets</i>		
Bay Credit Union PCA	\$12,934.57	
Bay Credit Union term	10,339.07	
Profit Sharing Account	41.40	
Donations Account	0	
<i>Total s</i>	\$23,315.04	
<i>Liabilities</i>		
Lake Superior Initiative		\$1,392.11
Climate Initiative		440.46
Food Initiative		186.60
Ivey Project		554.86
Trillium Project		5,200.00
Enduring Property		15,541.01
		\$23,315.04

Acknowledgements

Environment North thanks all of the members and donors for their ongoing interest and support. A big THANK YOU to *Streak of Green* for their donation, funds they raised during their Earth Month campaign last year. Thanks again to the *Bay Credit Union* for their ongoing contributions. We also appreciate the *Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal* for regularly publishing our articles.



Upper Wolf River Falls

Looking Ahead to the Next Year...

Reminiscent of Environment North's efforts to bring the film "An Inconvenient Truth" to students in 2007, "Chasing Ice" will be screened for over 1000 high school students on April 15-18, 2013. Go to [EFN](#) for details.

On April 20th Citizens United for a Sustainable Planet (CUSP) will host a Mother Earth Day fair. This will be the public's official introduction to this new organization dedicated to environmental and social justice. Environment North will be participating in the fair. Go to [CUSP](#) for more details.

Environment North has done some research regarding the process of changing in our by-Laws as required by federal and provincial legislation. We will have until June 2014 to comply with federal legislation and until June 2016 to

comply with provincial legislation. Plans are underway to completely review and modify our by-laws as necessary.

We will continue to monitor developments in various areas including: the Ring of Fire and other mining developments, nuclear waste disposal, energy supply for the northwest and now new on the radar ... a pipeline carrying crude oil from Alberta to refineries in eastern Canada.



Albert and Victoria Islands near Cloud Bay

Environment North strives to improve and protect the environmental sustainability and socio-economic well-being of Northwestern Ontario through:

- **Leadership**
- **Research**
- **Partnerships**
- **Education**
- **Community advocacy and capacity- building**

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



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A regional non-government
charitable organization focused
on environmental sustainability

environmentnorth.ca

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An agency of the Government of Ontario.
Relève du gouvernement de l'Ontario.