



Lands and People

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Enbridge's OCENSA pipeline transports crude oil to the port of Covenas in Colombia

Opposition growing to Enbridge's Gateway pipeline

By Will Horter

Enbridge, one of North America's largest energy companies, proposes to build a 1,123 kilometre pipeline to carry between 400,000 and 1,000,000 barrels of crude oil per day from Alberta's tar sands to a new sea port in Kitimat. A "condensate import" pipeline

review will operate independently, or parallel to, the federal government's National Energy Board hearings.

Enbridge's proposal is one of four export pipeline proposals vying to ship tar sands crude to foreign markets. Not all these pipelines will be built. Despite the projected growth in tar sands production over the next several decades, the four competing export pipelines would create a large surplus in capacity flowing out of Alberta. If all pipelines being proposed were to become operational by 2010 pipeline capacity could exceed oil production by 250%.

Enbridge's pipeline has received more media coverage than its competition, but faces the most obstacles. The Haida, Carrier Sekani and Treaty 8 First Nations' support for an independent, aboriginal review panel will likely delay Enbridge's ambitious timelines. Growing public opposition to tankers in BC's inside passage could cause further delays. And any delay hampers Enbridge's prospects in the competitive race with the other proposed pipelines for financing and regulatory approval.

parallel to the crude pipe would transport 150,000 barrels per day of condensate—a natural gas byproduct used in pipelines—back to Alberta. Tankers leaving Kitimat would then ship the crude oil through 90 kilometres of BC's fragile inside passage to California, China, and India.

Opposition Growing

Enbridge's attempt to fast-track the twin Gateway pipelines and open the inside passage to tankers is generating opposition from environmental groups, local communities and First Nations. A growing number of First Nations are opposed to the project and have launched an autonomous First Nations-led review process. This

Environmental impacts

The pipeline will increase Canada's green-

...Enbridge continued on page 3

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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Executive Director's Report

By Will Horter



Spring is coming and the sunshine is beckoning me outdoors. Like many of you, I feel compelled to ignore my office work and venture outside to talk to people and enjoy the simple pleasures of sunlight warming my skin.

A healthy dose of sunlight and conversation is not just vital to people's physical wellbeing, it is essential to the health of democracy. Unfortunately, in contrast to the spring weather here on Vancouver Island, sunlight is fading on democracy in North America. Governments elected by the thinnest of margins in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa are clamping down on information, refusing to answer questions that don't fit their priorities, and arrogantly avoiding debates both public and legislative.

BC's provincial government piloted this secretive approach to governing. By centralizing communications in the Premier's office, hindering Freedom of Information requests, and gutting virtually all legal requirements for public or stakeholder consultation on resource issues, more and more important decisions in BC are being made in secret, with little or no public debate.

Dogwood Initiative is working with local communities and First Nations to let the sunshine in. It's amazing, the cleansing power of sunlight. When light falls on an issue, transparency and accountability in government increase. That is why we spend so much of our time helping local people illuminate issues that affect their lives. We are helping people demand transparency and accountability from their leaders, and get the information they need to make informed decisions.

And despite some disturbing efforts to control debate, there are some rays of light escaping from Ottawa. Stephen Harper's government is responding to the Canadian demand for sunlight, transparency, and accountability in government with the *Accountability Act*. Banning corporate and union donations and capping individual donations at \$1,000, the Act can transform politics as we know it in Canada. It can

level the playing field and ensure that only voters can funnel money into the electoral process.

But sunlight and transparency only come if people organize and demand them.

Dogwood Initiative is doing its part. Over the last few months we have shed light on Enbridge's proposed twin Gateway pipeline project, which would open up BC's fragile inside passage to massive oil tankers (*see front page*); we have continued to enlighten rural communities and First Nations about the impacts of coalbed methane and potential options to defend their interests (*see page 11*); and we have requested that Elections BC investigate over half a million dollars in incorrectly disclosed donations by the BC Liberal party. We also proposed amendments to the provincial Elections Act to increase transparency and level the playing field so non-voters cannot hijack the electoral process (*see page 6*).

Dogwood Initiative believes sunlight's effects on society's health are contagious. As more people become aware of issues and the successes others are having, the more inspired they are to get involved. That is why Dogwood Initiative is trying to illuminate the many heroic efforts of local people doing great things to protect and promote their communities. The Strength in Community Festival (*see page 5*), to be held on Victoria day (May 22) in Victoria will feature inspiring speakers and food and music to light up the hearts and minds of people who believe in equality, justice, democracy, and sustainability.

Our Community Hero interviews (*see page 4*) shed light on the inspiring efforts of people like Chief Judith Sayers of the Hupacasath First Nations who are developing new approaches to meeting our future energy demands.

While farmers and First Nations are familiar with rain dances, we as concerned citizens have to dance for sunshine in government. We need to create new rituals that remind us of the need for sunshine in the democratic process. We need to organize and demand more public participation in decisions that affect us. The future of our communities, our economy and our environment depend on us. ☒



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house gas emissions by between 12 and 30 megatonnes, which is equivalent to the emissions of almost six million passenger cars.

The pipeline also poses severe local risks to BC. Data from other countries shows that oil spills along the pipeline and at the marine terminal are unavoidable.

But it is tankers in BC's inside passage from Kitimat through Douglas Channel 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 B.C. would inevitably occur."

Approval of the Gateway project would also require a loophole in (or the lifting of) the 34-year-old federal moratorium on crude oil tanker traffic along BC's inside passage. Data from tankers elsewhere suggests a major spill of over 10,000 barrels could occur every 6.37 years.

Polls commissioned by Dogwood Initiative show that a majority of British Columbians oppose lifting the moratorium on tanker traffic. The recent sinking of the Queen of the North ferry, coincidentally along Enbridge's proposed tanker route, has broadened public awareness of the risks of tankers in these treacherous waters. The ferry's oil slick threatens to become the worst marine spill disaster on the BC coast in almost 20 years. Imagine the damage if it had been an oil tanker.

The politics in Canada

Neither level of government has taken a public position on the Gateway pipelines, but both are perceived to be supporters. However, it remains to be seen how much political capital each government is prepared to expend on backing the project.

Doing so is politically risky. Polls commissioned by Dogwood Initiative show the tanker issue is so politically volatile that it is unlikely a minority government will risk moving forward aggressively. Support for a tanker ban is strong across all political parties. More than 72% of voters for all federal parties oppose oil tankers in northern waters.

If Mr. Harper's 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. But it

looks like their minority position has softened their approach. One day after being sworn in as the new federal Minister of Natural Resources, Gary Lunn, MP for Saanich and the Islands, told reporters that the offshore oil and gas moratorium is "not a top priority" for his fledgling government. Nonetheless, vigilance is necessary.

The international struggle for oil

The proposed pipeline injects BC into the growing geopolitical struggle over oil between the U.S. and the emerging Asian economic powers of China and India. If built, the pipeline threatens the U.S. monopoly over tar sands oil.

Over the past decade, Canada has become the largest foreign supplier of fossil fuels to the U.S. The United States is increasingly counting on Canada, especially the tar sands, to fill its gas tanks. A recent Knight Ridder newspaper story noted, the tar sands are a "vital part of America's energy future" that will "help keep American SUVs running in the years to come."

China recently passed Japan as the second-largest consumer of energy. By 2010, India is expected to displace South Korea as the world's fourth-largest consumer. Both China and India are becoming increasingly aggressive in their pursuit of fossil fuel supplies, even if this brings them in conflict with the U.S.

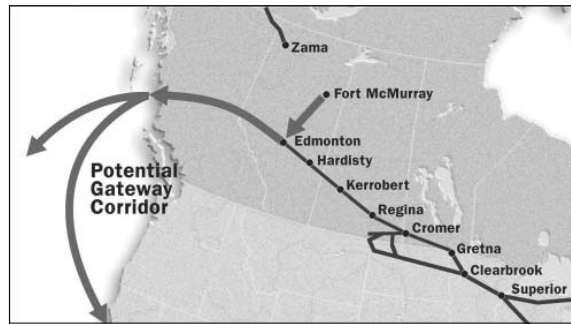
The pipeline to Kitimat will bring this international competition for tar sands crude to a head here in BC.

The backlash

The good news is that the Gateway project is vulnerable. The growing opposition from environmental groups and First Nations will complicate regulatory hearings. Delays will put Enbridge behind in the race to secure financing, oil supply commitments, and permits ahead of competing pipeline proponents like TransCanada.

The Gateway project also faces stiffer regulatory hurdles than its competitors because of the need for oil tankers. First Nations have a number of legal options to scuttle or delay the project. Dogwood Initiative and other environmental groups are co-ordinating legal, political, and financial approaches to engage Enbridge, the governments, and the public about the project.

Stay tuned—Dogwood Initiative will keep you informed as the story unfolds. ☒



Enbridge's proposed Gateway pipeline

energy future" that will "help keep American SUVs running in the years to come."

Community hero: Judith Sayers

By Heather Rock



Photo: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Chief Judith Sayers of the Hupacasath First Nation

Interview with Judith Sayers, elected Chief Councillor of Hupacasath First Nation on Vancouver Island.

HR: *Can you tell me about one of your community's achievements?*

JS: We have developed an independent power project (IPP) on China Creek that produces 6.5 megawatts of electricity, enough to meet the needs for 6,000 homes. It is a “run of the river” project: water runs down a penstock 4.5 km in length with enough head to power the turbines at the base. Creating energy in this way is non-consumptive and low-impact. We sell the energy generated to BC Hydro under a 20-year contract. The project was also an environmental achievement. The site has no salmon, due to an impassable waterfall. And since the watershed is very nutrient limited, the fisheries resource is minimal. The fisheries resource is very important to our community, so this was important.

HR: *Why did you get involved?*

JS: Four years ago BC Hydro proposed a gas power generation plant in Port Alberni. Hupacasath helped to push the environmental assessment process to a more difficult “stage two” review. When the city of Port Alberni refused to rezone the proposed area, the project did not proceed. During the environmental assessment process Hupacasath, along with other groups, had concerns with air quality. We decided that we did not just want to say “not in my backyard” but be a part of the solution. So, we looked at all forms of green energy available and at the resources in our territory. We settled on small scale hydro.

HR: *Who are you working with?*

JS: Hupacasath were the project developers. We formed the company Upnit to get equity partners. Hupacasath First Nation owns 72%. Ucluelet First Nation owns 10%; Synex Energy in Vancouver owns 12.5% and served as experts on our board and project team. The city of Port Alberni owns 5%. This was a good decision, since it obtained the city's co-operation, and assistance in obtaining the water licence. All the funding was from the federal Western Economic Diversification. Stephen Owen, the minister for WED, played a big role in obtaining funding. For financing, VanCity Capital helped with BC Credit Unions, which were not familiar with green energy projects. They are now open to funding

other IPPs. Having a 20-year agreement with BC Hydro helped obtain debt equity.

HR: *How has this affected your community and their environment?*

JS: If the natural gas plant had been built, 31 kilotonnes of green house gases (using best practices) would be emitted yearly. So our project is equivalent to keeping eight thousand cars off the road. This is one solution to climate change, and Upnit now has plans for similar projects.

HR: *How did this achievement make you feel?*

JS: Very important—and independent. Vancouver Island imports 90% of its energy needs by underwater cables. The cables are old and need replacement. We also feel creative—we had to be to find money for the project. Another achievement was the creation of a community energy plan; we wanted to [now have] an estimate of our own energy consumption.

HR: *What is one of the biggest problems you encountered?*

JS: Finding the equity we needed when we are a poor community. Also getting people to believe in the project.

HR: *What lessons have you learned?*

JS: Anything is possible if you have a good support network and good relations with people within and outside the community, as well as with governments. If you have everyone helping you, you will make it.

HR: *What advice would you share with other communities?*

JS: To find the best project possible and the best people to work with contractors, engineers, and lawyers. Surround yourself with supportive people. That is the key to your success in getting a project off the ground.

HR: *What is your biggest achievement?*

JS: That we even did it. Not only that but, on time, on schedule and on budget. There is so much uncertainty with these projects, especially when constructing pipelines below ground. Many other projects have not been built. When we applied for a water licence there were thirty-three applications. Only three received water licenses. We are proof that it can be done. ☞

Strength in Community Festival

By Moira Campbell

Each year, eighty thousand people line the streets of BC's capital to watch the Victoria Day Parade. This year Dogwood Initiative will be taking part. Our "walking float" will visually demonstrate the spirit of local, sustainable control of natural resources. There are a couple of ways you can participate. If you'd like to unleash your inner artist, join us on Saturday, May 20th, for a workshop in creating a walking community forest complete with renewable energy sources. If you'd like to walk in the parade carrying a tree (or maybe a windmill) then call or e-mail to reserve your space.

After the parade, join us at St Ann's Academy for the Strength in Community Festival. Enjoy inspiring interactive displays, speakers, music, and plain old fun.

The acoustic stage will feature speakers and music all afternoon, including sustainable energy guru Guy Dauncey and enviro-diva Briony Benn

Writer James MacKinnon will speak about his experience spending a year eating only food produced within 100 miles of his home. Try the diet yourself—delicious local food will be provided by the Island Chefs Collaborative, a group of twenty progressive local chefs whose mandate is to support our local farmers and small-scale food producers by purchasing from them and promoting their efforts in their restaurants.

ing from them and promoting their efforts in their restaurants.

"We work to educate the public about the fantastic food resources we have available locally and we fund-raise and donate money to farmers and farm organizations. The ICC chefs will feature a 100% local assortment of dishes for sale, from soups to sandwiches, beverages, and even our famous ice cream. Everything we prepare will come from farms within 100 miles of the venue.

All proceeds from our booth will go back to the ICC to fund new and upcoming local farmers" said David Mincey of Camille's Restaurant.

Enter the scavenger hunt for a chance to win great prizes including: a weekend for two at the exclusive Cliffs at Kispiox Lodge, gift certificates for Lifestyle Markets and the Victoria Soap Exchange, books from Munro's Bookstore, a meal at Café Brio or The Mint Restaurant, and a tour/tasting from Merri-dale Ciderworks. Scavenger hunt participants will have to visit the Energy, Forestry, Democracy, Community, and First Nations tents to get their "passports" stamped and be entered for the prize draw.

The tents will be run with the help of our Festival partners: BC Sustainable Energy Association (Victoria chapter) and Council of Canadians (Victoria chapter).

Our outdoors festival runs from noon until 4:30 pm. In the auditorium you can watch a thought-provoking film program chosen by Open Cinema.

Entry to the Festival is free, scavenger hunt by donation. Come and help us celebrate the spirit of community in British Columbia!

If you would like to show your community spirit and participate in Dogwood Initiative's "walking float" in the Victoria Day Parade, to volunteer for the Festival itself, or if you require more information about the Festival, please call 250 370 9930 ext. 24 and talk to Moira, or e-mail: mcampbell@dogwoodinitiative.org ✉



Victoria's most talked-about new roots group, Outlaw Social, will be performing at the festival.



St Ann's Academy, 835 Humboldt, Victoria
22 May 2006, following the Victoria Day Parade

Ecobean Roasting Company, home of Black Bear Organic Coffee will donate \$2 for each pack of 100% organic, green coffee beans you buy with our logo on them. They will be brewing coffee and selling beans at the Strength in Community Festival, or you can visit their website at www.ecobean.ca to place an order in Victoria, BC.

Big Money is Corrupting Politics

By Will Horter

Canadians want accountable government. We are yearning for transparent responsible decision-making, driven by the broader public interest, not the size of a donor's check.

The demand for accountability is driving change in Ottawa and is percolating out to Victoria. The federal Liberals were run from office because of shady dealings related to campaign donations, and now Dogwood Initiative has revealed that the BC Liberals systemically underreported donations in both 2001 and 2005.

A months-long Dogwood Initiative investigation has documented almost half a million dollars in donations that the BC Liberal party failed to accurately report in its 2001 financial disclosure report as required by law.

Almost 500 inaccuracies, most of which were undisclosed donations reported by candidates but not by the party, were identified by Dogwood Initiative. This amounts to almost a third of the \$1.6 million donated directly to Liberal candidates. We discovered that approximately six percent of donations weren't properly disclosed by the party in 2001. The largest inaccuracies involved donations to candidates that later became cabinet ministers.

Our random audit of the BC Liberals' recently filed 2005 financial report revealed similar systemic reporting mistakes, while our random spot check of the NDP's 2001 and 2005 filings did not.

Dogwood Initiative has requested that BC's Chief Electoral Officer, the watchdog overseeing electoral rules, conduct an investigation of the inaccurate reports.

The filing of "false or misleading" financial reports is an offence under the *Elections Act*, punishable by up to two years in jail and a \$10,000 fine. If convicted, the law would require the Liberal Party to be de-registered.

Pursuing a criminal offence charge is the only sanction available to the Chief Electoral Officer if Dogwood Initiative's allegations are confirmed. This illustrates the need to amend the *Elections Act* to give our electoral watchdog more nuanced tools to enforce compliance with elections laws. The law should also be immediately amended to require all parties to provide an electronic copy of their donation reports to Elections BC to facilitate the creation of an on-line searchable database of all political contributions.

Dogwood Initiative didn't set out to investigate inaccurate financial reporting. In fact, we happened on it by accident. In order to track the influence large donations from logging, mining and oil and gas companies were having on government policy, we created a database of all corporate donations going back to 1996.

We use this information to help our local partners defend their interests against unsustainable projects. As news spread that we had a donations database, occasionally we would get calls to search for donations from specific corporations.

A call from a group concerned about BC's large polluters led us to discover the BC Liberal's reporting inaccuracies. After confirming that many of BC's largest polluters are also donors to the BC Liberals, I was asked whether our database included all donations made directly to candidates. I said yes, because all parties are legally required to include all donations made to the party, their candidates and constituency associations in their year end report, which we used to create our database. But when we cross referenced a couple of the reports from candidates, we found the systemic inaccuracies.

To make the role money is playing in BC's political system more transparent, Dogwood Initiative is seeking donors to support our efforts to update our database to include all individual donations over \$1,000 and to make our database available online so people can easily determine who is influencing which party.

We predict campaign financial reform will become a hot button issue in BC and across Canada.

A report released last year by the Conservation Voters of BC shows that BC shares with Alberta the dubious distinction of having the fewest safeguards preventing big money from dominating politics.

The provincial NDP and federal Conservatives are responding. Both have put forward legislation that would impose new rules to keep big money out of politics.

In the last session of legislature, Carole James introduced a private members' bill which would ban corporate and union donations, and would impose a \$1,000 cap on personal donations and introduces a review of third party advertising limits.

Stephen Harper's *Accountability Act* proposes similar rules in order to give "Canadians a new vision, a plan to renew faith in government, to instill a culture

Candidate	No. of Errors	Amount
Ted Nebbeling	58	\$48,650
Claude Richmond	40	\$42,989
Bill Bennett	28	\$23,705

The top three Liberal candidates who misreported contributions in 2001

...campaign finance continued from page 6

of accountability...” Mr. Harper’s version contains no provision related to third party advertising.

However, the BC Liberals, content with the \$11.5 million it raised from non-voters, are resisting the trend.

British Columbians need to demand our politicians level the playing field. BC lags behind five other provinces and the federal government by having no cap on donations. And every province except BC and Alberta has direct public financing for candidates to level the playing field.

It’s understandable that Gordon Campbell doesn’t support Carole James’ effort to introduce campaign finance reform. Last year the BC Liberals out-fundraised Ms. James’ party by \$6 million, relying primarily on corporate donations fueled by its corporate friendly policies. Why should British Columbians tolerate a government whose main financial support comes from organizations that are not eligible to vote?

Given the public outrage over the sponsorship scandal, and the BC Liberal’s laissez-faire approach to disclosing donations, campaign finance reform seems like a no-brainer. Ms. James has renewed her call for reform by tabling a motion supporting the Chief Electoral Officer’s recommendations for tightening BC’s electoral finance laws.

But the NDP doesn’t have to wait for the BC Liberals to take action. They could seize the high ground by voluntarily refusing to accept corporate and union donations or individual donations over \$1,000.

Isn’t it time that the true voters—you and I—had the right to determine the direction of political power?

I think it is. If you do too, write or call, Carole James, Gordon Campbell or your local MLA and demand new legislation that keeps big money out of the political process. ✂

Shell is shut down in the Kootenays’

By Will Horter

Community activists are celebrating the end of one grim chapter in the story of coalbed methane extraction in BC’s Rocky Mountains. Shell Canada is quietly “discontinuing” its exploration program there.

“We certainly see this as a victory,” Casey Brennan, the Energy and Mining Program Manager with the Kootenay-based environmental group Wildsight, told *Lands and People* “We engaged in a respectful dialogue with Shell and let them know that coalbed methane exploitation was not compatible with the wilderness values in this area.”

“While Shell claimed they were using best management practices, we observed significant impacts from their operations,” Brennan continued. “Oil and gas companies are not used to the level of scrutiny our community subjected Shell to. We documented enough problems to know that coalbed methane is not an appropriate industrial activity for this region given the lax regulatory rules and enforcement.”

Despite the positive news of Shell’s departure, Wildsight and its partners vowed to continue the scrutiny and pressure. “The provincial govern-

ment’s *Code of Practice for the Discharge of Produced Water* puts our sensitive watersheds at risk,” Brennan insisted. “We will continue to promote strong regulations that require companies to re-inject all produced water into the ground, and to conduct comprehensive baseline studies before drilling.”

The Fernie City Council, the State of Montana and the Union of BC Municipalities have asked the provincial government to do more environmental studies before allowing coalbed methane drilling. The provincial government has promised a community consultation process, but has yet to outline one.

Dogwood Initiative will continue to work with Wildsight to inform communities and press the government to do coalbed methane right, or not do it at all. ✂



Casey Brennan, Wildsight’s Energy and Mining program officer

The climate crisis changes everything

By Cliff Stainsby

Dogwood Initiative's approach—helping local partners fight for sustainable healthy communities is becoming progressively more difficult. The reason—the growing climate crisis. The very notion of “sustainability” implies a predictable relationship between actions today and results tomorrow. For example, plans to log forests today and replant trees are only sustainable if we can reasonably expect those trees to mature and become tomorrow's harvest.

Climate change information released this year, primarily data on the rate and method of ice melt in Greenland, is both startling and terrifying in its implications. Startling in how rapidly the ice is melting, and in the unexpected manner in which it is breaking up and moving. Terrifying in what it means for our communities, economies and ecosystems.

The models used by climate scientists generally assume that while global warming is melting the ice, it is also increasing, through evaporation, the amount of moisture in the air, and that this moisture results in increased snowfall, particularly at the poles. The net result for the Greenland ice fields was assumed to be the difference between the ice melt and the snow fall.

New data from NASA suggests that the ice melt is far more rapid than expected. The data is so staggering that one of the world's pre-eminent climatologists, Dr. James Hansen, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, cautioned that the earth may be reaching a tipping point. Mr. Hansen said the data

“show that Greenland seems to be losing at least 200 cubic kilometers of ice a year. It is different from even two years ago, when people still said the ice sheet was in balance...Hundreds of cubic kilometers sounds like a lot of ice. But this is just the beginning. Once a sheet starts to disintegrate, it can reach a tipping point beyond which break-up is explosively rapid.”

This is a terrifying analysis because it means that past estimates of sea levels seriously underestimated the rate of rise. They used climate models that assumed ice sheets function like a single block of ice that will slowly melt taking over a thousand years to disintegrate. But in Dr. Hansen's words “We can now see that the models are almost worthless.”

How much sea level rise is possible? Dr. Hansen says “The last time the world was three degrees warmer than today – which is what we expect later this century – sea levels were 25m higher. So that is what we can look forward to if we don't act soon.”

Twenty five metres is about 82 feet, or 12 feet higher than two city telephone poles stacked one upon the other.

Sea level rise of a metre will be a disaster; sea level rise of 80 feet will be a catastrophe, with immense environmental, social and economic consequences.

But the uncertainty created by climate change extends far beyond the world's coastlines. In a recent *Globe and Mail* article, Dr. Richard Hebda, curator of botany and earth history at the Royal BC Museum when asked whether the pine forests will ever grow back replied,

“We just don't know... The question is, will there be forests at all in the southern portion of British Columbia's central interior? Will there even be any trees?...It all depends on how much CO₂ we push into the atmosphere.”

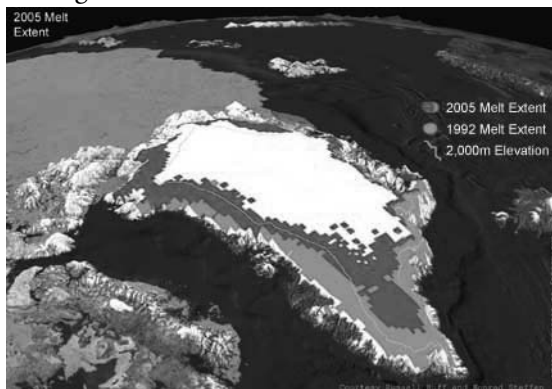
Climate change is upon us, is happening much, much faster than anyone thought, severe weather events (catastrophic storms and hurricanes) have increased from 29 per year globally in the 1970s to 119 per year since 2000, and the predictive models are broken.

If we don't act quickly and dramatically, the notion of sustainability will lose all meaning.

We must drastically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions (at least 60% to 80% below 1990 levels) and we must learn to adapt to the global warming changes that are already inevitable given the current levels of greenhouse gasses in our atmosphere.

If our societies are to be sustainable, if we are to protect our life support systems and stem the high and increasing rate of species extinctions; in other words if we as human societies intend to be around for the long term, we face and must deal with one overwhelming issue - global warming.

We as people and organizations, whatever our ideological differences, whatever our interests, whatever our politics, whatever our class, must focus on preventing the environmental, social and economic disaster of climate change. If it continues unchecked, none will escape.



Satellites are used to map the extent and duration of snowmelt on the Greenland ice sheet. The dark grey area represents the extent of snowmelt in 2005—the most extensive in the 27-year history of data collection.

Great expectations for community forests in BC

By Lisa Ambus

Community forestry is envisioned as an alternative approach to forest management that empowers local people, achieves economic development, and enhances ecological sustainability. This vision of community forestry may facilitate consensus and offer temporary relief from the battle between development and conservation goals. However, communities face significant challenges as they attempt to put theories into practice.

In 1998 under the NDP government, the BC Ministry of Forests designed and implemented a pilot project to experiment with community forestry. Currently, eleven communities hold a Community Forest Agreement (CFA) and manage 264,462 hectares of forest land, approximately 0.4% of the total forested area in the province. This equates to a harvest of 241,158 m³, less than 0.3% of the total provincial annual allowable cut (AAC) of 83.7 million m³.

The demand for community forests far exceeds available lands, and early into the pilot project it was evident that opportunities to expand the area and number of CFAs would only occur through significant tenure reforms. In 2001, the newly elected BC Liberal government instituted sweeping forest policy changes. These were designed to benefit the major licensees, and consequently had negative repercussions in rural British Columbia. Although community forestry was peripheral to their agenda, as a counterbalance to their pro-industry policies, the new government committed to increase the volume of wood available to First Nations, community forests, and woodlots. Through the 2003 Forestry Revitalization Plan, a small fraction of the 20% tenure take-back from the major licensees was reapportioned to expand the community forest program.

Ironically this commitment came from the Liberal government that initially dismissed community forestry as “social engineering”. Their change of heart came about with the realization that community forestry had valuable political currency. During the lead up to the May 2005 provincial election, the Ministry of Forests sent out a flurry of press releases inviting 24 communities to apply for CFAs. In less than a year, at least on paper, the community forest program tripled in size. To date there are as many as 32 communities waiting to receive a CFA. If all invited CFAs are awarded, an

additional volume of 784,300 m³ will be managed by community forests. This would bring the total volume managed by CFAs to 1.025 million m³, still only 1.2% of the provincial AAC.

There are great expectations of community forests, and the program expansion brings renewed hope to some rural communities in BC.



Visitors to Harrop-Proctor's community forest

However, these new ventures face several challenges simultaneously with little support and with few resources—forest management planning, starting up a business, finding markets, engaging community members in decision-making processes, and so on. Legislated under the Forest Act, CFAs operate in a policy environment sympathetic to large industrial operations, and in the global marketplace, the economies of scale do not weigh in favour

of small community forests. The CFA includes a few unique elements including rights to manage some non timber botanical products, but the primary focus is still timber extraction. In fact, the Ministry of Forests has offered several CFAs located in socially contentious areas such as local watersheds as a strategy to access timber that was previously inaccessible. There are concerns about the manner in which the community forest program is being implemented and administered by the Ministry of Forests, and people fear that the ‘community’ aspect of community forestry is being eroded to the point that the CFA is beginning to look like just another industrial license.

In spite of the challenges, there are several dedicated individuals working hard to ensure that community forests remain viable. Through the actions of the BC Community Forest Association, CFA holders are finding strength and support. In January 2006, members of the BCCFA succeeded in negotiating a short term ‘stumpage fix’ for CFAs, and are currently exploring long term solutions. Before proceeding with awarding any new CFAs, the Ministry of Forests has commissioned an independent review of the entire community forest program. Contingent on the review, the government may be willing to review and renegotiate specific terms and conditions of the CFA license agreements, application process, and regulations. Politically, it behoves the government to guarantee that community forestry in BC has a sustainable future. ☒

A legacy fund or subsidies to fossil fuels?

By Will Horter

Budgets provide tangible evidence of a government's priorities. The BC Liberals' recent budget illustrates their continued obsession with promoting oil and gas development.



Alberta's Minister of Revenue
Greg Melchin

Expect more of the same short-sightedness in energy priorities. Instead of a Legacy Fund for the post-fossil fuel era, or incentives to move our economy away from fossil fuels and diversify into job-creating industries like renewable energy and hydrogen infrastructure, the budget includes hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies

to oil and gas companies.

What happened to the promise in 2001 to end subsidies to business? And why are subsidies needed when fossil fuel companies are reaping record profits?

The massive subsidies to fossil fuel companies can be grouped into two categories: (1) a complex web of royalty breaks, and (2) direct subsidies for infrastructure and road development.

You may not know it, but you and I are providing a minimum of \$100,000 in royalty reductions for wells drilled in the summer, a \$50,000 royalty credit for coal-bed methane wells, \$30 million in annual royalty credits for oil and gas infrastructure, and over \$100 million in road-building for fossil fuel companies.

Add to these figures the following schemes to further reduce the already paltry royalties paid for oil and gas extracted from public lands:

1. Deep Well Royalty Credit for wells over 2,000 metres (depending on technique used);
2. Marginal Well Royalty Regime for unconventional wells with low production;
3. Deep Re-entry Well Royalty Reduction for reviving existing wells deeper than 2,300 metres;
4. Deep "Discovery Well" Royalty Holiday, 283,000,000 m³ of royalty-free gas for wells deeper than 4,000 metres and more than 20 km from other producing wells;
5. Low-Productivity Natural Gas Royalty reduction for wells producing below certain levels; and
6. Base 9 Royalty Credit, which reduces the royalty from 12% to 9% for new production from tenures granted between June 1, 1998 and December 31, 2008.

The government claims these subsidies are needed to develop wells that may not otherwise be economic. But if they are not economic, why drill them? And, with oil

and gas supplies peaking, prices will only rise, making the wells more valuable in the future.

These giveaways of tax payer money illustrate a government obsessed with promoting rushed oil and gas production at any cost, even over the long term fiscal future of the province.

No legacy fund for BC?

By spending all of BC's spiking energy windfall as general revenue, rather than saving some for the fast-approaching end of the fossil fuel era, the BC Liberals are squandering the province's fiscal future.

Other jurisdictions have recognized the finite nature of fossil fuel revenues and have set aside some of them for the future or for economic diversification. Alberta, Alaska, Norway, and even Chad are either currently building or have at one time built a reserve fund from oil and gas revenues.

Since 1976, Alaska has placed 25% of oil and gas revenues into its Permanent Fund, which is valued at over US\$27 billion.

Alberta is also putting money aside for the post-boom era. Between 15% and 30% of Alberta's oil and gas revenues were set aside in a Heritage Fund now valued at \$12 billion. And Norway's State Petroleum Fund stands at over \$100 billion.

We need to salt away money now because the boom won't last. BC has set a target of doubling oil and gas production by 2011. According to government studies, this is also likely to be the peak year for BC production of oil and gas.

Preparing for the future

The end of fossil fuels is likely to hit BC particularly hard. We need a transition plan for the new energy economy.

A few billion would come in handy to pay for sustainable transportation alternatives, energy-retrofitting homes and offices, making our major industries energy efficient, and enabling petrochemical-free agriculture. Not to mention current challenges like settling aboriginal land claims and implementing climate change measures.

The BC government should take the lead and end subsidies for fossil fuel, create incentives for renewables and set aside 25% of oil and gas revenue in a Legacy Fund.

Given the Liberals' obsession with promoting fossil fuels, this is unlikely to happen without public pressure.

That's Dogwood Initiative's job ... and yours. Let's get at it. ☒

Coalbed methane stalled in British Columbia

By Will Horter

Coalbed methane may kill canaries in coal mines, but British Columbians don't want it to kill their communities. We don't want coalbed methane anywhere near our homes, schools or watersheds.

In communities as diverse as Iskut, Fernie, Princeton and Hat Creek, people have come together and stood up to coalbed methane promoters, oil and gas companies like Shell and Encana, and their sycophantic supporters in government. And they have won—so far ...

Not one commercial coalbed methane operation is running in BC. Grassroots aboriginal and community activists should be proud of their amazing success in keeping the new industry from getting a foothold. Shell's withdrawal from BC's Southern Rockies is just the latest victory (see page 7).

The odds the activists faced were formidable. Provincial royalties—the money citizens like you and I get in return for the giveaway of public resources—were slashed to encourage coalbed methane exploration and drilling.

A typical coalbed methane project may pay only 13% in royalties, minus a subsidy of \$50,000 per well and \$100,000 “offsets” to encourage summer drilling.

But the battle is not over. Gas prices are expected to move even higher, as North America's fossil fuel addiction collides with the reality of diminishing supply.

Driven by the subsidies, the demand for new supplies for unconventional gases like coalbed methane will intensify.

The upper and lower Skeena are likely to be the next hot spots in BC. Shell will continue to pressure to drill in the Sacred Headwaters of the Skeena, Stikine and Nass. And Outrider Energy, a small upstart with no track record and little apparent financial support, has renewed

efforts to acquire coalbed methane drilling rights in Telkwa and Smithers in the lower Skeena.

It could be a turbulent spring and summer in the Skeena. Although Shell has told some Tahltan activists they will delay new drilling until 2007, they have told others they plan to drill this summer. And the Ministry of Energy and Mines is hinting it will soon sell coalbed methane drilling rights in Telkwa and Smithers to Outrider.

As the map shows, the Skeena is not the only place at risk. Coalbed methane potential exists across BC, so rights to the farmlands of the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, the serene ranchlands of Hat Creek near Cache Creek, and the lands around Merritt, Princeton, Hudson's Hope, and the Tuya and Bowron Rivers could be sold at any time.

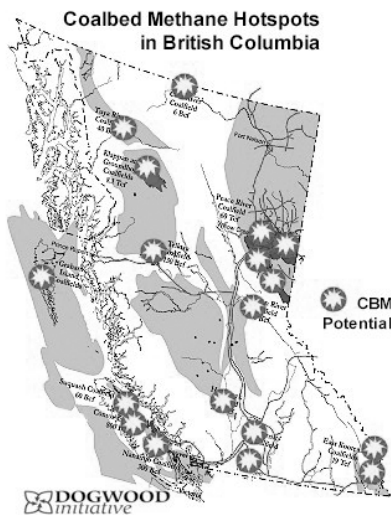
Coalbed methane is a gas trapped in coalbeds by enormous water pressure.

This water must be removed to free the gas. Getting the water out of the ground is an expensive, environmentally destructive process.

British Columbians will continue to oppose drilling, because the impacts of coalbed methane can be devastating. And the more they learn, the more they oppose it.

So coalbed methane will continue to face local opposition wherever it is proposed in BC. Dogwood Initiative, Wildsight, and West Coast Environmental Law will continue to support local activists and First Nations with the information, advice, and resources they need to protect their communities. ✕

“We have a management plan for coalbed methane. We plan to leave it in the ground for another 3000 years”, says Mike Retasket, Chief of the Bonaparte Indian Band of Hat Creek”



Coalbed methane projects entail an ugly mix of wells, roads, pipelines, and water disposal facilities. Try to picture this in the lush fields of the Comox Valley, in the Sacred Headwaters or near Smithers

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Staff and Volunteer Update

So much has happened at Dogwood over the last four months. It is useful to have this opportunity to reflect on all that has changed over the spring. Thanks to all our staff, board members, partners, volunteers and supporters who have given of their time and expertise enabling Dogwood Initiative to fulfill its mission.

Helena Mahoney, Sean Daley, Pavlina Vagnerova, Devon McKleay, and Berkley Brady contributed their editing and research skills to our Enbridge pipeline report, and cross-referenced dozens of finance reports to help build our political contributions database.

Contractor, Penny Murray has stepped forward to coordinate our upcoming *Strength in Community Festival*.

For their final project in Applied Communications, Camosun College students Libby Young and Catriona McDiarmid worked on the *Strength in Community Festival*: updating Dogwood's website; designing flyers, radio spots, and a fantastic poster which is being displayed around town at some of the more exclusive bus stops.

We are thrilled to welcome our new Office Manager, Rita Fromholt; and two new Board members, Geoff Mann and Stephen Whipp:



Rita comes to Dogwood with over eight years experience in non-profit program and administrative management with organizations such as the Rainforest Solutions Project (Sage Foundation), Ecotrust Canada and Pivot Legal Society.

Rita has a degree in Communications from SFU and a diploma in accounting

from the Certified Management Accountants Association. She is also currently completing the Leadership Vancouver program, and has participated in several Hollyhock training programs including the Art of Leadership.



Geoff is a professor in the Department of Geography at Simon Fraser University, having previously taught at the University of California and at UBC.

He received a PhD in Environmental Policy from the University of California, Berkeley, and an M.Sc. in Environmental Planning from the University of Guelph. For the past decade, his research and teaching have focused on the intersection of environmental and labour politics, with a special emphasis on the political economy of natural resources in western North America. Prior to university life, Geoff worked for several years with "at risk" youth. He and his partner Michelle and their two boys live in Vancouver.



Stephen Whipp is an activist. He believes passionately that individuals working together for the common good can change the world, and make it better for everyone.

Before coming to financial planning in 1996, Steve dedicated over 20 years to environmental justice and community and aboriginal issues in various parts of Canada. He's worked for aboriginal organizations in northern B.C. and the N.W.T.; covered environmental and aboriginal issues as a journalist and columnist; managed public legal education programs; and advocated on northern and environmental issues on Parliament Hill.

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