



Lands and People

September 2006, VOL.4, NUMBER 3



Photo Bruce Hill

Oil tanker *Faithful* is the second to break the 34 year old moratorium on tankers in BC's inside passage.

34-year Old Oil Tanker Moratorium Being Violated

By Will Horter

Recent events have heightened concerns about oil and gas projects proposed for British Columbia's magnificent northern coast.

On August 4, the cargo ship *Westwood Anette* rammed a pier near Squamish bursting its fuel tank and spewing nearly 30,000 litres of bunker fuel into Howe Sound. The oil quickly dispersed blackening the shoreline of the Squamish estuary. Cleanup efforts costing \$100,000 failed to prevent the estuary, birds and wildlife from being covered in toxic oil.

The oil spill in Howe Sound came just weeks after a tanker named *Faithful* (*see photo*) secretly slipped through 140 kilometers of BC's inside passage en route to the deep-sea port at Kitimat. This journey violated the existing moratorium banning tankers in BC's northern inside passage that had been put in place in 1972 after a large public outcry.

Without any public notice, *Faithful* became the second tanker this summer to secretly make the trip to Methanex's marine facility, where its

cargo of 350,000 barrels of petroleum-based condensate, a product used to dilute bitumen mined in tar sands, was offloaded onto railcars destined for EnCana's tar sands operation in Alberta.

News of *Faithful's* secret journey triggered outrage among coastal communities, First Nations and environmental groups, who wondered what had happened to the existing oil tanker moratorium that had been in place for over thirty years.

Stephen Harper's government is acting as if no moratorium exists on oil tankers. Although no official declaration has been made, his spokespeople have implied the government now interprets the moratorium to only apply to offshore oil drilling and exploration, not tankers.

Former government officials reject this claim. David Anderson, former Environment Minister and MP from Victoria, convinced then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to implement the ban 34 years ago. Anderson said recently that the federal Conservatives are conveniently misinterpreting the moratorium and that "*The idea that you can pretend it doesn't exist is stretching it a good deal*".

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DOGWOOD INITIATIVE was founded by First Nations, environmentalists, and community and labour leaders.

Our mission is to help British Columbians exercise local control to create healthy and prosperous communities

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President's report

By Cliff Stainsby



Sustainable land reform by democratic means, brought about by people and groups working together. That is what Dogwood Initiative is about.

If our goal is not a democratic, sustainable society, what the heck is it? An undemocratic, unsustainable one? Ludicrous.

But the task of creating a sustainable society gets more difficult daily. Most of us are aware of the litany of abuses we impose on our environment—pollution of the water, soil, and air; over-consumption of renewable resources; over-harvesting of the ocean fisheries; destruction of wetlands; and, most ominously, the pollution of our atmosphere with greenhouse gases and the resultant global warming.

Since Christmas, the nightmarish spectre of global warming has spawned much concern, even panic, in the scientific community as new data from Greenland indicates a rise in the sea level is more imminent and drastic than earlier projected.

The journal *Science* has concluded that “accelerated glacial melting and larger changes in sea level (for example) should be looked at as probable events, not as hypothetical possibilities.” Recent scientific research suggests that warming this century is more likely to be at the high end of the scale, over 5 degrees Celsius, than the lower 1 degree projected in 2001. This could mean sea levels rising by 25 metres or 82 feet threatening significant parts of the Fraser Valley and coastal BC.

Rising temperatures are already affecting British Columbia. The devastation of Lodgepole Pine forests by the Mountain Pine Beetle has been induced by climate change.

And worldwide the consequences will be extinctions

and reduced biodiversity, droughts, floods, increased frequency and intensity of storms, new pests and diseases, and the economic and social chaos these events will bring.

Not surprisingly, the world is scrambling for technological solutions. Since the early 1700s, an incredible succession of new technologies have permitted many of us to live in luxury relative to those of previous generations. Progress, the ever-accelerating consumption of material resources, has become so ingrained that each generation expects to be better off than the previous one. Indeed, this expectation has caused any real concern for future generations to evaporate from public policy, except as an assumption that economic growth will continue to make those expectations possible. Economic growth has become the be all and end all of social policy—a goal that mainstream politicians can't contemplate debating.

The driving force of the economic growth ideology is technology. Advances in technology increase our ability to transform the planet, but do not give us the wisdom to respect and protect our life support systems. We fool ourselves if we think technology is the source of a sustainable future. The solutions do involve technology, but they are not about technology. The best technological solutions will do is give us time. But with exponential economic growth, and consequent environmental harm, the time will be short, and the next hill to climb will be higher and steeper.

Real, long-term solutions are about attitude: Our relationship to the planet we live on must change. Exploitation must give way to stewardship based upon respect. Respect for our life support systems of clean air, clean water, healthy soils, biodiversity, and healthy, functioning ecosystems. We must come to respect the other living species we share this planet with. Not only is this appropriate morally; our lives and communities depend upon it. There are no jobs, economies or communities on a dead planet. It is up to us to avert such a catastrophe. ✿



Matching Your Money to Your Values

Join Dogwood Initiative and Stephen Whipp to learn more about investing in renewable energy
28 October, 2006 from 9am - 1pm in Victoria.

For further information call

250 370 9930 Ex 21 or email info@dogwoodinitiative.org

While controlling the federal government gives one a lot of power, it can't change history. The long-standing government commitment to the moratorium banning oil tankers off the north coast is well documented. The moratorium has been referenced in thousands of news stories over the decades and in hundreds of public statements by Progressive Conservative, Liberal and NDP politicians.

In fact, over the past few years, pre-Harper governments were sufficiently convinced of the existence of the tanker moratorium that they convened three separate high-profile panels, all with terms of reference (*see box below*) that explicitly referred to a moratorium banning "tankers through Hecate Strait, Queen Charlotte Sound and the Dixon Entrance." Note that the terms of reference contain no exemption for where the tankers are flagged or where they are traveling to or from.

Threats to coast multiply

The *Faithful* will not be the only tanker traveling BC's fragile coastal waters if Mr. Harper and Mr. Campbell's governments get their way. There are six major projects seeking approval that would bring additional oil and gas tankers into BC's inside passage:

1. Enbridge and Kinder Morgan are each seeking approval for competing pipeline projects that would bring oil tankers to Kitimat. Enbridge's proposed Gateway pipeline, would pipe up to 1,000,000 barrels per day of exported tar sands crude oil from a pipeline originating in Alberta to be shipped on oil tankers bound for China, India and California. Kinder Morgan's proposal would pipe 550,000 barrels per day along a similar route.
2. Both Enbridge and Pembina Pipelines are seeking approval for competing pipelines that would each transport 150,000 and 100,000 barrels per day in imported "condensate" on tankers to Kitimat for off loading onto pipelines bound for Alberta and Summit Lake near Prince George.
3. Kitimat LNG and Calgary-based Westpac Terminals are proposing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal for Kitimat and Prince Rupert. LNG is natural gas super cooled to approximately -162° C (-260° F). LNG typically contains hydrocarbons such as ethane

and propane, and other toxic contaminants. These terminals would receive gas shipped on tankers from places such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, Qatar, Russia and Alaska.

The good news is that not all the proposed pipelines will be built. Despite the rapid growth projected for tar sands production, by 2010, if all the proposed pipelines were built, there would be capacity to ship 2 ½ times more oil than is being produced in Alberta. Investors are unlikely to fund pipelines operating at such a low percentage of capacity.

Opposition growing

A growing number of First Nations are opposed to pipeline projects that will impact their traditional territories. In an unprecedented move that must send chills up government and industry spines, they have come together and launched an independent First Nations' review process. This review will operate separately from the federal government's upcoming National Energy Board hearings.

Enbridge's Gateway Pipeline project has received more media coverage than its competition and also faces the most obstacles. The Haida, Carrier Sekani and Treaty 8 First Nations' support for an independent, Aboriginal review panel and threats of litigation, will likely delay Enbridge's ambitious timelines.

Growing public opposition to tankers in BC's inside passage could cause further delays. And any delay gives the project a significant handicap in the competitive race with the other proposed pipelines for financing and

...Oil Tanker continued on page 4

Free Online Seminar Tanker Traffic Moratorium in BC's inside passage

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

6 pm - 7 pm

Presentation by Will Horter,
followed by discussion.

To register, or for further
information, email
info@dogwoodinitiative.org

The terms of reference for the Royal Society of Canada's offshore review states:

The Government of BC imposed a moratorium on offshore exploration drilling during 1959-1966. In 1972 the Government of Canada imposed a moratorium on crude oil tanker traffic through Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound ...due to concerns over potential environmental impacts. The moratorium was subsequently extended to include all oil and gas activities. This was followed in 1981 by a similar prohibition by the Government of British Columbia.

—"Report of the Expert Panel on Science Issues Related to Oil and Gas Activities, Offshore British Columbia". The Royal Society of Canada (February 2004).

regulatory approval.

Locals are concerned because recent pipeline spills have killed fish, damaged streams, polluted water and injured and killed neighbors and workers in BC and in other parts of North America. A recent spill on Kinder Morgan's (formerly Terasen) pipeline in Abbotsford spewed oil for a week before it was discovered, leading to the evacuation of local residents and damage to streams.

And recently, oil-giant BP was forced to shut down its crumbling North Slope pipeline in Alaska after it became the target of investigation by a federal grand jury, the Environmental Protection Agency and Congress following a March oil spill which dumped 270,000 gallons of oil onto the fragile tundra.

The carbon emissions from the various coastal projects would be another setback in meeting our Kyoto emission targets. Enbridge's Gateway pipeline project alone would increase Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by between 12 and 30 megatonnes, which is equivalent to the emissions of almost six million passenger cars.

But it is tankers in BC's inside passage from that pose the biggest environmental risk. A 1977 federal inquiry to investigate environmental, social, and navigational consequences of oil ports and tanker operations on BC's west coast concluded that if a marine terminal were developed at Kitimat, *"oil spills off the coast of BC would inevitably occur."* Data from tankers elsewhere suggests a major spill of over 10,000 barrels could occur every 6.37 years.

Dogwood Initiative is coordinating legal, political, and financial approaches to engage the corporations, the governments

and the public about the various projects and their impacts on the environment and economy of the region.

Recently our efforts to raise awareness of the financial risks of the coastal projects were rewarded. CIBC World Markets reported to potential investors of the Enbridge pipeline, that *"Our view has been that Gateway could be delayed."*

Militarizing the coast

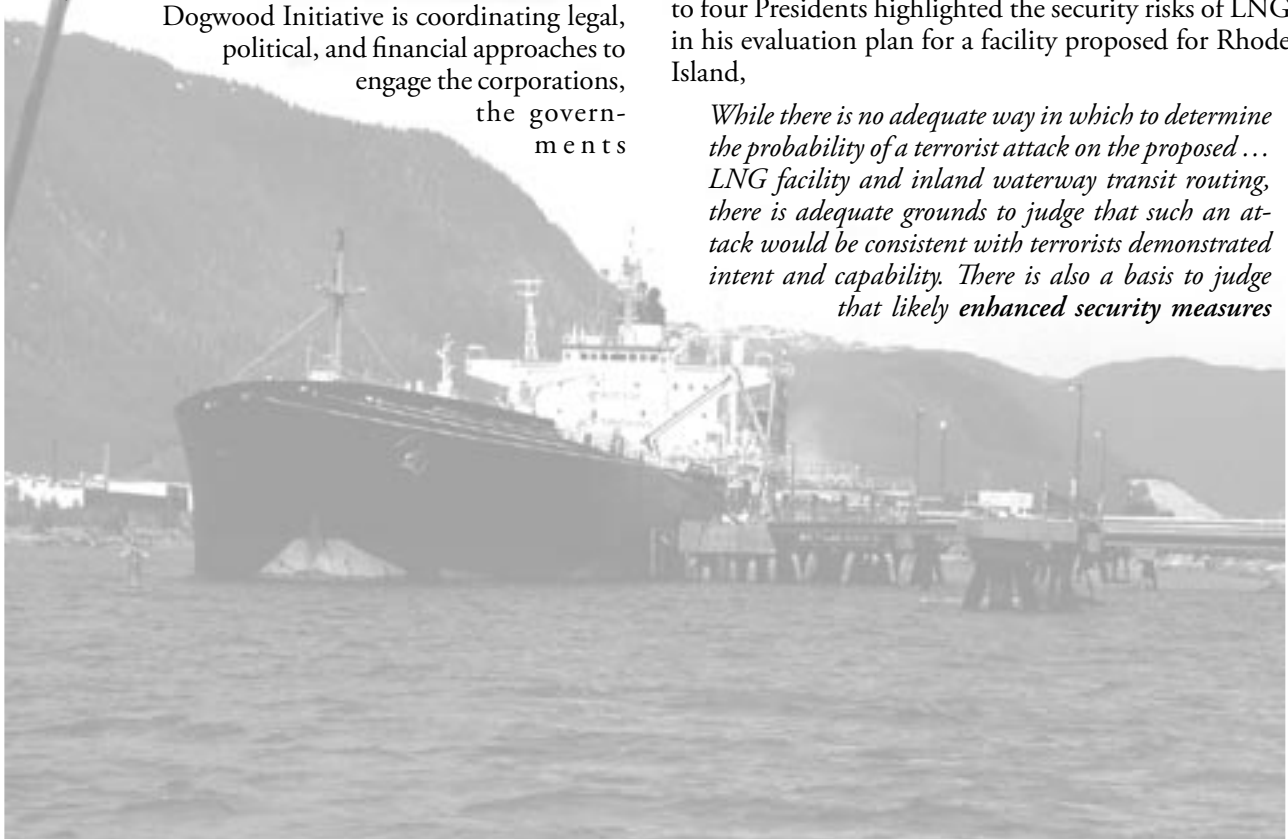
Pipelines and tankers traveling to and from Kitimat and Prince Rupert will inject BC into the growing geopolitical struggle over the world's remaining oil between the US and the emerging Asian economic powers of China and India. This has military, financial and political consequences.

If built, the oil pipelines threaten the US monopoly over tar sands oil, which it is counting on to fill its gas tanks. Both China (2nd largest oil consumer) and India (4th largest oil consumer) would become competitors to America.

As the geopolitical profile increases so to do the security issues. Approval of any one of the proposed projects would require an increased military presence. Currently Canada has no naval presence in the region and the Coast Guard is stretched by current operations.

The pipelines and tanker traffic also mean that the region would become a potential terrorist target. And an increased military presence still wouldn't guarantee security. Richard Clarke, former anti-terrorism advisor to four Presidents highlighted the security risks of LNG in his evaluation plan for a facility proposed for Rhode Island,

While there is no adequate way in which to determine the probability of a terrorist attack on the proposed ... LNG facility and inland waterway transit routing, there is adequate grounds to judge that such an attack would be consistent with terrorists demonstrated intent and capability. There is also a basis to judge that likely enhanced security measures



would not significantly reduce the risk. While there are some differences among experts about the conditions needed to generate a catastrophic explosion and about the precise extent of the resulting damage, there is significant grounds to conclude that a high risk exists of catastrophic damage from the types of attacks terrorists are capable of mounting. Those damage levels would overwhelm regional trauma, burn, and emergency medical capabilities.”

Do northern communities and First Nations really want an increased military presence or terrorist threat that would inevitably follow expanded oil and gas port development?

Pipeline politics

Neither the federal nor provincial governments have taken a public position on any of the pipeline project proposals, but both are perceived to be supporters.

Privately, however, a Dogwood Initiative access to information request has revealed that the BC government is cheering Enbridge on. Last year Energy Minister Richard Nuefeld wrote to Enbridge and said,

The [BC government] ... will be pleased to offer their assistance to Enbridge...

With respect to Enbridge's concerns regarding a moratorium on oil tanker traffic off British Columbia's coast, we would like to set out the Government's views on this issue. In 1971 the Provincial Government passed a resolution expressing to the Federal Government concern over oil tanker traffic transporting oil from Alaska to American ports, off British Columbia's coast. In 1972, the Federal Government announced a moratorium on foreign oil tankers traffic transiting the Canadian coast through Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and the Queen Charlotte Sound. This was a policy moratorium, and is not based on legislation.

In British Columbia's view, a crucial aspect of the federal moratorium is that it remains solely directed at foreign oil tankers transiting

British Columbia's coast. The moratorium is not directed at, and has no application to, oil tankers sailing to or from British Columbia ports.

It remains to be seen how much political capital each government is prepared to expend on the coastal oil and gas projects. If the Conservatives held a majority, there is little doubt that they would try to move quickly to withdraw the existing ban on offshore oil and gas development and tanker traffic.

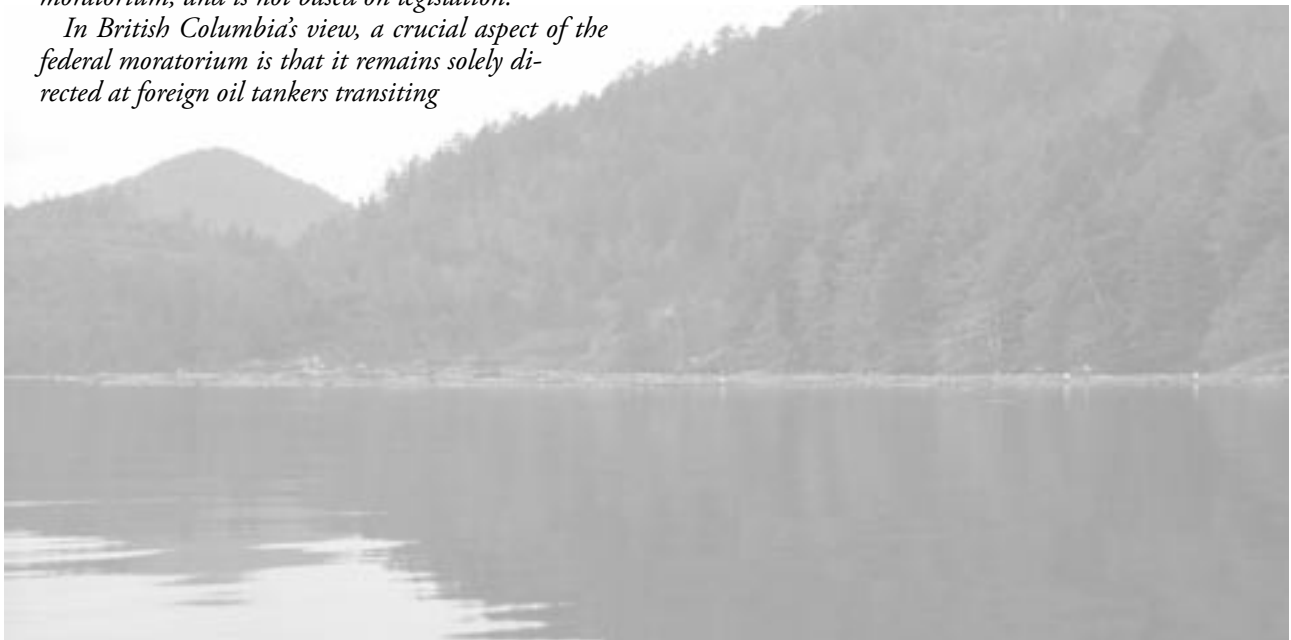
Public opposition to northern tanker traffic is widespread. Two public opinion polls commissioned by Dogwood Initiative show that the majority of British Columbians support a ban on tankers in northern coastal waters. Support for a tanker ban is strong amongst supporters of all political parties, including the Conservatives - more than 72% of voters for all federal parties oppose oil tankers in northern waters.

These polls illustrate it would be very risky for Mr. Harper's minority government to move forward aggressively. Perhaps Mr. Harper and Mr. Campbell should take note that every federal and provincial candidate running on a pro-oil and gas platform in a coast riding in BC has lost.

It ain't over till it's over

While opposition is growing the forces pushing to open BC's coast to oil and gas are formidable. On the one side are the federal and provincial governments, fueled by oil companies, on the other, First Nations, local communities, groups like Dogwood Initiative and people like you. While we appear to be outgunned, never underestimate the power of passion and ingenuity.

I'm optimistic that together we will defeat these proposals – just like we did 34 years ago. ✿



Democracy at risk - Inaccurate financial reports not sanctioned

By Will Horter

Democracy depends on transparency and the rule of law. Unfortunately, neither exists in the murky world of British Columbian election financing. We're hoping you will help us to change that.

Elections BC, a "non-partisan Office of the Legislature," chose not to conduct a full investigation of Dogwood Initiative's complaint that the BC Liberal Party failed to properly disclose 478 donations totaling \$510,140.49 in its 2001 report. However, Elections BC did confirm our findings.

In a May 16, 2006 letter to us they stated,

[We] concur that the [BC Liberal] party did not consistently report correct amounts for combined contributions... to the party and its candidates in the 2001 General Election ... It was a systemic error that resulted in some contributions to some candidates not being included in the party's combined report...

The donations were collected by Liberal candidates, but were not reported in the Party's filing as required by law. An initial look at the BC Liberal Party's 2005 report found similar instances of misreporting, while the NDP's filing for both years appeared to be accurate.

Dogwood Initiative asked Elections BC to investigate the incorrect disclosures in both the BC Liberals' 2001 and 2005 filings.

Although Elections BC has acknowledged big problems with the BC Liberals' 2001 filings, the Office has chosen to take no action, downplaying the 2001 inaccuracies by saying the mistakes were

not intentional. The Office is, however, continuing to investigate the 2005 inaccuracies.

The BC Liberals got off easy. Financial reporting mistakes can trigger fines of up to \$10,000, jail terms and de-registration of the party.

At a recent meeting with Elections BC, we asked that a warning be added on the website notifying anyone that accesses the 2001 filing that it contains "systemic errors." Elections BC refused, saying, "Regarding your request that we put a notice on the 2001 report, we have determined that it is not feasible and so will not be doing so."

Dogwood Initiative will continue to pursue the matter—perhaps through a judicial review of Elections BC's failure to investigate, or via a complaint to the Ombudsman. In the meantime Elections BC will continue to distribute reports it knows contain "systemic errors."

Elections BC's lack of enforcement was disappointing, but the growing public support for strong campaign finance laws is positive. Both the provincial NDP and federal Conservative leaders have recently proposed progressive legislation that would ban big money from politics.

Isn't it time that the voters—you and I—had the right to decide the direction of political power?

I think it is.

But accountability and transparency will only come if you and I demand legislation that keeps big money out of the political process. It's up to us. Let's get active. Our communities, our forests, our democracy depend on it. ✂



Win Outlaw Social CD

Those fine folk, Outlaw Social, loved our *Strength in Community* t-shirts so much they traded us 3 copies of their beautiful debut seven song CD in return for the last few shirts we had in stock. From the bittersweet and melancholy to the foot stomping and energetic, this is one CD every folk music lover should have in their collection. To win a copy, answer the following question: (Hint: the answer can be found in this newsletter).

According to data from other jurisdictions, how often could a major oil spill (of over 10,000 barrels) occur if we allow crude oil tankers traffic in BC's inside coastal waters?

Send your answers to info@dogwoodinitiative.org or Newsletter Contest, Dogwood Initiative, PO Box 8701, Victoria, BC V8W 3S3. Winners will be drawn at random on 2 October (Gandhi's birthday).

Changes in tax laws mean big savings to Dogwood Initiative supporters

By Moira Campbell

The 2006 Federal Budget removed the taxable capital gain on publicly listed securities given to charity. This means big potential tax savings for you!

Enbridge Shares

Dogwood Initiative is seeking gifts of shares in Enbridge, or your proxy votes, in order to bring a shareholder resolution forward. *Email whorter@dogwoodinitiative.org or call 250 370 9930 Ex 23.*

What are publicly listed securities?

Publicly listed securities include stocks or stock mutual funds in a taxable account (i.e., *not* an RRSP or RESP). Dogwood Initiative's fiscal agent will give a charitable tax receipt for the market value (on the date of transfer) of publicly listed securities donated to Dogwood Initiative.

How is this better than giving a cash donation?

In the example below imagine you donate \$10,000 in securities to Dogwood Initiative. Donating them directly to Dogwood Initiative (via our fiscal agent) could allow you to *avoid paying \$6,336 in taxes* from your investments.

(In this example you bought publicly listed securities

for \$1,000 that today are worth \$10,000 - good work!)

Look at how the tax benefit varies if you 1) gift cash 2) sell securities and donate cash to Dogwood Initiative *or* if you 3) donate securities directly to Dogwood Initiative.

In addition to the tax receipt for the donation, you can avoid paying capital gains on the increased share value increasing the net benefit to you after costs and taxes.

In the example above in addition to the \$4,356 tax receipt you would avoid \$1,980 in capital gains. Deducting the \$1,000 cost of the initial investment you have a personal net benefit of \$5,336 while Dogwood Initiative gets the benefit of the generous \$10,000 donation. It's good for everyone!

The actual tax credit will vary depending on your tax bracket, income and other factors. But, as you can see, donating appreciated securities to Dogwood Initiative can cost you less and provide additional tax benefits than donating cash. (*Please do get professional advice on your individual situation.*) ✂

If you would like to discuss giving a gift of securities to Dogwood Initiative in confidence, please contact J Scott. Email j.scott@dogwoodinitiative.org or call 250 370 9930 Ex 24.

What is the net tax benefit of a donation?			
	Gift cash	Sell securities and give cash	Give securities (no capital gain tax)
Initial investment outlay	\$10,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Amount of sale/donation	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Capital gain (sale amount minus cost)	N/A	\$9,000	\$9,000
Tax on capital gain ¹	N/A	(44%) \$1,980	(0%) Nil
Avoided tax on capital gain	N/A	Nil	\$1,980
Tax receipt for donation	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Donation tax credit ²	\$4,356	\$4,356	\$4,356
Net tax savings from donation (available to shelter other income tax)	\$4,356	\$2,376	\$4,356
Net benefit to you (tax credit + avoided capital gain - cost of initial investment)	-\$5,644	\$3,356	\$5,336

¹ Usually, one half of a capital gain is subject to tax.

² 22% for first \$200, 44% thereafter.

Softwood - It's the politics, stupid!

By Will Horter



Canada's Conservative government claims to have resolved the longstanding softwood lumber dispute. Don't count on it!

After months, more like years, of confusing Canadian headlines whiplashing back and forth about the status of a potential softwood deal, at press time Mr. Harper's minority government appears to have bludgeoned the disparate Canadian industry and governments into holding their noses and supporting his agreement with the U.S. at least for the time being.

But at what political cost?

Back in January I predicted no deal would be forthcoming until 2007. Why? Well, to twist the famous line from James Carver, former Bill Clinton political adviser and aw shucks pundit—It's the politics stupid!

Weak federal governments and internal political tensions on both sides of the border made the likelihood of a deal remote. I doubted either government would risk the political capital needed to impose a less than desirable deal on the divergent state and provincial governments and timber corporations.

The politically crippled Bush administration didn't have to squander much political capital to pressure the formidable political forces allied against Canada in southern and border states into the deal because the terms are more beneficial to U.S. industry.

In Canada, Harper's bullying actions to build support for the deal are surprising because it may sabotage his dream of a majority government. Simply put, by imposing a deal and twisting government and industry arms so aggressively his government risks alienating voters and political support in Ontario, BC and Quebec, who hold conflicting views on the best tactics and terms needed to resolve the long-standing conflict. Voters in rural BC and Quebec may make the Conservatives pay for sacrificing their interests to build relations with President Bush.

And, don't be fooled by the rhetoric that minor adjustments to the deal increased support and led to radical about faces by the various premiers and CEOs. Their arms were twisted and their words of support were uttered through clenched teeth.

The only explanation for the reversals is that serious incentives were being offered under the table. I expect the details of the quid pro quo's and corporate benefits, Harper and Bush have given to various state, provincial and industry interests will come to light over time.

The terms of the deal create regional winners and losers. Expect more corporate consolidation, as some corporations flush with cash from the returned tariffs consume their competition to monopolise even more control over Canada's public-owned forests.

I doubt the ceasefire will last long. Although I don't expect the bark-but-don't-bite opposition parties to force an election over the issue. The imposed deal has too many opponents, and will create too many losers, to survive for long.

While it will create a lull in the skirmish, the ceasefire does nothing to resolve the fundamental conflict. The two sides remain ideologically entrenched in their positions. The Americans are convinced that the almost criminally low stumpage in Canada, especially in BC, is a subsidy. The Canadians believe the U.S. is a trade bully and the dispute is all about market share. And they are both right.

That is why when I recently spoke to someone close to the U.S. industry they confirmed that the U.S. timber lobby was preparing new challenges focussed on all the new subsidies given to BC timber companies as part of the BC government's forestry reforms.

There will be no end to the war until Canadian governments and industry agree to negotiate reforms that address the driving force antagonizing the U.S., - the low stumpage charged for timber on public lands.

At the end of the day, politics are likely to once again sabotage Canadian unity and the longevity of the tentative deal. The wisdom of Mr. Harper's belligerent actions will be judged soon - when Canadians go to the polls. ❁



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Coalbed methane alarm in Bulkley Valley

By *Citizens Concerned About Coal Bed Methane*

An old farmer saying cautions against buying “a pig in a poke.” Its origin dates back to when market traders would offer to sell you a piglet in a “poke,” or sack. If you didn’t look in the sack, you might later discover an unpleasant surprise.

Yet, this is precisely what residents of the community of Telkwa, BC are being asked to do with Calgary-based Outrider Energy’s controversial plan to develop coalbed methane in their back yard—a project most local residents know little about.

There are many reasons to be cautious in evaluating Outrider’s plans. Across North America, coalbed methane development has a bad reputation. In Wyoming, the coalbed methane industry has run roughshod over farming families and ranchers, destroying water supplies, endangering people’s health, and leaving a landscape scarred with roads, well sites and pipelines.

When Alberta began exploiting coalbed methane, farmers and ranchers were told the Wyoming scenario would be avoided. Yet, in the absence of strong regulations, these same problems are now occurring: methane seeping into drinking water; toxic waste water being dumped into lakes and rivers and loud compressor stations running 24-hours-a-day near people’s houses.

Another reason Telkwa residents should be cautious is that Outrider is a new company with no track record. As a start-up company, it has no coalbed methane projects on the ground, so it can’t point to evidence of its practices.

Finally, BC’s regulations are too weak to protect the local water supply, farmland and the Skeena’s world-renowned salmon runs from the project’s potential impacts.

Even the *Union of BC Municipalities* has recognized the risks of CBM. In 2003, the UBCM passed a resolution calling for a province-wide coalbed methane moratorium until stronger regulations were implemented.

The impacts of coalbed methane are real; local concerns should not be taken lightly. They’re part of the reason that to date no other community in BC has approved a coalbed methane project.

Local concerns need to be addressed before initial tenure is approved—which the BC government hopes to do this coming fall. This pre-tenure period is the only real opportunity the local community has to provide feedback on the project as a whole. It is also the community’s best chance to raise the bar and ensure proper safeguards are attached to the tenure as conditions. Or, if people perceive the risks outweigh the benefits, it is the community’s only chance to say “No.”

Once the tenure is awarded, the Ministry of Energy and Mines passes oversight to the *Oil and Gas Commission* (OGC), which is funded by the oil and gas industry (an adage about the fox guarding the chicken coop

springs to mind). The OGC approves development activities on a “well-by-well” basis, constrained only by BC’s inadequate regulations. Once the project gets this far, it’s business as usual.

Which brings us back to the “pig in a poke.” While government is hurrying along the tenure process, the details of the Telkwa project aren’t being shared with the community.

How many wells are being proposed? How many local jobs will be created? Will re-injection of wastewater be feasible? How will cumulative impacts be dealt with? What will the maximum number of wells per hectare be?

Both the government and Outrider Energy say they can’t provide answers to these questions until they are able to conduct exploration activities, and to do so requires the tenure. It’s a smart move if they want the project to proceed at all costs. Once the tenure is granted, the community has little recourse, regardless of what the answers to their questions turn out to be.

In response to the lack of information surrounding the project, a group of citizens from Telkwa and the surrounding Bulkley Valley has come together to share their concerns and ensure their community’s values are protected. *Citizens Concerned About Coalbed Methane* has sent delegations to meetings of local town councils, and held info sessions on coalbed methane for community members. The group’s membership is at 158 members and growing!

In September, *Citizens Concerned About Coalbed Methane* plans to hold a public forum on the proposed project. Presenting at the forum will be independent scientists, people from communities with experience with coalbed methane, First Nations, Outrider Energy and representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Mines will also be invited. The goal is to engage in an open dialogue on the project’s risks and benefits. ✨

For more information:

e-mail info@concernedaboutcbm.org



The ugly footprint of coalbed methane projects

Dogwood Initiative was instrumental in getting the UBCM coalbed methane resolution passed in 2003 and is assisting many individuals and groups concerned about coalbed methane in the Bulkley Valley, and across BC.

Community Hero – Robin Hood

By Elizabeth Nijdam



Robin Hood (centre) with BCCFA staff Jen Gunter & Susan Mulkey

Robin Hood is President of the British Columbia Forest Association and has led the way for the application and development of the Likely Xatsu'll Community Forest, a joint partnership between the communities of Likely and Soda Creek Indian Band. The British Columbia Forest Association is a network of rural, community-based organizations in BC that are engaged in community forest management, as well as those seeking to establish community forests.

Elizabeth Nijdam: *What's unique about community forests?*

Robin Hood: Well, each community has its own prerogatives. Some want to protect or control the rate of harvest around their community or their community watershed. Or they want to automate the harvesting of the pine beetle-killed forests and use the money to benefit their community. Every community forest is unique.

EN: *You are also active in your local community forest, what is that all about?*

RH: I also coordinate and manage the Likely Xatsu'll Community Forest. We are partners with a First Nation 100 kilometres away, so we're two communities working as business partners.

I was involved right from the start –from pulling the communities together to the application – I was the driving force, the head motivator so to say. I lead the team that got it up and running, convinced all the volunteers that this was made for us, and then I sort of became the coordinator/manager.

EN: *And what makes your community forest unique?*

RH: We practice kitchen-table forestry - all of our meetings are done at kitchen tables within the communities. And we use the profits we generate from harvesting the timber to... rebuild historical mine displays and the Xatsu'll sends elders to gatherings and have improved access to traditional fishing spots. We also manage a firewood delivery program for elderly and handicapped. Environmentally speaking, we're funding a Creole census on the Quesnel River. At this time, there are unlimited rod days and we have become concerned about over fishing so we are paying a local consultant to do this study for the government.

Another partnership that we have is with the provincial environment water branch. We are monitoring an earth dam on Nina Lake.

And in both communities, in partnership with the Ministry of Highways and private contractors, we pay the school kids to pick up garbage on the side of the road and they use the money for field trips

EN: *What's your biggest achievement?*

RH: To get our community forest up and running without borrowing any money. And just being chosen as a community forest pilot because our communities are very small.

EN: *How can the public get involved and make a difference?*

RH: Personally, I think there should be hundreds of community forests given to communities to stabilize their economies...The ability to manage forests locally is very important.

EN: *What does the future of community forestry look like?*

RH: Local communities managing not only the forest but all aspects of what makes a community successful both economically and socially, including wild life management, tourism activities and assets, and anything that a community feels is near and dear to their well-being. ✂

This is an excerpt from an interview with Robin Hood carried out by Dogwood Initiative volunteer Elizabeth Nijdam on August 2, 2006. The full interview can be read on our website at www.dogwoodinitiative.org

Somethin' Happenin' Here

By Will Horter

In the past few years there hasn't been much good news for British Columbia's forests or forest communities. With softwood lumber, the beetle hysteria, and forest deregulation, a handful of corporations have increased their control over public forests by consuming their competition. Meanwhile, forests, communities, and workers struggle with an uncertain future.

But under the radar, two important grassroots trends are building strength. First, a growing number of communities are seeking local control of their forests as an alternative to the government's corporation-friendly approach. Second, some coastal communities are organizing against raw log exports and mill closures.

While both of these independent trends are positive for the future of forests and communities, if they ever combine forces, politicians and timber corporations had better watch out.

In recent years the community forests movement has grown. It has organized itself and is poised to be a political force. Since forming in 2002, with help from Dogwood Initiative, the *BC Community Forest Association* (BCCFA) has come a long way. Through the efforts of an amazing group of volunteers and staff, the BCCFA has grown to 42 member communities and has begun to lobby the BC government for laws and policies to enable community-centred initiatives to prosper. The BCCFA is getting politicians' attention.

Watching the 130 attendees at the recent BCCFA meeting in Burns Lake, I couldn't help but be reminded of the old Buffalo Springfield lyric:

*There's somethin' happenin' here.
What it is ain't exactly clear.*

It was inspiring to watch the community forests movement begin to understand and exercise its budding power. The dedication and resolve of these activists was inspiring, and could be the shot of adrenaline that forest activists in BC need. People like Robin Hood from Likely-Xat'sull (Soda Creek) (see *interview, left*), Marc von der Gonna from McBride, Ken Guenter from Burns Lake, Ramona Faust from Harrop-Procter, and Noba Anderson from Cortes Island are unrecognized heroes working hard to make alternatives to industrial forestry succeed. And they are making progress against formidable odds and with virtually no help from mainstream environmental groups.

Simultaneously, broad coalitions are forming in coastal communities to oppose raw log exports and the growing monopoly of a few big corporations, notably Western Forest Products, which controls nearly half of the logs cut on the coast.


In former industry towns like Port Alberni and Cowichan, alliances such as the *Save Our Valley Coalition* and the *You-bou Timberless Society* are building unprecedented links between laid-off loggers, mill workers, unions, environmentalists, and community advocates. For the first time labour issues of corporate control, layoffs, raw log exports, and mill closures are being linked with environmental concerns such as overcutting, drinking water protection, and habitat loss.

Rural British Columbians from many walks of life are sharing concerns about the growing crisis the government has created by turning decision-making over to logging companies. People realize the pro-corporation forest policies of the provincial government are disastrous for the future of their communities and local forests. They are seeking alternatives.

I am excited to listen to dedicated grassroots activists propose alternatives that could fundamentally change the economic and environmental future of British Columbia.

I'm optimistic "there's somethin' happenin' here" in BC. But a lot of work remains, and more people need to get involved.

Political parties in BC should take notice. If the community-forest and raw-log grassroots trends join forces, perhaps in support of the policies proposed by the *BC Coalition for Sustainable Forest Solutions* (see sidebar), their political power would be formidable. And the future of British Columbia's forests and communities would brighten.

As Buffalo Springfield sang, "stop, hey, what's that sound? Everybody look what's going down" 

Coalition for Sustainable Forest Solutions principles guiding new forest laws:

1. Reconcile Aboriginal and Crown title.
2. Create, implement, and enforce forest management standards that promote the long-term health of forest ecosystems.
3. Enhance public control and oversight of our forest resources, including rebuilding the public service.
4. Redistribute a majority of tenure at the lowest taxpayer cost in order to create a new social contract in Canada's forests and to provide greater opportunities for First Nations, communities and local jobs.
5. Ensure the public gets full value for forest resources through transparent log markets and related timber pricing reforms.
6. Ensure broad access to the timber supply and strengthen raw log export restrictions for the development of a strong, diverse value-added industry.

for more information
see www.forestsolutions.ca

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Staff and Volunteer Update

Summer has seen a few changes at Dogwood Initiative. We bid goodbye to Communications Coordinator Zach Robertson, who is currently building film sets in Ontario. Moira Campbell, who has been with Dogwood Initiative for two years working on fund development and communications, has left to spend more time with family and to make music over the next few months. She will be releasing her first solo album *Coming Up Roses* in October.

Paul Rokeby-Thomas has joined us for his co-op term at Camosun College, where he is studying accounting.

Dogwood Initiative has a new mascot in the form of Taurus Lighting Curly White—an American Bulldog puppy adopted at the tender age of 4 days by our Executive Director, Will Horter, and his wife, veterinarian Claudia Campbell.

We also welcome volunteers, Elizabeth Nijdam and Pepper the dog. Elizabeth is both lending their expertise to our communications work, and Pepper is spicing up the office atmosphere. (*You can read Elizabeth's interview with BC Community Forestry Association founder Robin Hood on page 10.*)

Annie (Yuen) Peng and Eric Regehr have also recently joined our volunteer team, contributing to our research into BC elections contributions, among other responsibilities. Shaun Ferri has been helping with research into liquefied natural gas, and with Freedom of Information requests. As always, we are

extremely grateful for the help of all our volunteers.

Finally, an enormous thank you to all those who helped out at Dogwood Initiative's *Strength in Community Festival*. Over 100 people played music, put up tents, served food, designed posters, walked in the parade and carried out a myriad of other tasks. We truly thank you for your support. See you next year!

If you are interested in volunteering at Dogwood Initiative please do request an information packet. Our Board is also currently recruiting, and we particularly require a Treasurer. Please contact Will Horter for further information on 250 370 9930 ext. 23, email whorter@dogwoodinitiative.org.



Taurus Lighting Curly White

Dogwood Initiative Events

Oil Tanker Moratorium	September 27	6pm - 7pm	Online Seminar
Matching Your Money With Your Values	October 28	9am - 1pm	Victoria

To register or for more information contact Dogwood Initiative

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