ECONEWS #214

EcoNews is a free monthly newsletter, funded by your kind donations. It dreams of a world blessed by the harmony of nature, the pleasures of community, and the joys of personal fulfillment, guided and protected by our active citizenship.

To receive EcoNews by email, sign up at www.earthfuture.com/econews. To receive it by mail send your address to Guy Dauncey, EcoNews, 395 Conway Rd, Victoria V9E 2B9.

Many thanks to The Pinch Group at Raymond James, T.Lim, Taania Dancer, Arnold Ranneris, Moireen Philips, Dee Bailin, Marlin Rice, Francis Gundry, Barbara Scott, Ruth Masters, Anne Hansen, C. Browning, William Ashwell, Kim Feltham, Jocelyn Braithwaite, Ann Tasko, Laura Anderson, Jan Carroll, Vivian Chenard, Bob Willard and Susan Draper.

The Money	April	May	June
Copies printed	1650	1500	1500
Sent by email	3080	3070	3120
Print, postage	$672	$802	750
Editorial	$450	$450	$450
Donations	$1168	$920	You?
Advertising	$50	$30	
Balance	$476	$174	

THE ECO-PERSONALS

$1 a word. Max 5 lines, non-profits, low-income free. 1" box ad $50

* **Lovely room to rent**, close to ocean, downtown, cooking facilities, $35/night, weekly and monthly rates 250-382-3810.

* **Create the B.C. you want** with The Land Conservancy. Step in and film a "be the change" video about why you support TLC. Step forward and make a donation. Share your video with your friends. Click here! www.bethechangebc.ca.

ECONEWS BY MAIL

I have been publishing EcoNews for coming up 20 years, and steadily printing fewer on paper as more people chose to read it by email. Both ways are fine. It costs $750 a month to print and mail, however, and for the past 20 years the donations have always flowed in to cover the cost. That is not the case at present, however. There's no money in the bank to cover this issue, or the 20 hours I put in each month to create it. Maybe the time will soon come to stop the paper version? If you value receiving it on paper, could you send a donation to cover the cost? (EcoNews, 395 Conway Rd, Victoria V9E 2B9). Many thanks! And many thanks to kind readers who have already donated.

ONE WIPE AT A TIME…

The trees grow peacefully in the forest. They have been growing there for many years, and a whole wonderful world of fungi, plants, birds, insects and animals has grown up around them, calling the forest home and enjoying its tranquility. Then one day, the forest awakes to a harsh and frightening noise - the death machines are coming, cutting, stripping and destroying everything in their way. Where it can, the wildlife flees. The trees groan, and face their end. The trees are cut, loaded, and trucked across country to a pulp and paper mill. Here, they are pulped, smushed and smoothed into the softest toilet paper. Broken into a thousand rolls, they are trucked to a store and sold to a family. For three brief seconds, they wipe someone's bottom, and then they are flushed away into the sewer, and (if you live in Victoria) into the sea.

Globally, over 27,000 trees are cut, turned into toilet paper and flushed away *every day* - that's a million trees a year. This is how we degrade our planet, one wipe at a time. But why are trees being cut to make toilet paper, instead of using recycled paper? Because toilet paper made from new trees provides the softer, fluffier wipe that so many pampered, unintentionally ecocidal human bottoms enjoy.

There has always been eco-friendly toilet paper made by companies like Seventh Generation, but tissues made from 100% recycled fibre make up only 2% of the market, so for each person trying to make a difference, 49 are busy wiping away the forest.

In a big breakthrough, however, Cascades - Canada's second largest manufacturer of tissue products - has made a $30 million investment in a process that gives recycled paper the softness people like, and it is using 100% recycled fibre in its Enviro-Premium toilet paper and paper towels. They are even here in Victoria, recycling from the blue box to the bum.

So please, tell all your friends! The Cascades Enviro brand is in all the stores, and no-one need ever destroy another tree just to wipe their bum. It's $4.99 for 12 rolls on special at Thrifty's right now; normally $8.99, 50 cents cheaper than Charmin. All the other brands - Purex, Charmin, Royale, Kleenex, President's Choice - treat them as you would a chainsaw murderer - for that's exactly what they are. See www.cascades.com/site/tissue-paper/bathroom-tissue.html and www.worldwatch.org/node/6403. For a portable "bidet in a bottle" that goes one step further and uses no paper at all, see www.bit.ly/tjebbi.

SANSUM PARADISE

It's right on the edge of paradise, overlooking the fast-moving currents of Sansum Narrows that run between Salt Spring and lands between Maple Bay and Genoa Bay. It is a total treasure, and The Land Conservancy (TLC) has quite rightly stepped up to acquire its 128 acres, to protect it in perpetuity. There's a stunning video - my, the TLC makes good videos - at http://bit.ly/sansum. Be sure you view it on full screen! It makes the case for protecting it better than any words can. It's like a local Ayers Rock, covered in moss, lichens, arbutus, cedars, Garry oak trees, wildflowers and total beauty of undisturbed ecological harmony.

But nothing as stunning as this comes easy, like lottery winnings in Campbell River. The TLC's option to buy carries a price $1.85 million, with a need to raise the money by the end of June. That means - like - now! The Cowichan Land Trust, the Cowichan Valley Regional District and an anonymous donor have pledged over $1 million, leaving $585,000 to raise in the next 30 days. As an incentive, the artist Sue Coleman is offering 12x18 prints of her painting *Sansum Point* (see below) for $140 if you buy before June 30, with $100 being donated to the purchase.

The Cowichan Valley's newly re-elected MP Jean Crowder has bought one - will you join her? Just go to http://suecoleman.ca. To make other donations, call 1-877-485-2422 or http://blog.conservancy.bc.ca/current-campaigns/save-sansum-point. And yea, for The Land Conservancy!

PESTICIDES AND INTELLIGENCE

We know that exposure to some pesticides increases the risk that you'll get a cancer known as non-Hodgkin lymphoma. We know that exposure to pesticides increases the risk of prostate and breast cancer. And now we know that when a baby is in the womb, there is a 5.5 drop in IQ scores by the age of seven for every ten-fold increase in prenatal exposure to organophosphate pesticides. You want dumb children? Then spray away - you won't need to bother with your child's college education.

Will BC do as 35 BC municipalities and three provinces have already done, and ban the use of cosmetic pesticides? It looks very hopeful, since Premier Christy Clark is supporting a move by Opposition Leader Adrian Dix to advance a private member's bill to protect our health by banning the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides in British Columbia. And wow - when did a Premier last support a private member's bill by the leader of the opposition? This is what progress looks like. But the lawn-care companies are fighting back, presumably reasoning that that we need more dumb children who will hire them when they're adults, so please send emails of encouragement both to Christy Clark premier@gov.bc.ca and to Adrian Dix adrian.dix.mla@leg.bc.ca

OUR HIDDEN EMISSIONS

When you mess with the atmosphere, you mess with the climate, and that means you mess with the weather. Are the unprecedented mile-wide tornadoes that ripped across the US south-east, killing hundreds, linked to climate change? No-one can say - but "the climate system is an angry beast and we are poking it with sticks," said Dr. Wallace Broecker, the prestigious climate scientist. Can the persistent cold weather that is making tomato plants shiver in the ground on Canada's west coast be linked to climate change? No-one has suggested it - but the rapidly warming Arctic does affect the jet stream, which governs our weather.

Whatever the impacts, we know they're coming. With the failure of the last UN climate conference, we're on track to a global temperature increase of 4°C by the end of the century - take a look at westcoastclimateequity.org to see what that looks like. The last time the world's temperature was 3°C warmer, the sea-level was 25 metres higher. Not inches - metres. That was back in the Pliocene era, 3-5 million years ago, when our ancestors in Africa were slowly beginning to take on human attributes.

So it's good news that the BC government has made the commitment to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 33% below the 2007 level by 2020? (That's 20% below 1990.) Yes it is, but let us not be fooled. The target we need to strive for is 25-40% below 1990 by 2020; Britain has just made a commitment to reduce its emissions by 50% below 1990 by 2027.

But wait - we're all missing something big, which is the hidden emissions that come from imported goods. When a factory in China uses coal-fired electricity to make plastic lawn furniture that we buy because it's so cheap, it carries a carbon footprint that is not counted in our national or provincial emissions. The latest estimate is that 26% of the world's CO_2 emissions come from goods produced for trade. We've a long way to go before we get a grip on this.

And what about our *exported* carbon emissions - such as the coal that BC ships to Japan and Korea? One calculation puts its greenhouse gas footprint at over 50 million tonnes of GHGs a year, compared to 66 million tonnes for BC as a whole (not counting imports) - and there will be a lot more if the Raven coal mining project gets the go-ahead (see Action of the Month).

So, long story short, we need to pressure all three BC political parties to keep the climate action coming, and push them to engage in a race to the top. Which party can come up with the best policies, and commitments?

THE GARDEN PATH
395 Conway Road, Saanich
Home of the Zero Mile Diet
Open Garden every Friday 10-6pm
Plants - Seeds - Books - Tours
Refreshments
www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath

SAN FRANCISCO GETAROUND

Here's something new, alongside carsharing and ridesharing. In San Francisco, a new online service called Getaround (www.getaround.com) (with flavours of the Beach Boys) lets car owners rent their vehicles to other members of the service. What a simple idea! The idea was hatched in 2009 by three postgraduate students who wanted to go beyond carsharing. Its called "peer to peer sharing", and it's already common with house-swaps. Thanks to a new California law that allows vehicle owners to share their cars without jeopardizing their auto insurance, there were no major barriers. A Toyota Corolla rents for $5-$6 an hour. This being San Francisco for $50 an hour you can rent a Tesla Roadster electric vehicle. You browse your neighbourhood on the website to see who's sharing, and arrange the rental on your iPhone. In another San Francisco peer-to-peer outfit - Relay Rides (www.relayrides.com), you install a device in your car that allows authorized borrowers to access your vehicle. A third outfit, Spride Share (www.spride.com) is linked to the existing car sharing club and is outfitted with its technology, so the cars effectively become part of the fleet - expanding the number of car sharing vehicles available to members. This new trend could become very big, with car-owners earning up to $350 a month by renting out their vehicles.

ACTION OF THE MONTH: RAVEN COAL, COMOX VALLEY

So - the proposal to start coal mining in the Comox has finally advanced to its environmental assessment - and we are being formally invited to say what we think. How can you refuse such an offer?

We have until June 27th to tell them what we think about this proposal to dig into the Earth and mine it for coal, the use of which poses such an enormous threat to our planet's atmosphere, oceans, ecosystems and civilization. The mined coal will pour more mercury into the air when it's burnt, which is taken in by fish in lakes and oceans. The mining will also risk our Island's clean water and salmon runs, create air pollution from coal dust, and tarnish the emerging ecotourism economies of the Comox Valley and Port Alberni. Is this what we really want, just for a few dirty jobs in a throw-back to the old industrial age? Hell no. Here's the coal mining industry's take, that makes it look as fresh as spring flowers: www.theravenproject.ca

Action: Email your comments to raven@ceaa-acee.gc.ca, fax them to 250-356-6448, or use this online form www.eao.gov.bc.ca/pcp/forms/Raven.html

Mining the Comox Valley
Green smudged with black.
Whose great idea was this?