



THE CITY OF WINDSOR

COUNCIL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

VALERIE CRITCHLEY
CITY CLERK

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER
TO OUR FILE NO. _____



January 24, 2013

TO: **ALL MEMBERS OF THE WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

This is to advise that the next meeting of the Windsor and Essex County Environment Committee is scheduled as follows:

**Thursday, February 7, 2013
5:30 o'clock p.m.
Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant
4155 Ojibway Parkway**

The *attached* agenda will be considered. Please notify the undersigned at 519-255-6222, ext. 6430, if you are unable to attend.

Yours very truly,

Karen Kadour
Committee Coordinator



AGENDA
WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
held on Thursday, February 7, 2013
Meeting at 5:30p.m.
At LOU ROMANO WATER RECLAMATION PLANT

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **DECLARATION OF CONFLICT**

3. **MINUTES**

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held January 7, 2013 – *to be e-mailed separately.*

4. **PRESENTATION**

Director, Essex Region Conservation Authority, Richard Wyma: Introduction to the Trail On! Campaign and Canada's response to the International Wildlife Reserve

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

5.1 Fluoride Campaign Update

6. **COORDINATORS REPORT**

No report.

7. **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 7.1 Air
- 7.2 Transportation
- 7.3 Provincially Significant Wetlands
- 7.4 Water Quality
- 7.5 Surplus Parks Strategy

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Motion to approve an expenditure in the upset amount of \$661.90 payable to Generator Design of Canada Inc.(as part of the Energy Conservation Campaign) – *invoice is attached.*

8.2 **Green Speaker Series – Proposal for Green Speaker Series**

Proposal to invite Dan Burden, Executive Director and Cofounder of the Walkable & Livable Communities Institute for the next Green Speaker Series – Background information is *attached.*

9. **COMMUNICATIONS**

9.1 Article from Jamie Choi – Avaaz.org dated January 19, 2013 entitled "Attack of the Frankenfish" – *attached.*

- 9.2 Windsor Star Article entitled "Hazardous Goods Bound for Bridge?" – attached.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on March 7th, 2013 at the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant at 5:30 o'clock p.m.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Generator Design of Canada Inc. INVOICE

3336 Walker Rd.
Windsor, Ontario N8W 3S1
Canada
Tel: (519) 253-1787
Fax: (519) 253-9740

Invoice No.: 2014
Date: 01/10/2013
Page: 1
Terms: Net 30. Due 02/09/2013.
P.O.

Sold to:

Windsor Essex County Environment Committee
Averil Parent
4155 Ojibway Parkway
Windsor, Ontario N9C 4A5
Canada

Ship to:

Windsor Essex County Environment Committee
Averil Parent
4155 Ojibway Parkway
Windsor, Ontario N9C 4A5
Canada

Quantity	Description	Tax	Unit Price	Amount	Tax amount
1	Design of Sponsor Sheet	H	550.00	550.00	71.50
25	Printing: 8.5" x 11" Flyers - 100 lb text, 4/0 colour	H	1.43	35.75	4.65
	H - HST 13%				
	HST			76.15	
Generator Design of Canada Inc. HST: #86570 5834 RT0001					
Shipped By:		Tracking Number:			
Comment: An additional 3% charge is applied when paying with credit card.				Total Amount	661.90
Sold By: Crouse, Alan					

Happy Holidays
Ralph

Ralph: Please see attached. It appears Dan Burden's asking price is beyond WECEC's modest budget. Usually our limit for Green Speakers is \$1,000. Alan

From: Parent, Averil
Sent: December 20, 2012 3:42 PM
To: Halberstadt, Alan
Subject: Dan Burden speaker fee

Hi Alan,

I've just been in touch with someone in Dan Burden's office. He was the potential Green Speaker you mentioned to me. His speaker fee and travel would come to over \$10,000. The girl I spoke to mentioned that she might be able to combine his trip with other business in Ontario which might cut the cost in half. She will keep me posted but I told her that this would still be out of our reach.

Merry Christmas!

Averil

Averil Parent, BSc., MES
Environment and Sustainability Coordinator
City of Windsor
4155 Ojibway Parkway
Windsor, Ontario N9C 4A5
tel: (519) 253-7111 Ext. 290
fax: (519) 253-0464
email: aparent@city.windsor.on.ca

 Please consider the environment before printing this email.

22 Benefits of Urban Street Trees

By Dan Burden, Senior Urban Designer

Glattling Jackson and Walkable Communities, Inc; May, 2006

U.S Forest Service facts and figures and new traffic safety studies detail many urban street tree benefits. Once seen as highly problematic for many reasons, street trees are proving to be a great value to people living, working, shopping, sharing, walking and motoring in and through urban places.

For a planting cost of \$250-600 (includes first 3 years of maintenance) a single street tree returns over \$90,000 of direct benefits (not including aesthetic, social and natural) in the lifetime of the tree. Street trees (generally planted from 4 feet to 8 feet from curbs) provide many benefits to those streets they occupy. These trees provide so many benefits that they should always be considered as an urban area default street making feature. With new attentions being paid to global warming causes and impacts more is becoming known about the many negative environmental impacts of treeless urban streets. We are well on the way to recognizing the need for urban street trees to be the default design, rather than a luxury item to be tolerated by traffic engineering and budget conscious city administrators.

The many identified problems of street trees are overcome with care by designers. Generally street trees are placed each 15-30 feet. These trees are carefully positioned to allow adequate sight triangles at intersections and driveways, to not block illumination of the street from overhead lamps, and not impact lines above or below ground. Street trees of various varieties can be used in all climates, including semi-arid and even arid conditions.

The science of street tree placement and maintenance is well known and observed in a growing number of communities (i.e. Chicago, Illinois; Sacramento, Davis, California; Eugene, Oregon; Seattle, Redmond, Olympia and Issaquah, Washington; Charlotte, N.C.). Although care and maintenance of trees in urban places is a costly task, the value in returned benefits is so great that a sustainable community cannot be imagined without these important green features.



Properly placed and spaced urban street trees provide these benefits:

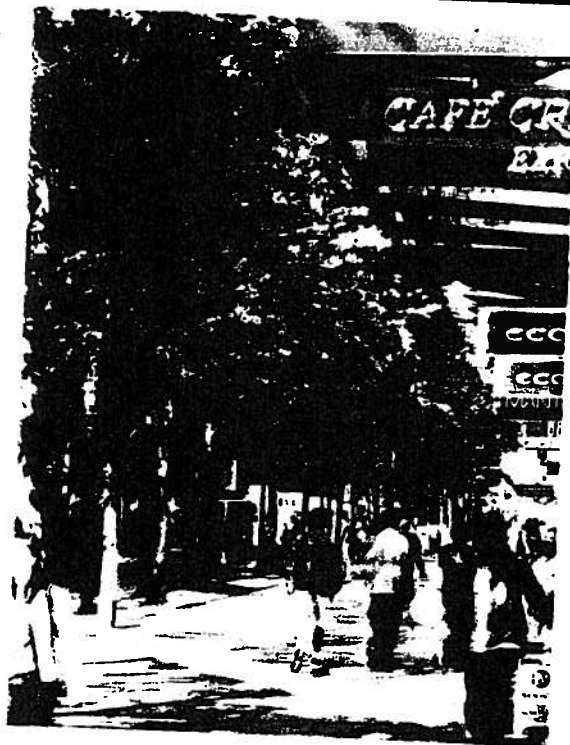
Increased motorized traffic and pedestrian safety (contrary to popular myths). See below article for details on mode safety enhancements. See especially the compilation of safety benefits detailed in, *Safe Streets, Livable Streets*, by Eric Dumbaugh Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 71, No. 3, Summer 2005. One such indication of increased safety with urban street trees is quoted from this document:

"Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that the inclusion of trees and other streetscape features in the roadside environment may actually reduce crashes and injuries on urban roadways. Nacleri (2003) examined the safety impacts of aesthetic streetscape enhancements placed along the roadside and medians of five arterial roadways in downtown Toronto. Using a quasi-experimental design, the author found that the inclusion of features such as trees and concrete planters along the roadside resulted in statistically significant reductions in the number of mid-block crashes along all five roadways, with the number of crashes decreasing from between 5 and 20% as a result of the streetscape improvements. While the cause for these reductions is not clear, the author suggests that the presence of a well defined roadside edge may be leading drivers to exercise greater caution."

1. **Reduced and more appropriate urban traffic speeds.** Urban street trees create vertical walls framing streets, and a defined edge, helping motorists guide their movement and assess their speed (leading to overall speed reductions). Street safety comparisons show a reduction of run-off-the-road crashes and overall crash severity when street tree sections are compared with equivalent treeless streets. (Texas A and M conducted simulation research which found people slow down while driving through a treed scape. These observations are also noted in the real world when following motorists along first a treed portion of a street, and then a non treed portion. Speed differentials of 3 mph to 15 mph are noted.



2. **Create safer walking environments**, by forming and framing visual walls and providing distinct edges to sidewalks so that motorists better distinguish between their environment and one shared with people. If a motorist were to significantly err in their urban driving task, street trees can deflect or fully stop a motorist from taking another human life.
3. **Trees call for planting strips**, which further separate motorists from pedestrians, buildings and other urban fabric.
4. **Increased security**. Trees create more pleasant walking environments, bringing about increased walking, talking, pride, care of place, association and therefore actual ownership and surveillance of homes, blocks, neighborhoods plazas, businesses and other civic spaces.
5. **Improved business**. Businesses on treescaped streets show 20% higher income streams, which is often the essential competitive edge needed for main street store success, versus competition from plaza discount store prices.
6. **Less drainage infrastructure**. Trees absorb the first 30% of most precipitation through their leaf system, allowing evaporation back into the atmosphere. This moisture never hits the ground. Another percentage (up to 30%) of precipitation is absorbed back into the ground and taken in and held onto by the root structure, then absorbed and then transpired back to the air. Some of this water also naturally percolates into the ground water and aquifer. Storm water runoff and flooding potential to urban properties is therefore reduced.



7. **Rain, sun, heat and skin protection.**

For light or moderate rains, pedestrians find less need for rain protection. In cities with good tree coverage there is less need for chemical sun blocking agents. Temperature differentials of 5-15 degrees are felt when walking under tree canopied streets.



8. **Reduced harm from tailpipe emissions.** Automobile and truck exhaust is a major public health concern and contains significant pollutants, including carbon monoxide (CO), volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and particulate matter (PM). Tailpipe emissions are adding to asthma, ozone and other health impacts. Impacts are reduced significantly from proximity to trees.



9. **Gas transformation efficiency.** Trees in street proximity absorb 9 times more pollutants than more distant trees, converting harmful gasses back into oxygen and other useful and natural gasses.

10. **Lower urban air temperatures.** Asphalt and concrete streets and parking lots are known to increase urban temperatures 3-7 degrees. These temperature increases significantly impact energy costs to homeowners and consumers. A properly shaded neighborhood, mostly from urban street trees, can reduce energy bills for a household from 15-35%.

11. **Lower Ozone.** Increases in urban street temperatures that hover directly above asphalt where tailpipe emissions occur dramatically increase creation of harmful ozone and other gasses into more noxious substances impacting health of people, animals and surrounding agricultural lands.



12. Convert streets, parking and walls into more aesthetically pleasing environments.

There are few streetmaking elements that do as much to soften wide, grey visual wastelands created by wide streets, parking lots and massive, but sometimes necessary blank walls than trees.

13. Soften and screen necessary street features

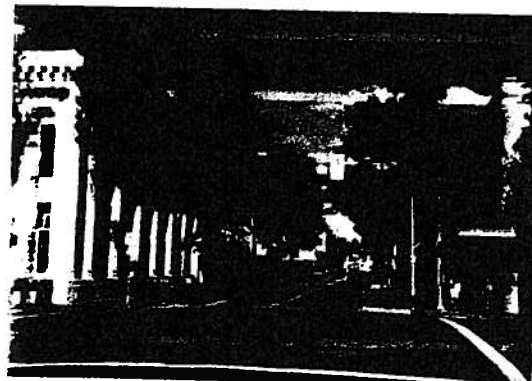
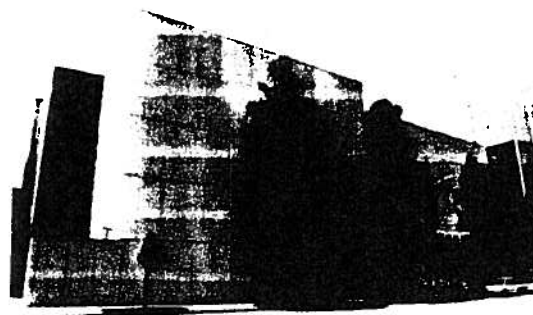
such as utility poles, light poles and other needed street furniture. Trees are highly effective at screening those other vertical features to roadways that are needed for many safety and functional reasons.

14. Reduced blood pressure, improved overall emotional and psychological health.

People are impacted by ugly or attractive environments where they spend time. Kathlene Wolf, Social Science Ph.D. University of Washington gave a presentation that said "the risk of treed streets was questionable compared to other types of accidents along with the increased benefit of trees on human behavior, health, pavement longevity, etc." She noted that trees have a calming and healing effect on ADHD adults and teens.

15. Time in travel perception. Other research and observations confirm that motorists perceive the time it takes to get through treed versus non-treed environments has a significant differential. A treeless environment trip is perceived to be longer than one that is treed (Walter Kulash, P.E.; speech circa 1994, Glatting Jackson).

16. Reduced road rage. Although this may at first seem a stretch, there is strong, compelling research that motorist road rage is less in green urban versus stark suburban areas. Trees and aesthetics, which are known to reduce blood pressure, may handle some of this calming effect.



17. **Improved operations potential.** When properly positioned and maintained, the backdrop of street trees allow those features that should be dominant to be better seen, such as vital traffic regulatory signs. The absence of a well developed Greenscape allows the sickly grey mass of strip to dominate the visual world. At the same time, poorly placed signs, signals, or poorly maintained trees reduces this positive gain, and thus proper placement and maintenance must be rigidly adhered to.



18. **Added value to adjacent homes, businesses and tax base.** Realtor based estimates of street tree versus non street tree comparable streets relate a \$15-25,000 increase in home or business value. This often adds to the base tax base and operations budgets of a city allowing for added street maintenance. Future economic analysis may determine that this is a break-even for city maintenance budgets.



19. **Provides a lawn for a splash and spray zone, storage of snow, driveway elevation transition and more.** Tree lawns are an essential part of the operational side of a street.

20. **Filtering and screening agent.** Softens and screens utility poles, light poles, on-street and off-street parking and other features creating visual pollution to the street.

21. **Longer pavement life.** Studies conducted in a variety of California environments show that the shade of urban street trees can add from 40-60% more life to costly asphalt. This factor is based on reduced daily heating and cooling (expansion/contraction) of asphalt. As peak oil pricing increases roadway overlays, this will become a significant cost reduction to maintaining a more affordable roadway system.

22. **Connection to nature and the human senses.** Urban street trees provide a canopy, root structure and setting for important insect and bacterial life below the surface; at grade for pets and romantic people to pause for what pets and romantic people pause for; they act as essential lofty environments for song birds, seeds, nuts, squirrels and other urban life. Indeed, street trees so well establish natural and comfortable urban life it is unlikely we will ever see any advertisement for any marketed urban product, including cars, to be featured without street trees making the ultimate dominant, bold visual statement about place.

120 N. Orange Avenue | Orlando, FL 32801 | 1.866.347.2734 | www.walkable.org

Dan Burden is the nation's most recognized authority on walkability, bicycle & pedestrian programs, street corridor & intersection design, traffic flow & calming, road diets, and other planning elements that affect roadway environments. Dan is also sought after by the health community, promoting neighborhoods, villages, and cities that are designed for more active, interactive, and healthy living. Dan has 37 years of experience in developing, promoting and evaluating alternative transportation facilities, traffic calming practices and sustainable community design.



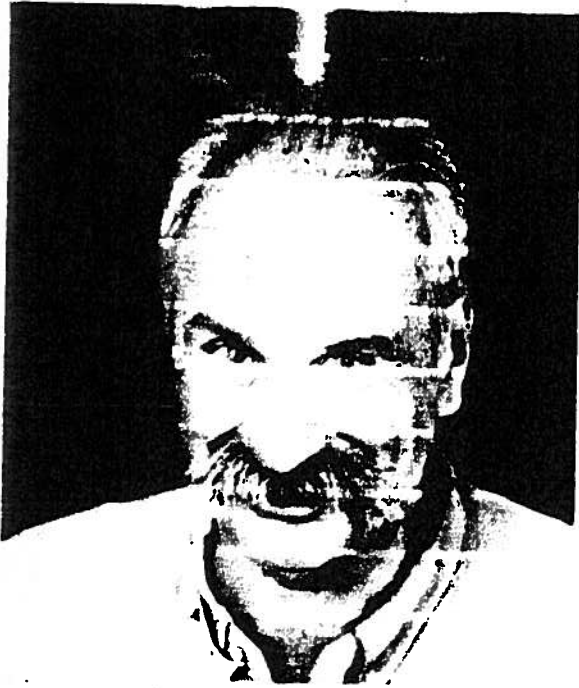
Employed by Florida DOT in 1980 as the first Bicycle Coordinator, Dan returned from an inspiring trip to Australia, changed his job title and became the nation's first full time State Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator in 1981. Then in 1996, with many requests to help others, Dan and his wife Lys founded Walkable Communities, Inc., a non-profit corporation helping North America develop walkability programs and walkable communities. In 2005, Dan joined Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc. and became a Senior Urban Designer, Principal, and Shareholder. Although Dan is contracted and paid through Glatting Jackson, he and his staff maintain and promote walkability information and knowledge through Walkable Communities, Inc.

There are few people in the country who know more about traffic calming practices, access management, building streets for emergency responders, intersection design, and other strategies for creating pedestrian and bicycle friendly communities than Dan Burden. He has taught bicycle and pedestrian facility design courses, livability, Smart Growth, and Sustainable Transportation in hundreds of different communities throughout North America.

Dan has personally photographed and examined walking, bicycling, placemaking, and town center conditions in over 2500 cities in the U.S. and abroad. He worked as a bicycle consultant in China for the United Nations in 1994, and he has been to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and many European countries to photograph their great cities. His pictures have been published in the New York Times, National Geographic, Better Homes and Gardens, Sierra Club calendars, and Weekly Reader. Presentations are always richly illustrated with examples from near and far.

- Time Magazine recently listed Dan as "one of the six most important civic innovators in the world."
- The Transportation Research Board (National Academy of Sciences) honored Dan by making him their Distinguished Lecturer in 2001.
- In 2007 EPA's New Partners for Smart Growth gave Dan its first "Lifetime Achievement Award."
- In 2000, The Association of Pedestrian and Bicyclists Professionals (APBP) honored Dan with its first "Lifetime Achievement Award."
- The League of American Bicyclists lists Dan as "one of the 25 most significant leaders in bicycling for the past 100 years."

- Project for Public Places (PPS) profiles Dan as it highlights those individuals who have captured our imagination about the need to create great places in every community.



Dan served on the Florida DOT "Greenbook" Committee to help draft standards for streets and traffic calming. He has been instrumental in developing diverse programs in walkability, bicycling facilities, traffic calming, and sustainable transportation programs in scores of cities, large and small. These principles work in towns of only 600 people, as well as those having 600,000 or 6,000,000. The cities Dan has worked in include: Bradenton Beach, Satellite Beach, Ormond Beach, Key Largo, West Palm Beach, South Miami Beach, Orlando, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach and downtown Venice in Florida; Lacey, Bellevue, Mercer Island, University Place, Maple Valley, Shoreline, Seattle, Port Townsend, Bellingham and Colville, Washington; Austin and Round Rock, Texas; Arcata, San Diego, Sacramento, St Helena, West Hollywood, Claremont, Encinitas and Santa Monica, California; Eugene, Corvallis, Portland, Oregon; Asheville, Waynesville and Charlotte, North Carolina; Lansing, Traverse City, Kalamazoo, Brighton, Howell, Michigan; Grand Junction, Bayfield, Boulder, Denver, Greeley, Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, Colorado; Las Vegas, Nevada; Hartford and Stamford, Connecticut, Columbus, Ohio and Honolulu, Hawaii, among many others.

Dan Burden is the inventor of the walking audit. He often serves as the key facilitator for highly interactive 2-5 day public involvement planning processes, known as a charrette. The charrette process includes focus group sessions, walking audits, brainstorming sessions, prioritization, and citizen-driven "design table" workshops in which local residents help with a "hands-on" approach for design solutions to neighborhood traffic problems. As part of each charrette Dan makes a 20-40 minute presentation on walkability or traffic calming practices, based on his experience with similar programs in more than 2,500 cities nationwide.

Dan has given keynotes in many states, regions, national, and international conferences, ranging from 60 people to 16,000. Presentations at state, national, and international levels have been delivered to specific audiences as broad and diverse as world health, American Public Works, transportation engineering, traffic calming, diet and nutrition conferences, architecture, active living, aging, planning, landscape architecture, Smart Growth, Sustainability, emergency response, city and national beautification, main street, and child safety.

"Having attended many of Dan Burden's presentations, and having collaborated with him on several, I can vouch for his greatest talent: getting people with different viewpoints to agree on a vision for their community, by showing them the untapped beauty and potential they have in their greatest commonly-owned asset - their public streets. Dan can actually get Americans to care about cities again. And he does it by getting the traffic engineers on board, not by vilifying them, but by making them excited about being involved in change."

Kadour, Karen

From: Halberstadt, Alan
Sent: January 19, 2013 8:05 AM
To: 'Jamie Choi - Avaaz.org'
Cc: Kadour, Karen; cwright@leamington.ca
Subject: RE: Attack of the Frankenfish

Karen: Can you please place this on the agenda as a communication for the WECEC February meeting. Thanks Alan

From: Jamie Choi - Avaaz.org [mailto:avaaz@avaaz.org]
Sent: January 18, 2013 7:16 AM
To: Halberstadt, Alan
Subject: Attack of the Frankenfish

Dear friends,

The US is about to treat the world to the first genetically modified meat: a mutant salmon that could wipe out wild salmon populations and threaten human health -- but we can stop it now before our plates are filled with suspicious Frankenfish.

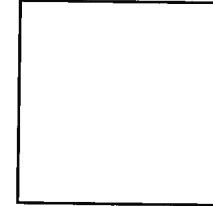
The new fake salmon grows twice as fast as the real one, and not even scientists know its long-term health effects. Yet it's about to be declared safe for us to eat, based on studies paid for by the company that created the GMO creature! **Luckily, the US is legally required to consider public opinion before deciding.** A growing coalition of consumers, environmentalists, and fishermen is calling on the government to trash this fishy deal. Let's urgently build an avalanche of global support to help them win.

The consultation is happening right now and we have a real chance to keep mutant fish off the menu. **Sign to stop Frankenfish and share widely** -- when we reach 1 million, our call will be officially submitted to the public consultation:

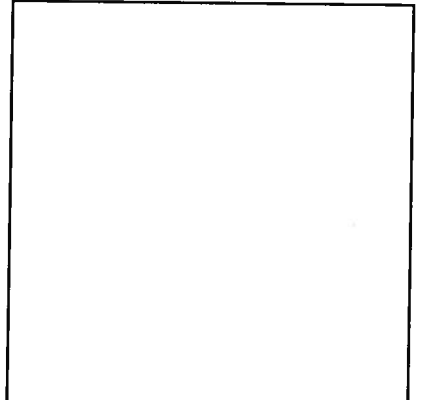
http://www.avaaz.org/en/stop_frankenfish_r/?bsZcWbb&v=21097

The company that developed the Frankenfish **altered the DNA of the salmon to create a fish that would grow at lightning speed, year-round.** Not only do we not understand its long term health effects, if a few of them or their eggs reached the wild, these super-salmon could decimate entire wild salmon populations. **Worse, once they hit supermarkets, we won't be able to tell apart Frankenfish and real salmon,** so there won't be a way to avoid it!

The biotech industry has spent hundreds of millions of dollars lobbying governments to approve its GM crops. **Frankenfish is their next million dollar baby** -- it could open the floodgates for other transgenic meats. **But the US government will consider public opinion before it makes its final decision** -- if we can stun them with a giant global opposition when they least expect it, we can stop this reckless deal.



The US is about to treat the world to the first genetically modified meat: a mutant salmon that could wipe out wild salmon populations and threaten human health. Unless we stop it, this Frankenfish could **open the floodgates for biotech meat around the world.** Click below to build 1 million voices to stop it:



Frankenfish is on the verge of being approved -- let's make sure biotech companies don't decide what we eat.
Help build one million voices to stop the mutant fish:

http://www.avaaz.org/en/stop_frankenfish_r/?bsZcWbb&y=21097

Avaaz members have come together to protect the natural world and our food system from dangerous meddling. In 2010, over 1 million of us spoke out against genetically modified food in Europe. Let's come together again to stop Frankenfish.

With hope,

Jamie, Nick, Emma, Dalia, Emily, Paul, Ricken, Wen-Hua and the whole Avaaz team

MORE INFORMATION

Engineered Fish Moves a Step Closer to Approval (NY Times)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/22/business/gene-altered-fish-moves-closer-to-federal-approval.html>

GM salmon: FDA's assessment of environmental risks (LA Times)

<http://www.latimes.com/health/boostershots/la-heb-aquabounty-salmon-fda-assesses-risks-20121224,0,2554480.story>

Genetically Modified Animals (Women's Health Magazine)

<http://www.womenshealthmag.com/nutrition/genetically-modified-animals>

Protect our waters from GE Salmon (Center for Food Safety)

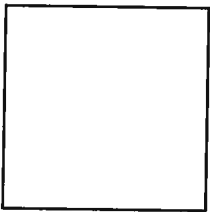
<http://ge-fish.org/>

Below the Surface: The Dangers of Genetically Engineered Salmon (Food & Water Watch)

<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/factsheet/below-the-surface/>

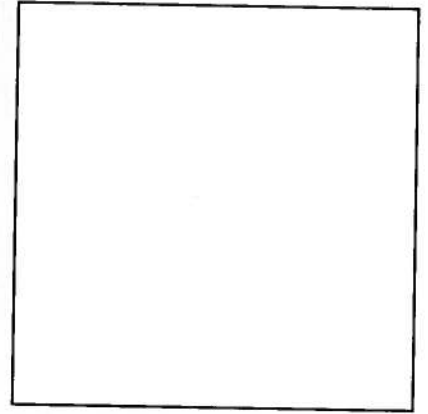
Genetically Engineered Salmon (Ocean Conservancy)

<http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/aquaculture/aquaculture-genetically.html>



Support the Avaaz Community!

We're entirely funded by donations and receive no money from governments or corporations. Our dedicated team ensures even the smallest contributions go a long way.



Avaaz.org is a 17-million-person **global campaign network** that works to ensure that the views and values of the world's people shape global decision-making. ("Avaaz" means "voice" or "song" in many languages.) Avaaz members live in every nation of the world; our team is spread across 19 countries on 6 continents and operates in 14 languages. Learn about some of Avaaz's biggest campaigns [here](#), or follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

You are getting this message because you signed "[Poisoning Canada's water](#)" on 2011-07-07 using the email address ahalberstadt@city.windsor.on.ca. To ensure that Avaaz messages reach your inbox, please add avaaz@avaaz.org to your address book. To change your email address, language settings, or other personal information, [contact us](#), or simply [go here to unsubscribe](#).

To contact Avaaz, please do not reply to this email. Instead, write to us at www.avaaz.org/en/contact or call us at +1-888-922-8229 (US).

Jan. 18, 2012

HAZARDOUS GOODS BOUND FOR BRIDGE?

Fears raised over response to spills

DAVE BATTAGELLO
The Windsor Star

The Michigan government is recommending that hazardous materials be allowed to cross the Ambassador Bridge, raising concerns that the 83-year-old crossing would be ill-equipped to handle a spill.

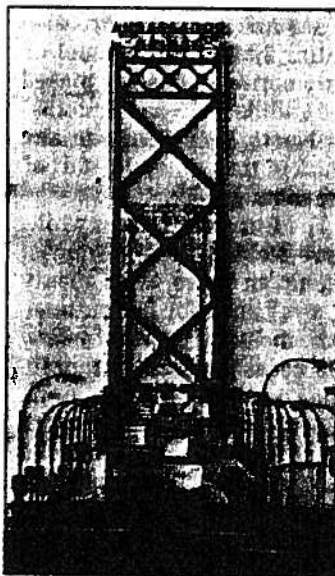
"I personally don't think allowing dangerous goods on the bridge is wise," said Windsor fire department Chief Bruce Montone.

"Far more consultation needs to take place."

"Professional courtesy suggests they should be talking to us. We certainly haven't been consulted. That's the problem; they only have jurisdiction over half."

The Michigan Department of Transportation began studying the issue in 2010 following a bridge request to waive a hazardous materials ban that has been in place since the bridge opened in 1929.

Last month, MDOT released an 18-page report which in-



TYLER BROWN/BRIDGE/Windsor Star
The Michigan Department of Transportation has recommended waiving a hazardous materials ban that has been in place since 1929.

ONLINE
windsorstar.com

Should hazardous material be transported over the bridge?

cludes several recommendations for the Ambassador Bridge, the Windsor-Detroit tunnel and major roads leading to the crossings.

See HAZARDOUS, A4

Hazardous 'It makes no sense'

CONTINUED FROM A1

Under the recommendations, the bridge would be allowed to move any hazmat material over the crossing with the exception of explosives.

In some cases, such as fuel tankers, an escort with flashing lights would be required to accompany trucks carrying the dangerous materials.

The report also recommends a full ban on hazmat goods in the tunnel and along about two kilometres of the Lodge Freeway (M-10) closest to downtown Detroit.

Montone believes quick access to any accident or spill on the bridge involving a truck carrying hazardous materials would be difficult, with little ability to prevent contamination of the Detroit River.

"There are an awful lot of nasty products," he said. "Just think of a radioactive spill getting into the water. The problems would expand exponentially. I shudder to think of the additional threats that could challenge us with."

Michigan Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D — Detroit), who represents neighbourhoods where the bridge is located, has sent a letter to residents encouraging them to respond to MDOT's bridge recommendation.

MDOT is soliciting public response to the proposal and agreed Thursday to hold a public hearing at an unspecified date.

Tlaib said allowing hazardous material on the bridge poses a risk to neighbouring residents from gases, flammable substances, chemicals and poisonous materials.

She said the fact that there is a densely populated southwest Detroit neighbourhood near the bridge "should compel MDOT to heed the concerns of stakeholders before granting permission to the Ambassador Bridge."

In Windsor-Detroit, only the truck ferry is allowed to transport hazardous goods across the Detroit River — in part because of its location away

from residents. Its docks are in the Brighton Beach industrial area and next to Zug Island on the Detroit side.

Truck ferry operator Gregg Ward, whose business could be shut down should the bridge be allowed to carry hazardous material, said there has been a lack of investigation on potential disasters connected to moving dangerous goods over the aging crossing.

He said it is unrealistic to expect an escort to make any difference moving hazmat across the narrow four-lane confines of the high-traffic bridge.

"The regulations are there for a reason," he said. "The MDOT study failed to fully explain to the public what would be the enhancement to public safety accomplished by permitting hazardous materials on the Ambassador Bridge."

Bridge president Dan Stampfer and MDOT did not respond Thursday to a request for comment.

Neither Ontario's Ministry of Transportation nor Transport Canada were consulted during MDOT's hazmat study.

"We will review the report and convey comments we may feel are appropriate via the public consultation process," said Bob Nichols, spokesman for MTO. "We look to MDOT to ensure any remaining consultation outreach would include key stakeholders including area crossing operators, local government and regulatory agencies."

Bridge owner Matty Moroun's poor track record in respecting community interests

have to be considered before any approval to allow hazmat on his crossing is granted, said Derek Coronado of the local Citizens Environment Alliance.

"Trust is not the first thing that comes to mind when talking about Ambassador Bridge operations," he said. "It would be interesting to know how this would work on a privately operated facility."

"There is an obvious risk factor and that underlines a serious problem in our economy," he said. "So many of these materials that are toxic are because the production process has not looked at safer substitution of materials. The best way to prevent dangers from this pollution is prevent it at the source rather than look at ways to safely transport toxic materials."

West-end resident and bridge watchdog Mary Ann Cuderman, whose bake shop is near the crossing, said the onus is on the bridge company to prove it has the ability to deal with accidents or spills.

"If something happened up there, if something started leaking like acid, what are they going to do?" she said. "There is a lot of questions they haven't answered. We have to see the full picture before allowing this."

MP Brian Masse (NDP —

Windsor West) is seeking inspection reports on the bridge's condition.

"There has to be complete accountability in knowing first about the infrastructure itself," he said.

He also said the truck ferry should be the only approved hazmat crossing in Windsor-Detroit.

"This isn't necessary," he said. "We have a crossing right now that is fully developed, functional, with a proven track record of being safe. Why would you want to expose all that regular traffic and trade (on the bridge) to hazardous materials. It makes no sense."

MDOT's Hazardous Material Routing report can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9621_110584_291617-,00.html.

Comments can be sent to Robert H. Parsons, Public Involvement and Hearings Officer, Michigan Department of Transportation by email at parsonsb@michigan.gov or fax at 517-373-9255.

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