



ENVIRONMENT north

2014 Annual Report

A Message from the President

2014 has brought a new dimension to environmental issues for the Northwest—namely Energy East and the transport of oil.

We were involved with public education of the impacts of climate change in the northwest—increased flooding and other severe weather, stresses on the boreal forest such as more fires and pests, changes to rivers and lakes and the great Lake Superior.

Now the oil industry is on our doorstep with pipeline proposals and rail transport. Environment North joined the Council of Canadians, Ontario Nature and Citizens United for a Sustainable Planet in opposing the Energy East project with the slogan “Our Risk, Their Reward”. The risks of an oil pipeline are greater through northern Ontario with countless waterways, challenging terrain and difficult to access areas. Oil transport by rail has the same hazards and the rail tracks are near homes and businesses.

We would not be faced with either hazard if plans to expand the oil industry were halted. Canada would also have a chance to fulfil the 2020 GHG emission reduction commitment made in Copenhagen.

There is some momentum for a global GHG agreement in Paris. The US and China have made an agreement. Many international organisations have major climate change campaigns including the World Bank. Ontario is poised to develop a carbon pricing mechanism.

Carbon pricing schemes are essential. It is a recognition of the carbon costs of using fossil fuels. It makes low-carbon practices and technology more financially attractive. All sectors including the building sector would move to the next level of energy efficiency. At our AGM this year architect John Stephenson will share with us a vision for “Building Carbon Neutral”. We hope you come and share yours!

Looking forward to seeing you, **Graham Saunders**



Green building materials

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ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE SEMINAR SERIES
Join us for an evening of learning and sharing

with guest speaker
John Stephenson, B Arch, OAA, MRAIC
 Form Architecture Engineering

**Building Carbon Neutral
 the Why and the How**

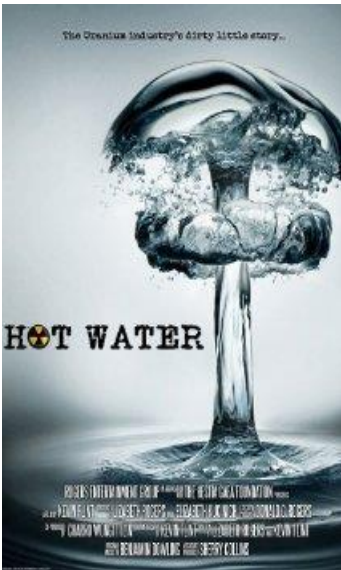
7:30 pm, Thursday April 30, 2015
 Come early at 6:30 pm to the Environment North AGM
 Mary J L Black Library, 901 Edward Street South
 All are welcome, details at: www.environmentnorth.ca

Logos: earth care Thunder Bay, Bay Credit Union, RESRG Lakehead University, ecosuperior

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Scott Harris, Peter Lang and Rodney Brown at the People's Climate March in Thunder Bay (Sept 22).



Climate Change

In 2014, two of the Environment North Environmental Learning and Sharing seminars were about climate adaptation. The seminar series, beginning last year, has been the inspiration of board member Roopa Rakshit. In February Dr. Stuart Cohen, from the University of British Columbia spoke about “bringing research and local knowledge together”. In April Mr. Allan Douglas, the Director of the Ontario Climate Centre for Climate Impacts of Adaptation Resources (OCCIAR) at Laurentian University in Sudbury discussed "Managing for Climate Risks at the Municipal level: Current Practices, Lessons and Resources". Mayor Keith Hobbs contributed to this seminar and shared details on the Municipal Adaptation and Resiliency Service, a collaborative effort involving the Clean Air Partnership, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and OCCIAR.

Nuclear Waste (an update)

And then there were nine.

Nine communities remain from an original twenty-two, in the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) site selection process: Blind River, Central Huron, Elliot Lake, Hornepayne, Huron-Kinloss, Ignace, Manitouwadge, South Bruce and White River.

Schreiber is the most recent community in northwestern Ontario to have been “voted off the island”. Interpretation of more detailed geological information such as high-resolution airborne magnetic and gravity data suggest subsurface geological features such as fractures. These fractures could impact the long-term safety of a disposal site. Detailed geological reports are available on the NWMO website. Shortly before this announcement Dr. Gordon Edwards, president of Canadians Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility was invited by the Schreiber Community Liaison Committee. to make a presentation to the community. The NWMO will fund independent expert advice. Gordon Edwards has degrees in physics and mathematics and for nearly four decades has been

Environment North president Graham Saunders was asked by the Environmental Film Network to help facilitate discussion of the Film Thin Ice— where a geologist travels around the world to meet with climate scientists and discuss their research.

The “People’s Climate March” a global climate rally took place on September 22. While the event was centred in New York City (and included two Thunder Bayans), a well-attended event took place here in Thunder Bay. Board members Graham Saunders and Scott Harris were among the speakers.

One underutilised form of renewable energy is solar thermal— for heating water and air. This was discussed in an Environment North Chronical Journal article by EN member Kerstin Muth.

Environment North has been engaged in opposition to the proposed Energy East Pipeline. For more go to page 4...

involved with nuclear waste issues and is routinely invited to International meetings grappling with this issue.

Gordon Edwards does not believe that it is safe to store the nuclear waste underground. He supports “rolling stewardship” by which each generation manages and monitors the waste until a “genuine solution” is found.

The film “Hot Water” was shown at the Environmental Film Festival in 2014 with discussion facilitated by two EN members. This American film reveals the many contaminated sites including groundwater, soil and air from uranium mining and other nuclear industry activities. It points out that there is still no plan for safely storing the tons of nuclear materials produced each year for the long term.

And stay tuned for “Journey to the Safest Place on Earth” which is showing at the Environmental Film Festival in May this year. The film asks the question, “Where is the safest place to store nuclear waste?”

And then . . . there were none!

Community Resilience

Environment North participated in the Lake Superior Day event held at the Marina. It was an opportunity for members of the public to learn about various groups promoting sustainable ways of living next to this great inland sea.

Environment North submitted comments regarding the proposed remedial options the Thunder Bay North Harbour Toxic Sediment to Ecosuperior. Board member Susan Grinstead, author of the comments, outlined reasons for supporting movement of the sediment to a confined disposal facility.

Roopa Rakshit chose food issues for another two of EN Learning and Sharing Seminars. The first seminar was about food security, conserving and sustaining with Dr. Ralph Martin from the University of Guelph. The second topic was community enterprise and promoting local food with David Thompson from the Rural Agri-Innovation Network in Sault St. Marie and Dr. Joseph LeBlanc at the time with the True North Community Co-operative.

Forestry and Mining

FORESTRY

The *Forest and Freshwater Food Project*, a collaboration between Environment North, Ontario Nature and the True North Community Co-op, is now completed. Some of the key outcomes from the project were: 1) the completion of a forest food values survey across northern Ontario - over 500 people from Red Lake to Moose Factory to North Bay filled out the survey. 2) the completion of the report "Beyond the Fields: the Value of Forest and Freshwater Foods in Northern Ontario", and 3) the inclusion of "forest and freshwater foods" in the definition of local foods in Ontario's new Local Food Act.

MINING

Marathon Platinum Group Metals and Copper Mine Project

Environment North (EN) was an intervener for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's (CEAA) Joint Review

Two articles published in the Chronicle-Journal by Environment North were about the same topics as the seminars - food security and local food promotion. Another article, by Environment North member and bee keeper Brian Biesenthal detailed the research and actions aimed at saving bee populations.

Environment North was a recipient of funds raised at an Earth Day celebration organised by Bruce Hyer, Elizabeth May, Lakehead University Radio and the Walleye. Earth Rhythms proved to be a fine evening with musical entertainment provided by Sarah Harmer, Valdy and Rodney Brown.

Environment North donated funds to aid the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists with the purchase of their largest nature reserve, the Terrace Bay Reserve. It is an 1239 acre parcel of land that includes 10.5 km of spectacular and pristine Lake Superior shoreline as well as 15 small islands.

Panel for the Marathon Platinum Group Metals and Copper Mine project. As of October 31, 2014, the Minister of the Environment disbanded the Joint Review Panel as the proponent Stillwater Canada Inc. indicated that it does not plan to proceed with the project at this time. The project no longer appeared to be economically viable.

NorOnt Eagle's Nest Project

Environment North received participant funding in 2012 in order to provide comment on NorOnt's Environmental Impact Statement regarding the Eagle's Nest Project in the Ring of Fire. Once the Environmental Impact Statement is posted on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's registry, the public will be invited to comment and Environment North will be able to access the participant funding. These funds will be utilised to hire a consultant to review and comment on the document.



Graham Saunders and Scott Harris at Lake Superior Day



Beekeeper Brian Biesenthal tending a hive

Boundary Islands





Ontario Energy Board / Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario

OEB Energy East Consultation and Review



Weather Whys
March 2014

Review the idea of March.

Plutarch noted in his Parallel Lives, that a southern breeze from the East carried of great danger on the idea of March. Caesar, as he walked to the Senate, called out to his soldiers and said laughing: "The idea of March is gone!"

To which the audience answered: "Yes, Caesar, but they are not gone." As readers know, Caesar and Cleopatra were in Rome late on March 15, 44 BC and did not go well for Julius.

All praise the Gregorian calendar – not perfect, but an improvement.

Several warnings on this blog provided a segue to climate news. Human-induced climate change amplifies or modifies existing weather risks. Recent "strange" extreme weather events are going to continue in their frequency and intensity, we are experiencing climate change." (Boris Christian Figueres, executive director of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. "Climate change is now built into the system according to Figueres and most climatologists experts."

According to new polling, a clear majority of the public in Canada acknowledge that climate is a critical issue and a majority (about 60%) say they would be willing to pay to reduce their household greenhouse gas emissions.

However, current energy news also includes proposals for five major pipelines from the oil sands in Alberta. The new and costly Harper government approval process could result in more than 4.5 million barrels of "new" flow oil per day by 2018. Almost all of this production would be exported; greenhouse gas emissions would be equivalent of 45 million additional cars on roadways. Unfortunately,

- the petroleum players that generally confirm the climate change problem also favour the proposed frenzy of pipeline construction
- the Harper government pursues active policies of suppression of critical science, subsidies of research for development for fossil fuel use and rapid approval of related proposals.

So Canada and the world exist in a weird situation. Many of the world's largest energy companies, people in almost all countries, almost all science academies, most governments, the United Nations, the World Bank and other agencies agree that humans are accelerating dangerous climate change and the global community should take action to address the problem.

Evidence and general agreement almost seems to be in place. It has worked before with global climate.

- Nuclear testing was banned
- acid rain treaties were reduced

Weather Whys, a column by Graham Saunders, was previously a regular feature in the Chronicle Journal newspaper. Now the column about everything to do with weather and climate change – history, politics, research, forecasts – is available with a membership to Environment North. Weather Whys is being provided on a volunteer basis and will appear in your email box every two weeks. Membership fees can be found in the enclosed Environment North brochure or are available online at www.environmentnorth.ca

More Highlights of 2014: Energy East

The environmental movement across the country has mobilised to express opposition to the proposed Energy East Pipeline. The project consists of converting an existing natural gas pipeline, construction of new pipeline and construction of associated facilities such as pump stations and tank terminals. The purpose is to move crude oil from Alberta to eastern Canada and have access to new markets.

Environment North is a member of a coalition consisting of the Council of Canadians—Thunder Bay Chapter, Ontario Nature and Citizens for a Sustainable Planet (CUSP). This group has been collecting signatures asking the City Council of Thunder Bay to adopt a resolution to oppose the Energy East Pipeline Project.

The Ontario Energy Board began a consultation with the public in 2014 and it is ongoing. Environment North submitted comments to the OEB in 2014 and will again in April 2015 as the final technical reports have been completed by the Ontario Energy Board's consultants. Environment North echoes the concerns of

many. Construction of the pipeline facilitates expansion of the oil and gas industry, in particular the tar sands and the investment in this infrastructure commits us to years of oil production in order to fill the pipeline. This is incompatible with the need to turn the greenhouse gas emissions production curve down in order to avoid irreversible ecological damage. There is also an unacceptable risk to an oil spill in the Great Lakes Watershed. In northern Ontario the transport of oil, whether by train or by pipeline crosses numerous waterways and poses risks to our water resources. There is also little benefit to Ontario for accepting the risks associated with the mass transport of oil.

Board member, Scott Harris wrote the article "Grassroots Activism: Changing the Course of History" for Environment North's Chronicle-Journal article ". He outlined some of the successes of the past and pointed out that we are once again on the "cusp" of history. Citizens can rally once again and say NO to new pipelines and YES to action on climate change.

2013-2014 Board of Directors

Julee Boan
Sue Grinstead (secretary)
Scott Harris (vice-president)
Lucy Laframboise
Lea Matyuska (treasurer)
Kirsten Odber
Roopa Rakshit
Graham Saunders (president)
Brittany Young

New to the Board in 2014 was Brittany Young.

Brittany is currently attending Confederation College in the Environmental Technician program. She also holds a B.A. in Development Studies from the University of Calgary. Throughout her schooling she has been active in both social and environmental organizations in the community. Also, she currently a part of the Student Sustainability Initiative at Confederation College.

If you are interested in becoming involved please contact us by email or connect with a board member. (environmentnorth@gmail.com)

Included with your membership:

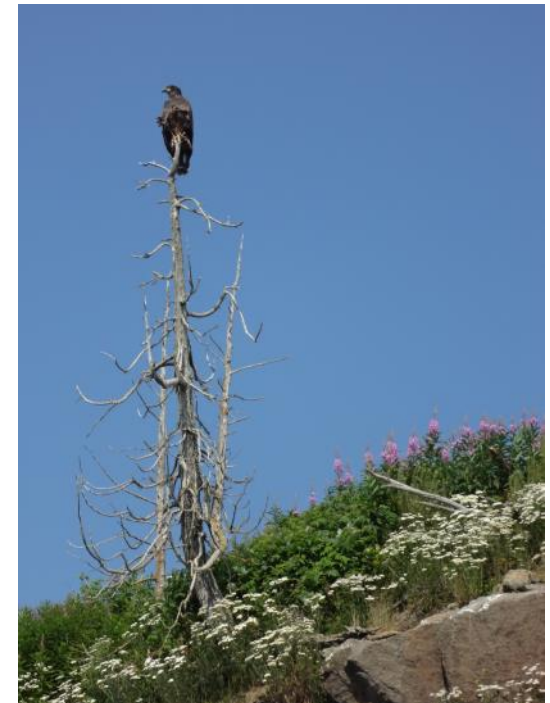
"Weather Whys"

by Graham Saunders

Regional weather, climate and other environmental news delivered at least every two weeks, right into your electronic mailbox.

2014 Financial Report

	December 2014	December 2013	Assets		Liabilities	
<i>Receipts</i>			Bay Credit Union PCA	\$5,971.23	Lake Superior Initiative	\$392.11
Memberships	\$1,245.00	\$350.00	Bay Credit Union term	10,560.46	Climate Initiative	440.46
Donations: Individual	1,494.45	950.00	Profit Sharing Account	103.90	Food Initiative	186.60
Corporate	373.78	2026.05			Web Page	317.56
Grants and Project Funding	4,793.33	17,007.90			Enduring Property	15,298.86
Project Fundraising	1,100.00					
Other	130.80	128.09				
<i>Total Receipts</i>	\$9,137.36	\$20,462.04	<i>Totals</i>	\$16,635.59		\$16,635.59
 <i>Expenditures</i>						
Charitable Programs and Donations	\$11,142.96	\$22,886.81				
Meetings and communication	474.41	1,767.67				
Fundraising, conferences	0	0				
Salary and Benefits	0	0				
Membership Fees Paid	0	0				
Honorariums	0	0				
Professional Fees	0	0				
Banking Fees	17.50	14.50				
Other	0	0				
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$11,634.87	\$24,668.98				



Acknowledgements

Environment North thanks all of the members and donors for their ongoing interest and support. We welcomed a number of new members last year! A special Thank You to Bruce Hyer, Elisabeth May, Lakehead University Radio and the Walleye for organizing the Earth Rhythm Celebration and for including Environment North among the three recipients of the funds that were raised. We would like to recognize and thank our partners and sponsors for the Seminar Series this year including EarthCare Thunder Bay, Bay Credit Union, Ecosuperior, The Food Strategy Network, the Days Inn and the Prince Arthur Hotel. We also would like to thank the Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal for publishing our monthly articles.



Little Pigeon 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
