



THE CITY OF WINDSOR

COUNCIL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

VALERIE CRITCHLEY
CITY CLERK

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER
TO OUR FILE NO. _____



August 28, 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, September 5, 2013
5:30 o'clock p.m.
*Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant***

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, September 5th, 2013

Meeting at 5:30p.m. At the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant (4155 Ojibway)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

3. **DECLARATION OF CONFLICT**

4. **MINUTES**

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held July 4th, 2013 – emailed separately.

5. **PRESENTATION**

Sergio Grando, Manager Energy Initiatives, City of Windsor – Corporate Energy Initiatives & Reporting Requirements under the Green Energy Act

6. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

5.1 Smog alert action plans and strategies

5.2 Ojibway Shores Update

7. **COORDINATORS REPORT**

WECEC Coordinator Monthly Report – attached.

8. **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 Air

7.2 Transportation

7.3 Provincially Significant Wetlands – attached.

7.4 Water Quality – attached.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Notice of Motion re. storage of nuclear waste – attached.

8.2 Bi-Annual WECEC report – attached.

8.3 2014 WECEC budget request – attached.

8.4 Potential WECEC meeting at Riverdance Community Centre

10. **COMMUNICATIONS**

9.1 The Windsor Star: Ojibway shores plan to store dric dirt, July 5th 2013 – attached.

9.2 Windsor Port Authority Media Release regarding Ojibway Shores, July 10th 2013 – attached.

9.3 The Windsor Star: Push for ojibway urban park gains steam, July 12th 2013 – attached.

9.4 The Windsor Star: Ojibway clear-cutting put on hold, July 18th 2013 – attached.

9.5 The Windsor Star: Video shows pet coke dust cloud hitting Windsor's riverfront, July 30th 2013 – attached.

9.6 The Windsor Star: Petcoke site operator halts shipments, July 20th 2013 – attached.

9.7 Media Release: Agreement between ERCA and U.S Fish and Wildlife Signed, August 14th 2013 – attached.

9.8 The Windsor Star: Concerns raised over proposed nuclear waste, August 18th 2013 – attached.

9.9 The Windsor Star: Petcoke removal hailed as victory, August 21st 2013 – attached.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting will be October 3rd, 2013 at Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant at 5:30 o'clock p.m.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

WECEC COORDINATOR MONTHLY REPORT
AVERIL PARENT



– JULY & AUGUST 2013 –

ONGOING INITIATIVES

1. Ojibway Shores Public Meeting

WECEC was very involved in promoting and encouraging residents to attend and comment on the Port Authority's proposal to develop Ojibway Shores. Members of WECEC attended the public meeting July 3rd at MacKenzie Hall, along with over 400 concerned residents. This united action may have played a role in the Port Authority's decision to cease development and work with the City of Windsor on alternative actions for the property.

2. WECEC Budget – Summary

2013 Budget		
Expense	Credit	Expenditure
2013 Budget	\$8,300.00	
Website domain renewal		\$76.32
Conservation Campaign Ad		\$1,525.39
Pat on the Back room rental		\$246.00
June meeting at Ojibway		\$122.50
Promotional Items		\$347.92
Conservation Campaign Generator Design		\$596.06
Earth Day		\$40.00
David Suzuki		\$1,000.00
Dan Burden		\$1,000.00
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Pat on the Back food		\$123.13
Wildlife tour		\$793.23
Pat on the Back plaques		\$57.40
Website hosting fee		
Totals	\$8,300.00	\$7,927.95
TOTAL REMAINING	\$372.05	

PROVINCIALY SIGNIFICANT WETLANDS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

1) Green Speaker – John Hartig

The PSW Subcommittee invited John Hartig to speak as a Green Speaker later this year. John is interested and available in late October. John has suggested that Richard Wyma be included in discussions as well.

2) City of Windsor land designation as part of the Canadian Registry of Lands

The report to City of Windsor Council asking that Peche Island, McKee Park, Goose Bay Park, St. Rose Beach Park, Bridges Bay Park, Black Oak Heritage Park, Ojibway Park, Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park and Spring Garden Natural Area be designated as part of the International Wildlife Refuge has been delayed. This allows for the opportunity for Paul Pratt to present the report to WECEC when it is complete. Paul has agreed to do so and will inform the WECEC coordinator when he is ready to present

WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

1) Phosphorous Research

The Water Quality Subcommittee continues to utilize an ERCA student to conduct research to be used in a potential phosphorous campaign next year. This campaign would build on the blue green algae video by educating residents about how to read product labels such as fertilizer and laundry soap and compare the phosphorous content for various products. The group has talked of getting permission to use phosphorous free lawn signs on city parks as well as handing them out to homeowners to encourage and educate others. Another short video about how to read labels and make informed decisions would be of great benefit to this upcoming campaign.

2) Eco Justice Great Lakes Sewage Report Card

In August, the environmental group Eco Justice released their 2013 Great Lakes Sewage Report Card. The report ranked Windsor sewage treatment as last place among other Ontario municipalities. The Water Quality subcommittee will look into this report, and potentially invite the Manager of Water Quality at the City of Windsor to a future WECEC meeting to discuss the report.

POLLUTION SURVEY RANKS WINDSOR LAST

Emma Loop, The Windsor Star | Aug 15, 2013 | Last Updated: Aug 15, 2013 - 9:04 UTC

A report that ranks Windsor dead last in the province for sewage water pollution isn't as bad as it seems, one city official says.

Paul Drca, the city's environmental quality manager, said the report fails to show that Windsor has tackled many of the big issues that earned it an overall grade of C-.

"There is a problem. No one's denying there is a problem. But the report makes us look a lot worse than we really are," Drca said this week.

The report, compiled by a group called Ecojustice, placed Windsor last out of the 12 Ontario municipalities that agreed to offer up data from 2011.

Liat Podolsky, a scientist with Ecojustice - a national organization she says takes people to court in defence of the environment - said the report "is just a snapshot." She said cities that didn't answer the survey, such as Hamilton and Kingston, with known water pollution problems could have ranked low as well.

However, she said Windsor got a low grade because when large storms hit the area, things can get messy.

"The main reason they're doing the worst is because they have the highest number and volume of partially treated bypasses that went directly into the water," she said.

According to Podolsky, a bypass happens when there's too much water flowing through the sewage system - like when a big rainstorm or massive thaw hits - and water treatment plants are overburdened. Podolsky said the plants release the excess water back into local waterways, "either partially treated or not treated at all."

In 2011, Windsor's two main water treatment plants - Lou Romano and Little River - were forced to bypass water a combined 102 times as a result of soggy weather. That means 3,785,000 cubic metres of water that didn't get a full cleaning was poured back into the Detroit and Little Rivers, Podolsky said.

– June, 2013 –

The cleaning the bypassed water did get was "not even close to adequate to removing a lot of the harmful pollutants that you would find in sewage," Podolsky said.

"That's where I have problems with the Ecojustice report," Drca said, arguing the bypassed water still got a good cleaning at the Lou Romano plant.

"The water that was discharged during those bypasses was the same water quality that treatment plant discharged for 30 years" before its \$150-million update in 2007, he said. Drca noted that in 2011, the city had "greater than two times" the average annual rainfall as well.

Windsor also received low grades for having, like most aged Canadian cities, an oldschool system that pushes waste and storm water through the same pipes.

Overflows of these pipes, referred to as combined sewer overflows, during heavy storms send a cocktail of rain and toilet water back into the rivers without any sort of treatment.

Drca said Windsor has 26 combined sewer overflows along the Detroit River. However, he said because the Ecojustice report relies on two-year-old data, it doesn't acknowledge a \$68-million fix to that part of Windsor's treatment system.

He said the city recently built a basin in front of the casino that traps the excess waste and storm water that would usually spew into the river during storm overflows.

If the storm isn't too severe, Drca said, the basin will hold the extra water in a tank until it can be sent to the Lou Romano treatment plant. But if a big storm hits, the tank treats the water itself at a minimum provincial standard, which he argued is still "a high level of treatment."

Drca said the basin only catches water from the combined sewer overflow spouts east of Caron Avenue. Those on the west end still empty untreated water into the river - and the city can't track how much or how often.

Podolsky called the new basin a "good start," but said the fact that the city is in the dark about what's coming out of the combined sewer overflows west of downtown signals "a very big problem."

Drca said the city doesn't have the money to build a second basin for the west end yet, but projects like it "can move up very quickly" depending on what's happening in the political arena.

As for the Detroit River, Drca said it's "not as bad as people think it is."

"There are bad spots," he said, "but for the most part, that river is in very good shape."

Whereas the Municipality of Kincardine has offered to host a Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) of low and intermediate level nuclear waste at the Bruce Nuclear Power Station site, supported by Ontario Power Generation (OPG);

And Whereas concern has been expressed by other Municipalities in both Canada and the United States, as well as individuals, citizen and environmental groups;

And Whereas The Town of Kingsville, in the Province of Ontario shares many those concerns, including but not solely related to the risk of embedment of nuclear waste at a site less than 1 kilometre from the Great Lakes, a source of drinking water to 40 million people and supplying 21 % of the world's fresh water;

And Whereas the proposed site is in limestone above an ancient waterbed, and there has been no intensive research done on other sites available in the granite of the Canadian Shield, or elsewhere;

And Whereas there has not been a disaster/containment plan articulated;

Be It Resolved that the Town of Kingsville is not in support of the Kincardine location for a DGR at this time, and requests more information, alternatives and plans be presented, and more research and results be reported and critically reviewed before a final decision is made.

This motion is to be forwarded to GLSLCI for distribution to the appropriate authorities and interested parties.



May 24, 2013

Joint Review Panel
Deep Geologic Repository for Low and
Intermediate Level Radioactive Waste
Case Reference Number 17520
Debra Myles, Panel Co-Manager
c/o Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
160 Elgin Street, 22nd Floor
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3
Canada

Dear Joint Review Panel:

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) is an organization of mayors and other local elected leaders from over 100 cities in Canada and the United States working together to advance the protection, restoration, and long term sustainability of the world's largest source of surface fresh water, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. The economic well-being and quality of life for the 16 million citizens of these communities as well as for all Canadians and Americans is a key goal. By making its own cities more sustainable and addressing issues that have implications for the resource, the organization seeks to lead by example and encourage others to do the same. It is for this reason that the Cities Initiative provides these comments on the deep geologic repository (DGR) proposed by Ontario Power Generation (OPG) for the long term storage of low and intermediate level radioactive waste at the Bruce Power nuclear generating station site in Kincardine, Ontario.

The Cities Initiative appreciates the cooperativeness of OPG in arranging a fact finding site visit to the proposed facility for several members of the organization. All of the right people from OPG and others from the National Waste Management Organization were there and all questions were answered in a very forthright manner. In addition, written material was provided in advance and during the tour to further inform the participants. The Cities Initiative learned a great deal more about the project and is in a better position to provide comments.

Timing for Comments

The Cities Initiative is concerned that the public comment period on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed DGR is being closed on May 24 after only 30 days' notice. We recognize that the comment period has been open for a much longer time, but with the magnitude and complexity of materials accumulated in the record of this proceeding, more

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Keith Hobbs, Mayor of Thunder Bay, Vice-Chair

Régis Labeaume, President of Québec Metropolitan Community, Secretary/Treasurer



advance notice of the end of the comment period should have been given. The Cities Initiative is a small organization with limited resources with a large membership spread from the western end of Lake Superior to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It is very difficult to review the materials and communicate with the membership in the time provided. We fully intend to participate as interveners in the public hearing, but request an additional 60 days for providing comments on the EIS.

Community and Stakeholder Outreach

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region is a unique community bound together by the fresh water treasure of the world. This region is thinking and acting more like an integrated social, environmental, and economic cohesive unit all the time. The history of this goes back many years, starting with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, and has been reinforced more recently by the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1972 (amended in 2012), and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Water Resources Management Agreement and Compact of 2008. Many organizations like the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Great Lakes Commission, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Council of Great Lakes Industries, and the Cities Initiative have extensive Canadian and U.S. involvement and reinforce the idea of thinking and acting like an integrated region.

This point is important because the DGR is something that has significant implications for the entire region. OPG has obviously done extensive outreach in the Kincardine and Bruce County area, and has reached out to elected officials and others in Michigan, but the area of interest is really much larger. Because of the large supply of surface fresh water, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region has attracted a great deal of electrical generating capacity over the years. This includes traditional coal fired plants, as well as nuclear generating stations and hydropower dams. Now wind farms are seen in many places around the region, as well. This generating capacity has been a real advantage to the area, but some costs have come with it. One of the significant concerns for some time has been what to do with all the low, intermediate, and high level radioactive waste that has accumulated over the years. OPG is to be commended for stepping forward to find a more permanent solution to managing the waste in the long term. At the same time, recognizing the regional nature of the issue, there has not been enough outreach to the broader Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region on the DGR project and that needs to be done before the EIS and licensing process moves forward.

Site Selection

From the record and what we have learned by visiting the proposed site of the DGR, it is our understanding that the municipality of Kincardine originally approached OPG about being a

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host for the radioactive waste and the DGR. It is fully understandable why the municipality would be receptive given the long term relationship with the company and the nuclear plant, and recognizing the economic significance of the plant and the DGR to the community and all of Bruce County. Obviously, community acceptance of the project is exceedingly important. It is our understanding that no other site was considered. Recognizing the significance of the issue and the size of Ontario, it does not seem appropriate to limit potential sites to just one location and potential solutions just to DGR. As good as the geology for the site and the engineering for the DGR might be, it is hard to believe that there might not be more appropriate sites elsewhere.

Perhaps of greatest concern is the close proximity of the site one kilometer from the shore of Lake Huron, or to any of the Great Lakes or St. Lawrence. When dealing with a resource as valuable as the fresh water here, why take the risk of putting the site so close to the shore. Whatever the geology might be in the location, it just seems to make much more sense to have the site as far away as possible from such a major source of fresh water.

Conclusion

The Cities Initiative greatly appreciates the efforts OPG has put forth to help inform representatives of the organization on the DGR project, and recognizes all the work that has gone into the proposal. However, the limited time to review the record and prepare comments, the limited outreach to the broader Great Lakes and St. Lawrence community, and the consideration of only one site that is one kilometer from Lake Huron leads us to conclude that the project should not move forward at this time.

Sincerely,

Tom Barrett, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of Milwaukee



– BI-ANNUAL REPORT 2013 –

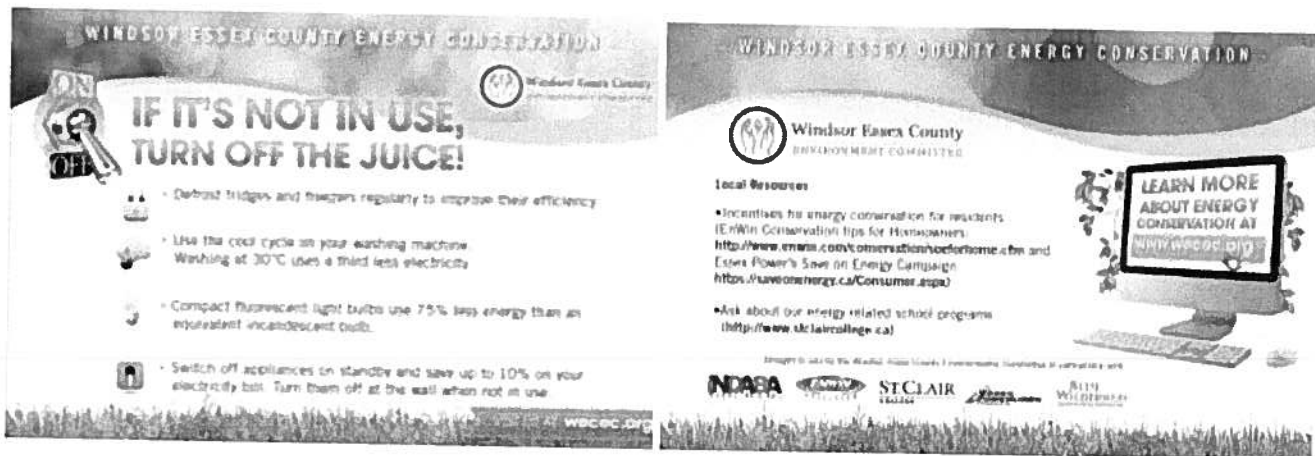
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Energy Conservation Campaign (\$596.06)

WECEC successfully partnered with St. Clair College, Essex Power, EnWin, the Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation and EcoSpex in an Energy Conservation Campaign. In this way, we were able to pool our resources and develop a \$10,000 campaign to promote energy conservation benefits to homeowners.

This campaign was launched mid April. A press conference was held on Friday, April 19th at St. Clair's Centre for Construction Innovation and Production and included a tour of the facility. Media coverage was obtained from Blackburn radio, AM800 and The Windsor Star.

Campaign advertisements were placed in the County papers and Windsor Star online. WECEC and our partners participated in Experts on Call sessions April 7th, and April 27th to discuss how homeowners can decrease their energy consumption, available technician programs offered at St. Clair College, as well as how reducing consumption can help small businesses. WECEC participated in the Windsor Home Show (April 5th-7th) to promote the committee and this campaign. Post cards (shown below) were distributed to participants to promote this campaign.



ROSE City Clean Sweep Kickoff

WECEC partnered with the City of Windsor and the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association to organize a successful kick-off event for the City's Rose City Clean Sweep campaign. Over 40 participants met on Maiden Lane West on Friday April 5th to help pick up litter around the downtown. There was significant involvement from the media, including a write-up in the Windsor Star.

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Earth Day (\$40)

WECEC participated in the Windsor Essex Earth Day celebrations by having a booth at the event on Sunday April 28th at Malden Park from 10am until 3pm. Members distributed our brochure, customized pens and magnets, as well as our Energy Conservation Campaign information.

Green Speaker Series: Dr. David Suzuki (\$1,000)

WECEC was approached by Canvas Campus for a donation to support bringing Dr. David Suzuki to Windsor to present to over 7,000 school children at the WFCU on April 25th. Committee members were happy to contribute \$1,000 from the Green Speaker Series budget towards this cause. WECEC members were able to meet Dr. Suzuki before he spoke.



Pat on the Back Environmental Awards (\$2,426.53)

Fifteen applications were received for our third annual "Pat on the Back Awards". A \$500 award is given to 4 environmental projects lead by community or school groups. An ad-hoc subcommittee met to review the applications and selected six final applicants who presented their project at the Pat on the Back award ceremony Wednesday May 29th at 7:00pm at the Ojibway Nature Centre.

WECEC is very pleased to announce the four award winners of the third annual Pat on the Back Awards:

- 1) Together we flourish, a community organization who will be building a community garden and running a Gal Pals mentoring program;
- 2) Sandwich secondary, to be able to expand their native plant area by amending soil with mulch and compost;
- 3) St. Jean Baptist, who will be building a vegetable garden and donating some of their produce to the community; and
- 4) St. Jules School, to make improvements to their outdoor green space through soil amendments and the planting of native species.

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The Committee also enjoyed presentations from St. Anne's legacy project, to create an accessible outdoor classroom and student area, as well as the Riverside Green Team, involved in a multi-phase project to turn their courtyard into a "no mow" zone.

The ceremony was well attended by many members of the public and environmental organizations.



Green Speaker Series: Dan Burden – Walkable and Livable Communities Institute (\$1,000)

On Friday June 7th WECEC continued their Green Speaker Series with host Dan Burden, Co-Founder and Director of Innovation and Inspiration at the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute. Dan spoke to over 100 people about how creating more walkable streets can contribute to healthier, more vibrant communities with thriving economies.

WECEC partnered with the City of Windsor Planning and Environmental Master Plan departments, the Wyandotte and Walkerville Business Improvement Areas as well as the St. Clair Society of Architects to coordinate this event.

Participants included many members of City of Windsor administration as well as county municipality administration, City Councillors, architects, students, St. Clair College professors, BIA members, the Windsor Essex County Health Unit, Tourism Windsor Essex, members of the public, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation, non-profit organizations and the Greater Essex County District School Board.

During the walking audit, Dan pointed out many simple solutions to begin improving walkability. For instance, clearly viable crosswalks and signage were often missing from city streets. Dan suggested using bumpouts at intersections, diagonal parking along side streets and more greenery and places to sit. He also demonstrated that Wyandotte East is wide enough to accommodate bike lanes by lying on the street perpendicular to a parked car. A bike lane is one "Dan" wide, and there was plenty of space for cars to pass by.

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After the walking audit, participants were split into small working group around aerial maps along Wyandotte. The groups brainstormed how to increase walkability. The diverse backgrounds of participants allowed for lively and passionate discussion while working towards a common goal.

There was a great media presence leading up to as well as during the workshop. Days before the event, the Windsor Star did an article with City Planner Thom Hunt highlighting areas in Windsor that are very walkable as well as areas that need improvement. Representatives from the Windsor Star, Blackburn media, AM800 and CBC attended the presentation. The Windsor Star and CTV accompanied the group on the walking audit and CBC radio hosted Dan on their show after the event. Positive media stories were released that day discussing walkability and the potential it has in Windsor.

Dan has provided all workshop participants with his presentation. Many valuable resources are on the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute page: www.walklive.org.



WECEC BUSINESS

Website Maintenance (\$503.37)

The WECEC Coordinator maintains our website, www.wecec.org. Here we post news and events along with information about WECEC and our meeting agenda's and minutes. The website is an important part of our communication and advocacy strategy. We pay yearly website hosting fees as well as a domain renewal fee.

Promotional Supplies (\$347.92)

WECEC often participates in community events such as Earth Day. At our booth we hand out promotional tools such as WECEC customised pens or magnets to encourage members of the public to visit our website and learn more about what we do.

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June Meeting at the Ojibway Nature Centre (\$122.50)

This year, WECEC decided to host one of their meetings at the Ojibway Nature Centre. This was to encourage members of the public to attend, as our meeting place at the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant may not be viewed as a publicly accessible location.

Trip to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (\$793.23)

The tour of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge on Friday June 14th was very successful. Nearly 20 people participated and attended a tour of Humbug Marsh along with a presentation by Refuge manager Dr. John Hartig. Participants included WECEC members, Essex County Field Naturalists, City of Windsor administration, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup as well as their Public Advisory Committee members. Dr. John Hartig discussed the process by which Humbug Marsh was saved from development as well as highlighted many ongoing Brownfield restoration and manmade wetlands sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY AND COUNTY COUNCILS

Report No. 69 of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee:

THAT the City of Detroit Environment Affairs, State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the United States Environmental Protection Agency **BE CONTACTED** on behalf of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee over the environmental concerns that are mounting regarding the petroleum coke being stock piled along the Detroit River shoreline (just east of the Ambassador Bridge), and

THAT a letter **BE SENT** from Windsor City Council to the three levels of government (City, State and Federal government) outlining the environmental concerns over the stock piling of petroleum coke along the shoreline, and

THAT the City of Windsor **PETITION** the Town of LaSalle, the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), Michigan Representatives Rashida Tlaib (D-Detroit), U.S. Representatives Gary Peters (D-Bloomfield Township) and John Conyers (D-Detroit) as well as regional MPs and MPPs for support in this initiative.

This report was approved by City Council on March 18th.

Report No. 70 of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee:

THAT the resolution presented by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee emphasizing the serious nature of the Asian carp crisis in the Great Lakes and the urgency of finding a solution **BE ENDORSED** and

THAT the City of Windsor **BE REQUESTED** to pass a resolution endorsing the same.

This report was approved by the Environment and Transportation Standing Committee on April 24th and City Council on May 27th.

Report No. 71 of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee:

THAT City Council **BE REQUESTED** to reconsider/revoke/review Council Resolution CR433/2007 relating to a rezoning for Part of Block Z, Registered Plan 927 as there are no adequate plans for the mitigation

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

of identified species and further, that a new bylaw **BE ADOPTED** relating to the Official Plan Amendment rezoning.

This report was rejected by the Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee on May 13th and by the Environment, Transportation & Public Health Standing Committee on May 17th. It was rejected by City Council on June 17th.

Report No. 72 of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee:

THAT the City of Windsor **BE REQUESTED** to engage the Windsor Port Authority to discuss their intentions for the activities occurring on the Ojibway Shores property, namely the hiring of a consultant to undertake a biological survey of the property.

This report was rejected by the Environment, Transportation & Public Safety Standing Committee on May 22nd.

Report No. 73 of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee:

THAT a letter **BE SENT** to Minister Lebel asking him to inform the Windsor Port Authority that they **CANNOT** proceed with the clear-cutting of Ojibway Shores **NOR** accept fill as they intend to start September 1, 2013.

This report was rejected by City Council on July 8th 2013.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

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Totals	\$8,300.00	\$7,927.95
TOTAL REMAINING		\$372.05

*To be reimbursed by campaign partner

*As of July 7th 2013

WECEC IN THE NEWS

Big-box retail development plan near Ojibway draws fire

Doug Schmidt

Mar 27, 2013 - 8:35 PM EDT

Last Updated: Mar 28, 2013 - 6:57 AM EDT

A developer is hoping to have found a more acceptable way to win approval for a long-delayed but controversial big-box retail development on lands abutting the environmentally sensitive Ojibway Prairie Complex.

Coco Paving Inc. has submitted a proposal under a rarely used clause of Ontario's Endangered Species Act that allows development in protected areas subject to the proponent providing "benefits that exceed the adverse effects" on several listed plant and snake species.

"It's a win-win — good for the environment and good for the economy," said company spokesman Anthony Rossi. The proposal was posted on March 7 on the province's Environmental Registry, which provides details and offers opportunity for the public to comment and ask questions until April 8.

One of the biggest changes, said Rossi, is Coco's willingness to carve about 10 acres from its 47-acre holdings east of recently-closed Windsor Raceway and establish a "restoration area" and natural buffer between the development, at the corner of Matchette Road and Sprucewood Avenue, and Ojibway park.

But the proposal hasn't found much favour from activist Nancy Pancheshan and her Save Ojibway group. "The problem with this application is that many of the endangered species are not included ... and (the plan) is incapable of offsetting the disturbances it will create," said Pancheshan, who has been fighting the developer's plans since they were approved by city council in 2007.

She said part of the development will lie just metres away from sensitive tall-grass prairie lands, and the estimated 18,000 additional vehicles per day along Matchette Road, to be more than doubled in width from two lanes to four lanes with a median, will greatly increase snake mortality.

"This will just cause future blight in the city and compromise our remaining environmental habitat," said Pancheshan.



Nancy Pancheshan looks out at the property near the former Windsor Raceway site where a proposed development is planned. Pancheshan has environmental concerns with the wildlife in the area. (JASON KRYK/The Windsor Star)

Pancheshan appealed the original plan to the Ontario Municipal Board and has spent about \$20,000 so far (raised mainly through public donations) enlisting the help of independent experts — a biologist, herbologist and hydro geologist — to dispute the company's own reports.

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

It wasn't until Pancheshan's efforts that a number of rare and endangered species were identified on the lands targeted for development. An OMB hearing was indefinitely adjourned in August 2011 after the company was instructed to take a deeper look at the native species on its lands.

Rossi said Coco's latest proposal represents "a significant accommodation," one that will see plants like the dense blazing star and willowleaf aster dug up and replanted, as well the homes of Butler's gartersnake and eastern foxsnake relocated. The 10 acres to be restored to prairie habitat, which includes an existing horse training track, "will eventually be conveyed (to the city or province) for park purposes," said Rossi.

While still wanting to see the details, Ward 1 Drew Dilkens said if the developer is improving on a plan he and a majority of council already approved, then: "Bravo, Coco." Dilkens said "the demand of the market is going to drive the development," and that it's "a reflection on how people like to shop."

Ward 4 Coun Alan Halberstadt, however, said he'd like to see whether council might reconsider its original vote, particularly in light of the additional information Pancheshan and her group uncovered during the OMB appeal process.

Environmental issues aside, a big-box retail development on the outskirts of the city "would be another blow to the downtown and the core area," he said. Halberstadt is co-chair of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee, and he said Pancheshan will be addressing the group at its next meeting on April 4, just days before the Environmental Registry public input deadline.

WECEC is already warning on its website that the Coco proposal "goes against our city's efforts to revitalise." It also provides a "sample comment" letter to the province which begins with a denunciation of the developer's plan.

Clean Sweep crew kicks litter's butt

Volunteer Joan Ziriada uses a stick to clean gum from a Maiden Lane grate as Scott McMullan helps out during Rose City Cleanup on downtown streets Friday.

Photograph by: Nick Brancaccio, The Windsor Star

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Doug Schmidt, The Windsor Star | Apr 12, 2013 |
Last Updated: Apr 12, 2013 - 7:05 UTC

It seemed at times that it was raining butts as smokers strolling down Ouellette Avenue continued casually tossing their spent cigarette stubs at the same time as clean-up volunteers were bowed over sidewalks picking them up.

"This definitely makes one prejudiced against smokers," said Joan Ziriada, one of about 40 volunteers who hit the downtown streets Friday for this year's Rose City Clean Sweep kickoff.

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

Ziriada, who works at a downtown law firm, said she loves the trees along Maiden Lane, which she traverses several times during each workweek, but she complains that smokers use the large iron grates that surround the trunks as ashtrays.

"They're a great idea, but they're giant butt receptacles," she said of the grates. Taking an early lunch break, Ziriada made bagging those butts her Clean Sweep mission.

When it comes to litter, the downtown's looking "pretty good" compared to in the past, said Ward 4 Coun. Alan Hal-berstadt, but he agreed that "the bad part are the cigarette butts."

Before being dispatched out into the streets and alleys, volunteers, armed with brooms, bags and protective gloves, were warned to avoid druggie needles and anything else deemed too gross or dangerous.

"I think the message this sends is more important than the actual cleanup," Ward 3 Coun. Fulvio Valentinis said of the annual spring ritual.

"I believe the politicians should be setting an example," added Ward 7 Coun. Percy Hatfield, who also participated.

The three city councillors said all Windsorites share in the responsibility of maintaining a clean city and tackling litter. "The image it projects is not a positive one," said Valentinis.

"All neighbourhoods are being encouraged to clean up," said Averil Parent, Windsor's environment and sustainability coordinator.

She said the city is still looking for groups, organizations and individuals to come forward to participate in the month-long Rose City Clean Sweep. To register, call the city's 311 line, or email cleancity@city.windsor.on.ca, or visit online at www.citywindsor.ca.



The plugged-in world needs to unplug

St. Clair College power engineering student Madan Roy operates the main steam control valve while learning the functions of a steam plant at Centre for Construction Innovation and Production on Friday. Steam power is an energy efficient power generation process and officials were on hand at St. Clair College to bring awareness to energy conservation benefits.
Photograph by: Nick Brancaccio, The Windsor Star

Share

Craig Pearson, The Windsor Star | Apr 20, 2013 | Last Updated: Apr 20, 2013 - 8:17 UTC

Our increasingly plugged-in world needs to unplug, according to a new green initiative.

A freshly created campaign dubbed If It's Not In Use, Turn Off the Juice - which launched Friday in Windsor - urges people to turn off appliances when not in use.

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

"We're so used to plugging in, plugging in, that it becomes second nature," Charlie Wright, deputy mayor of Leamington and co-chair of the Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee, said at the energy-saving program launch at St. Clair College.

"We always feel we have to be plugged in to the Internet, to our cellphones. Yet it's good to be unplugged sometimes. You can save a lot of money."

Wright said consumers can save 20 per cent in energy expenses by simply turning off appliances and committing to other green initiatives, such as using new LED light bulbs.

"We had become the throwaway society," Wright said. "Then we became the recycling society. Now we're becoming the more efficient society. We're using energy smarter."

Fellow Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee co-chair Alan Halberstadt, a Windsor city councillor, said most people don't realize that simply keeping their TV, computer or coffee maker plugged in drains power and money.

"A lot of people might turn off their lights when they're not in use, but not appliances," Halberstadt said. "But if it's plugged in, you're using power."

If It's Not In Use, Turn Off the Juice is an energy-conservation, public-awareness campaign supported by WECEC, Essex Powerlines, Blue Wilderness Management Group, St. Clair College, WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation and Enwin Utilities.

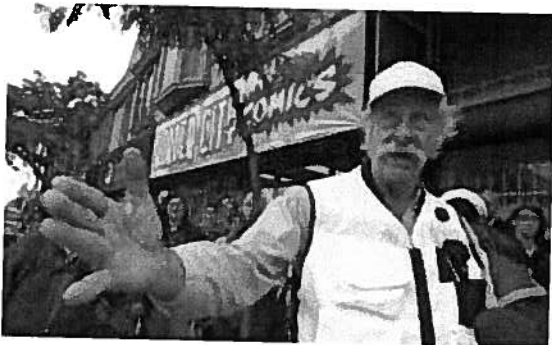
After the campaign launch, students at St. Clair College showed guests a recent recycling project at the school's Centre for Construction Innovation and Production.

Waseem Habash, St. Clair's associate vice-president of academic operations, said the school already offers three programs centred around energy conservation, and that the campus continues to add more and more courses on the topic.

For instance, students in the power engineering technology lab convert excess steam into condensed air, which has a number of industrial applications.

"Energy conservation is important," Habash said. "Students are learning about greener design and greener construction."

American expert says Wyandotte Street full of opportunity



Wearing his bright green safety vest, Dan Burden, co-founder and director of Innovation and Inspiration, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, picks out some of the possible improvements on Wyandotte Street East in Walkerville, Friday June 7, 2013. (NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star)

Jun 07, 2013 - 5:49 PM EDT

Last Updated: Jun 07, 2013 - 8:28 PM EDT

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

An American expert on street walkability toured the Walkerville stretch of Wyandotte Street Friday afternoon to give city officials pointers on how to redesign the aging roadway.

Dan Burden, co-founder of the Walkability and Livable Communities Institute, said the East Windsor neighborhood shows a lot of promise.

Outfitted in a lime green reflective vest and matching farmer's cap, he stopped at the intersections of Wyandotte Street and Chilver Road and decreed to the about 90 people around him: "I just love your opportunity on Wyandotte!"

The walkability audit with Burden was organized by the city and local organizations, such as the Wyandotte and Walkerville BIAs. City official Averil Parent said the event was so popular that she had to limit registration. Mike Palanacki heads city road maintenance and said Burden, named by TIME magazine in 2001 as one the six most important civic innovators in the world, was brought in as part of the plan to make Windsor's roads more "people friendly."

He said the city is taking a new approach in resurfacing Wyandotte over the next two years. He said moving cars efficiently and safely was the biggest concern in the past, but that things are changing.



Dan Burden walks Wyandotte Street in Walkerville "I think we have to rethink that whole philosophy," he said.

Now other ways of getting around – such as walking and cycling – are getting their time in the spotlight. Palanacki said it's to help promote healthy lifestyles, but that it's also to address functionality.

Building highways isn't always the solution when dealing with traffic congestion, he said, giving Toronto as an example.

Burden echoed the point in his analysis of Wyandotte, currently two lanes wide on each side in some areas. He said smaller single car lanes – 10 feet wide being ideal – are actually safer, because it allows room for separate cycling lanes and larger sidewalks.

To illustrate his point, he stretched out on the busy road flat on his back, showing that bike lanes – which he said need to be marked with thick painted lines – can be as wide as he is tall, and still allow traffic to flow easily.

He said cars currently have more space than they need and that adding bike lanes makes motorists safer, "because they're not jockeying for space."

The benefit of wider sidewalks is also commercial, Burden said. "Everybody wins," he said, because if pedestrians have room to stroll, shops lining the streets will see more foot traffic.

Motorists are more likely to slow down when they approach intersections with extended curbs as well, he said, making it a safer area to walk.

James Elliott, a 20-year-old architectural technology student at St. Clair College, was in the crowd with a friend. He said that as a student who's taught to design buildings with surroundings in mind, he liked what he was hearing from Burden.

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

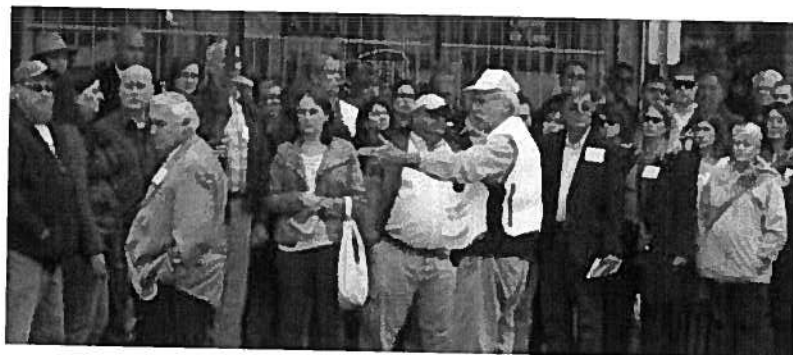
"It's really simple stuff," Elliott said, adding that small projects can still have a big impact.

Palanacki said the goal in bringing Burden in to evaluate Wyandotte was to learn how to revamp the road while keeping spending to a minimum.

Parent said the cost to bring Burden to Windsor for the audit was about \$7,000, but that the groups involved in the event pitched in with funds.

Palanacki said the city will "look hard" at the suggestions made by Burden and implement as many as the budget can handle.

Dan Burden, left, co-founder and director of Innovation and Inspiration, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, begins his tour to point out possible improvements on Wyandotte Street East in Walkerville, Friday June 7, 2013. (NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star)



Dan Burden, centre, co-founder and director of Innovation and Inspiration, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, picks out some of the possible improvements on Wyandotte Street East at Devonshire Road, Friday June 7, 2013. (NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star)

Using his lanky frame as a measuring tool, Dan Burden, co-founder and director of Innovation and Inspiration, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, points out the size of bicycle lanes, one of many possible improvements on Wyandotte Street East in Walkerville, Friday June 7, 2013. (NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star)



Dan Burden, centre, co-founder and director of Innovation and Inspiration, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, picks out some of the possible improvements on Wyandotte Street East in Walkerville, Friday June 7, 2013. (NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star)

Ojibway shores plan to store dric

dirt

Lorna Martis sits with hundreds of concerned citizens at an Ojibway Shores meeting this week at Mackenzie Hall.

Photograph by: Nick Brancaccio, The Windsor Star , Windsor Star

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Doug Schmidt, Windsor Star | Jul 05, 2013 | Last Updated: Jul 05, 2013 - 7:05 UTC

The Windsor Port Authority wants to raze the forest along the city's last stretch of natural shoreline because it hopes to land a contract to store dirt for the new Detroit River bridge.

In explaining its plans to the public Wednesday night to remove the forest and in-fill the 36-acre federally owned property, the authority said only that it had "attracted a potential tenant" to the site.

But rather than for some major new economic or port employment opportunity, the clear-cutting would allow temporary dirt storage, port authority president and CEO David Cree told The Star Thursday.

He said the land would be used as a storage site for perhaps five years as dirt is needed for the eventual approach to the new international crossing to be built to the immediate north.

Cree said the hope is that, in preparing the site, which the WPA has owned since 1998, it could lead to a long-term occupant.

"I find that a bit appalling, really," Ward 4 Coun. Alan Halberstadt said on hearing of the rationale behind the clearcutting proposal that has been met with strong opposition from the local environmental community.

Every one of dozens of speakers at a public meeting hosted by the WPA Wednesday at Mackenzie Hall urged the federal agency to preserve the property.

On Thursday, Windsor Mayor Eddie Francis added his voice to the opposition.

Francis said the port authority should reconsider its plan to clear-cut at Ojibway Shores.

"They don't have a tenant, they don't have an investor ... my advice to the port authority is for them to re-evaluate the future of that property," he said.

The authority recently announced its intention to clear the forest cover at Ojibway Shores as soon as September, with the final decision by the federal agency's board expected in August.

The WPA's plans, however, may have suffered a lethal blow after outside pressure, including from Windsor West MP Brian Masse Wednesday, saw Amico Construction, responsible for excavating the \$1.4-billion Herb Gray Parkway, deny it had a deal to supply a large volume of in-fill dirt to the property.

"There was no agreement in place," Cindy Prince, Amico's vicepresident of development, said in speaking on behalf of company head Domenic Amicone.

"That's certainly going to be a factor in the board's decision-making process," Cree said.

– Bi-Annual Report 2013 –

He said it was only last Friday that the WPA learned of a June 11 letter from Transport Minister Denis Lebel to the local Citizens Environment Alliance assuring the group that "Transport Canada has no intention of using the Ojibway Shores land to accept fill for the Detroit River International Crossing project."

Cree said the WPA had been expecting about 150,000 cubic metres of parkway dirt trucked in to raise the property about four feet to bring the site to the required 100-year floodplain level.

Without the fill, "their business case falls apart," said Francis, adding he called Amicone Thursday morning after he "saw what happened" at the previous night's public meeting.

A capacity crowd of 230 filled a rented room at Mackenzie Hall, but a similar number who couldn't get in filled the adjacent corridor, downstairs lobby and outside parking lot.

Francis also said the city has no intention of investing the several million dollars required to service the property. A municipal servicing agreement was part of the 1998 deal that saw the city initiate a land swap with the port authority for the industrially zoned Ojibway Shores.

But that was then. "We value that area, and we value these properties," Francis said of the Ojibway Complex, containing the richest collection of rare and endangered plant and animal species in Ontario.

Also on Thursday, the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee met and voted to step up the lobbying of Ottawa to halt the chainsaws, as well as to seek municipal support to help in the search for a longerterm green solution.

A petition is currently circulating, calling for the creation of a "national urban park" that would serve as a green gateway into Canada from the new border crossing.

Halberstadt, who co-chairs WECEC, said he will meet Tuesday with MP Jeff Watson (C - Essex) to see what else can be done to protect Ojibway Shores.

A. Organizational Overview

Mission

To protect and enhance the quality of the environment for residents in Windsor and Essex County by providing advice, guidance, and counsel to City and County Councils on policies and procedures and providing and supporting advocacy, community education and outreach programs.



Windsor Essex County
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Description

The Windsor-Essex County Environment Committee (WECEC) is a group of environmental-related organizations that meet monthly to ensure the ongoing health and stability of our local environment. We protect and enhance the quality of the environment for residents in Windsor and Essex County; provide advice and guidance to City and County Councils on policies and procedures; and provide and support advocacy, community education and outreach programs. WECEC is recognized as a credible and integral agent/component in regional environmental decision making and community engagement.



Windsor Essex County Environment Committee

B. Budget Detail & Request

	2013 Budget	2013 Actuals YTD*	2014 Budget	\$ Budget Change Over PY	% Budget Change Over PY
Revenues					
Grants & Subsidies		(4,300)		0	n/a
Total Revenue	0	(4,300)	0	0	#DIV/0!
Expenditures					
Other Miscellaneous Expenditures	4,000	5,107		4,000	(100.0%)
Total Expenses	4,000	4,937	4,000	4,000	0.0%
Total Net	4,000	637	4,000	4,000	0.0%

Request From City of Windsor

	2013 Budget	2013 Actuals YTD*	2014 Budget	\$ Budget Change Over PY	% Budget Change Over PY
Request From City of Windsor Request	4,000		4,000	0	0.0%

* YTD Actuals as at

C. Budget Highlights

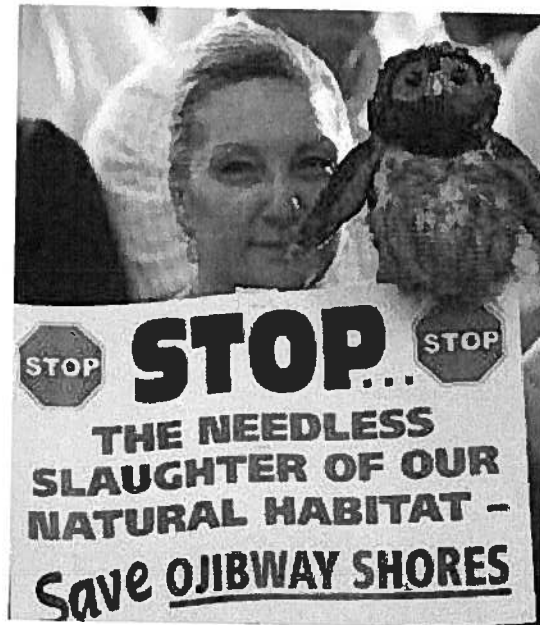
2013 Accomplishments

	<p><i>Worked with community partners to develop a \$10,000 campaign educating home owners on the benefits of decreased energy consumption. A press conference was held on Friday, April 19th at St. Clair's Centre for Construction Innovation and Production and included a tour of the facility. Media coverage was obtained from Blackburn radio, AM800 and The Windsor Star.</i></p>
Energy Conservation Campaign	<p><i>Campaign advertisements were placed in the County papers and Windsor Star online. WECEC and our partners participated in Experts on Call sessions April 7th, and April 27th to discuss how homeowners can decrease their energy consumption, available technician programs offered at St. Clair College, as well as how reducing consumption can help small businesses. WECEC participated in the Windsor Home Show (April 5th-7th) to promote the committee and this campaign.</i></p>
Rose City Clean Sweep Kick-off	<p><i>WECEC partnered with the City of Windsor and the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association to organize a successful kick-off event for the City's Rose City Clean Sweep campaign. Over 40 participants met on Maiden Lane West on Friday April 5th to help pick up litter around the downtown. There was significant involvement from the media, including a write-up in the Windsor Star.</i></p>
Earth Day 2013	<p><i>WECEC participated in the Windsor Essex Earth Day celebrations by having a booth at the event on Sunday April 28th at Malden Park from 10am until 3pm. Members distributed our brochure, customized pens and magnets, as well as our Energy Conservation Campaign information.</i></p>
Green Speaker: David Suzuki	<p><i>WECEC was approached by Canvas Campus for a donation to support bringing Dr. David Suzuki to Windsor to present to over 7,000 school children at the WFCU on April 25th. Committee members were happy to contribute \$1,000 from the Green Speaker Series budget towards this cause. WECEC members were able to meet Dr. Suzuki before he spoke.</i></p>
Pat on the Back Awards	<p><i>Fifteen applications were received for our third annual "Pat on the Back Awards". A \$500 award is given to 4 environmental projects lead by community or school groups. This year's winners were Together We Flourish, Sandwich Secondary School, St. Jean Baptist Elementary and St. Jules School.</i></p>
Green Speaker: Dan Burden	<p><i>WECEC continued their Green Speaker Series with host Dan Burden, Co-Founder and Director of Innovation and Inspiration at the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute. Dan spoke to over 100 people about how creating more walkable streets can contribute to healthier, more vibrant communities with thriving economies.</i></p>

2014 Initiatives

\$2,260	Continuation of environmental awareness campaigns
\$40	Earth Day 2014
\$3,000	Continuation of our Green Speaker Series offering free environmental presentations by experts
\$2,500	Continuation of our Pat on the Back Awards, presenting 4 \$500 awards to local environmental projects
\$500	Website fees
\$8,300	Total (City of Windsor + County of Essex)

Ojibway shores plan to store dric dirt



Lorna Martis sits with hundreds of concerned citizens at an Ojibway Shores meeting this week at Mackenzie Hall.
Photograph by: Nick Brancaccio, The Windsor Star , Windsor Star

Share

Doug Schmidt, Windsor Star | Jul 05, 2013 | Last Updated: Jul 05, 2013 - 7:05 UTC

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Media Release

July 10, 2013

The Windsor Port Authority announced today that it is putting the planned development of the Ojibway property on hold while it works with local environmental groups, City of Windsor and other governmental agencies to identify possible alternatives to the development of the Ojibway Shores property.

Mr. David Cree, President & CEO of the Windsor Port Authority stated;

"The purpose of the recent Open House was to give the public an opportunity to express their views about our proposed development and to obtain further information about possible important species on the site. Environmental work by the WPA has been ongoing for a year. The numerous concerns raised at the public meeting are under consideration at this time. The WPA Board of Directors has unanimously agreed to suspend the environmental review while alternatives to the proposed development are reviewed.

Mr. Cree confirmed that the Port Authority will be seeking meetings with environmental groups and various government agencies over the next few months.

David Cree
Windsor Port Authority
519-258-5741

Push for ojibway urban park gains steam

Share

Brian Cross, The Windsor Star | Jul 12, 2013 | Last Updated: Jul 12, 2013 - 9:06 UTC

The public uprising that helped put the proposed clear-cutting

of Ojibway Shores on hold this week has spilled over and boosted a fledgling campaign to create an urban national park covering large portions of the entire Ojibway area.

"I've talked to a lot of people and produced some flyers, got some interest, and suddenly the Ojibway Woods issue became a hot potato, people were just exploding with this issue," Anna Lynn Meloche said Thursday, referring to recent outrage over the Windsor Port Authority's plan to clearcut and infill Ojibway Shores, the last natural shoreline in Windsor. On Wednesday, the port authority put the brakes on that plan and said it wanted to look at options for preserving the 36-acre property as a natural area.

Meanwhile, the push for an urban national park in Ojibway - in West Windsor and LaSalle - has kicked into high gear, according to Meloche, who believes Ojibway Shores is one of the properties that belongs in it.

More than 560 have signed petitions and a letter campaign has begun urging the park's creation on a "willing-seller, willing-buyer basis."

Meloche isn't necessarily talking about swallowing up the 875 acres of municipally and provincially owned natural areas in Ojibway. They're already adequately protected, so they might simply be affiliated with the new national urban park.

Meloche said she wants to expand the envelope beyond the existing parks, by acquiring lands from willing parties. She mentioned not just Ojibway Shores (owned by the port authority, a federal agency) but also the recently closed Windsor Raceway property that borders Ojibway Park, the big box property at Sprucewood and Matchette (across from the provincial prairie preserve, it's currently the subject of an Ontario Municipal Board hearing) and various woodlots in LaSalle.

Some critics have said Windsor would have to get at the back of the line when it comes to approval for a new national park, but Meloche argues: "Who is at more risk of losing its environment than this area here?" She said Windsor-Essex has the least protected area of any region in Canada, and that the Ojibway complex, with its tall grass prairie and Carolinian woods, has the highest biodiversity and most endangered species in Canada. Development pressures around the existing natural areas are threatening the complex with further fragmentation - one of the biggest enemies of habitat, she said.

The ideas are still being formed and people are free to make suggestions, said Meloche, who believes the creation of the park would help put an end to the continued development pressures that threaten the area. "We know how valuable it is, I think we just have to nudge levels of government that haven't paid much attention to southern Ontario." Attempts to get a comment from federal Environment Minister Peter Kent or his spokeswoman were not successful Thursday.

MP Brian Masse (NDP - Windsor West) said the petitions show the broad support for the environment that was on display at the public meeting last week on Ojibway Shores, where hundreds packed the meeting hall.

"We really do need to improve our environment down here, we all know that; I think that's why Ojibway Shores has seized so many people," said Masse, who's holding a news conference on a related issue this morning in the Black Oak Heritage Park just south of Ojibway Shores.

The proposal is being modelled after the first urban national park in Canada, currently being developed in the massive Rouge area on the eastern edge of Toronto. The Ojibway proposal's website is ojibwaynationalurbanpark.ca.

The urban park idea is an interesting solution for the Ojibway area, said Derek Coronado of the Citizens Environment Alliance, whose organization has yet to examine it in detail. Part of the reason people are getting behind it, he said, "is in Canada, without any kind of constitutional protection for the environment, the highest level of protection you can get is a national park."

Ojibway clear-cutting put on hold

Share

Brian Cross, The Windsor Star | Jul 18, 2013 | Last Updated: Jul 18, 2013 - 5:05 UTC

The Windsor Port Authority's decision recently to put on hold its controversial proposal to clearcut the last stretch of natural shoreline in Windsor had environmental groups eagerly discussing how to work with the authority to preserve Ojibway Shores.

"It's thanks to the public, the public was huge," Jesse Gardner Costa, president of the Essex County Field Naturalists, said of the hundreds of citizens who packed a public meeting last week to tell the port authority to cancel the plan and make the 36-acre site a natural connection between the Detroit River and the 875-acre Ojibway Prairie Complex of protected lands.

A week later, after learning of the near-universal opposition to their development plan - including statements from the federal transport minister and the contractor of the Herb Gray Parkway that dashed hopes they'd be getting very cheap fill to raise the elevation of the site so it would be ready for development - board members met Wednesday morning and firmly applied the brakes.

"It's on hold and the board has very clearly unanimously decided that we should put it on hold and that is a very clear message that we're very interested in looking at other opportunities before we make a final decision," authority president David Cree said.

The opportunities the board is referring to, he confirmed, are suggestions made by the environmental groups on how to preserve the property as a natural area, while providing the board with at least some of the money the authority would have generated by leasing the land out to a business for some kind of port use.

The authority can't sell the land, but there perhaps could be a longterm lease or land swap, Cree suggested. The land had a value of more than \$1 million when the authority obtained it in a land swap more than 20 years ago with the City of Windsor. Paying taxes on it and maintaining it since then means the authority has invested a considerable amount in it, Cree said.

Derek Coronado of the Citizens Environment Alliance said Wednesday's decision marks the first time the authority has said it's serious about the idea of preserving the land. In previous discussions, the authority politely listened to the environmental groups' pleas, "but they weren't necessarily hearing what we were saying," he said. "I think they're more interested now."

The groups have a number of ideas, including tapping the federal government - poised to build a bridge and bridge plaza directly to the east - to become involved, or to have a tiny eco fee (perhaps two cents a car) charged to motorists crossing the new bridge, to help pay for a 100-year lease.

At last week's meeting, suggestions were made to get non-profit groups like the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited involved in helping with funding. "We think there are a number of opportunities, good ideas for long-term security of that property," said Gardner Costa.

"We're going to keep this up and make sure."

The environmental groups are seeking permission from the authority to gain access to the site, to take inventory of any at risk species and other environmental features.

Video shows petcoke dust cloud hitting Windsor's riverfront

Dave Battagello

Jul 30, 2013 - 2:08 PM EDT

Last Updated: Jul 31, 2013 - 10:09 AM EDT

A company storing petroleum coke along the Detroit riverfront has conceded a video clip and still photos taken by Windsorites which detail a spectacular cloud of black dust from the pile filling the air during high winds this past weekend were indeed reality.



"We had a ship in to load some of the inventory," said Daniel Cherrin, spokesman for Detroit Bulk Storage. "When loading the inventory they have to break the seal of epoxy (a spray used to hold down dust) to load the vessel. On that day there was a storm and wind that moved in. It carried some of that into the air as a result.

"You could say it was a perfect storm where they were loading the vessel (with petcoke) and it broke away into the wind. That's what people saw."

The video taken Saturday was posted online by Randy Emerson, a member of the Windsor on Watch environmental group who was driving on Riverside Drive when he pulled over at the riverfront park at Parent Avenue, just east of Caesars Windsor. It shows a massive cloud of black dust filling the air and headed across the river just before dissipating.

"I was out with my wife and friend and we saw this cloud in front of us (across the river)," he said. "At first, I thought it was a cloud (connected to a storm), but then you can hear me say on the video that has got to be the petcoke.

"I hope people see that it's not what they say it is. Even with all the safety that people have promised (with the petcoke pile), nature has a way of getting around that. They keep saying this stuff is safe, but it's not. People shouldn't be breathing this – especially with the high rate of asthma we have in this city already."

Separate photos obtained by The Star were passed on from other onlookers.

Among those who witnessed the black petcoke cloud was the operator of Windsor River Cruises who said he had a boat full of passengers on the Macassa Bay who were kept docked on shore because a rain storm was approaching.

“We were set to take off,” said John Sheridan, the river cruise company’s vice-president. “There was some bad wind with the weather that was coming in, so we parked at the dock for several minutes.

“Then we saw this huge black cloud. At first I wondered for a second if it was a tornado, but then everyone realized it was the petcoke. Some guys were at the back (of the cruise boat) taking photos with phones. It only lasted for a minute or so, but I’ve never seen anything like it.”

U.S. Congressman Gary Peters (D-Detroit) has tabled a bill in Washington to have the health impacts of petcoke studied and has pushed to get the black pile off the riverfront.

“We’ve been told that the petcoke dust issue is being contained, but here is first-hand evidence to the contrary,” said Peters on Tuesday.

“I am concerned and alarmed about repeated reports of petcoke blowing off the piles and into homes and businesses. It is critical that we get answers on how to properly store petcoke so we can protect public health and safety and I will continue to fight to get answers on the potential long-term effects of petcoke on public health and the Great Lakes watershed.”

Windsor riverfront resident Ruth Germain – who lives in a high-rise condo just west of downtown – was among the first to express fears about the health and environmental impacts of the petroleum coke pile.

“It is a great video because it really illustrates the problems we are having in controlling the dust,” she said. “That dust just went all over our condo. It happens on a regular basis even though they say it doesn’t. They say it’s inert, but it sure doesn’t appear to be.”

Cherrin noted Detroit Bulk Storage has halted further shipments to the riverfront site and ships will continue to take away what remains on the black pile which at one time was four storeys in height and a couple hundred metres long.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has made repeated visits to the site and issued warnings in the past about blowing petcoke dust – especially during loading of the freighters.

“We continue to work with (MDEQ) on a regular basis,” Cherrin said. “they are monitoring air quality in and around the site. We do try and take added precautions to try and eliminate issues. We are spraying the piles with epoxy and there has been no evidence it has gone into the river (with runoff).”

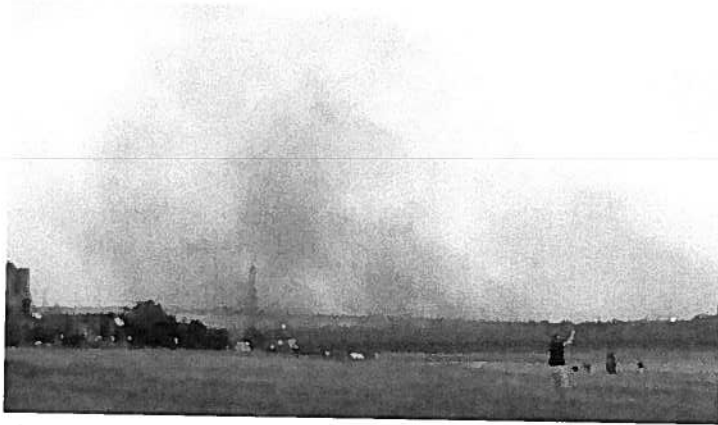
MDEQ spokesman Brad Wurfel said the video shows why it's best the petcoke pile on the riverfront be removed.

“We have had continual complaints that there is a dust issue when the material is moved or the winds are unusually high,” he said. “It's precisely why (MDEQ) has been pushing for better fugitive dust control and why the agency is supportive of DBS finding a different location for this material.

“It seems very challenging to reliably contain this material uncovered on this site.”

The industrial property where the petcoke has been stored in Detroit since last fall is owned by Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun. He leased the lands to Detroit Bulk Storage. The company was doing so on behalf of billionaire businessmen Charles and David Koch — regarded as the largest customer and supplier of petcoke in the U.S.

Petroleum coke started to be produced in large amounts at the nearby Marathon Petroleum Corp. refinery in Detroit last fall after a massive \$2-billion facility upgrade was completed — allowing it for the first time to process heavy crude oil brought in by pipeline from Alberta.



Petroleum coke gets filtered out from the crude to be resold as a cheaper replacement for coal. Although not officially listed as a toxic or hazardous product, it can contain heavy metals or sulphur, according to experts.

The Star the petcoke is now being stored at another port outside the state of Michigan, but would not identify the location.

Local MP Brian Masse (NDP – Windsor West) said the video proves any attempt to seal the pile with epoxy spray is not working.

"With all the extreme weather we have been having the last couple months how can anyone not think this is getting into the river," he said. "That's happening either from blowing by the wind or with the massive amounts of rain (through runoff) on a facility that was not built for this purpose.

"If a riverboat captain and others are seeing this, how many times in the middle of the night has this potentially taken place, as well."

Masse remains frustrated the federal government is not getting more aggressive on petcoke on this side of the border and blames that on fears of offending the lucrative oil sands industry in Alberta.



"It's totally unacceptable behaviour," he said. "Any product to do with oil sands they side with and never the environment. Maybe this will get them involved and do what they should have months ago."

Bystanders along Windsor's riverfront watch as a cloud of petcoke appears to drift across the Detroit River. (Twitpic/The Windsor Star)

Petcoke site operator halts shipments

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Dave Battagello, The Windsor Star | Jul 20, 2013 | Last Updated: Jul 20, 2013 - 8:13 UTC

Detroit Bulk Storage has stopped trucking in petroleum coke for storage at a controversial site on the banks of the Detroit River.

A spokesman for the company called it a "business decision,"

although there are still plans to proceed with a permit application with the City of Detroit that would allow the storage of the black byproduct of Alberta's oilsands on the site which sits just east of the Ambassador Bridge.

The petcoke ignited a firestorm in recent months after the massive pile on the industrial riverfront site in Detroit at one time reached four storeys and a few hundred metres in length without any permits. Angry residents, environmentalists and politicians on both sides of the border feared blowing dust or run-off from the massive pile was creating an environmental hazard for both people and waterway.

U.S. Congressman Gary Peters raised concerns and proposed legislation to the House in Washington, while the New York Times and Guardian in London reported on the story.

But the pile has become much smaller in recent weeks and will continue to shrink, said Daniel Cherrin, a spokesman for the company.

"The number of ships to remove the current inventory has increased and the piles have been reduced significantly," he said. "In addition, Detroit Bulk Storage is not scheduled to receive any additional shipments of petroleum coke."

Ships will continue to remove what 's there throughout the summer, he said.

It was unclear whether the company will revive storing petroleum coke on the site should it secure proper zoning and permits from the Detroit in the coming weeks.

A special land use hearing in Detroit is scheduled for July 31 for Detroit Bulk Storage regarding the site starting at 10 a.m. in the Erma Henderson auditorium on the 13th floor of the Coleman A Young Municipal Center.

The industrial property where the petcoke has been stored since last fall is owned by Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun. He leased the lands to Detroit Bulk Storage.

The company was doing so on behalf of billionaire businessmen Charles and David Koch - regarded as the largest customer and supplier of petcoke in the U.S. Petroleum coke started to be produced in large amounts at the nearby Marathon Petroleum Corp. refinery in Detroit last fall after a massive \$2-billion facility upgrade was completed - allowing it for the first time to process heavy crude oil brought in by pipeline from Alberta.

Petroleum coke gets filtered out from the crude to be resold as a cheaper replacement for coal. Although not officially listed as a toxic or hazardous product, it can contain heavy metals or sulphur, according to experts.

A second massive pile was previously located west of the bridge at Nicholson Terminal - a Detroit port of which Moroun has operational control.

But the port decided last month it was getting out of the petcoke business and that pile has disappeared. A spokesman for Marathon indicated Friday the Koch brothers remain

the primary customer for petcoke being produced in Detroit. With Detroit Bulk Storage no longer handling the product, one source indicated it is now being shipped and stored in Ohio, but Marathon's Brandon Daniels directed all such questions to the Koch company.

"Koch Carbon has made a business decision to store purchases of petroleum coke from Marathon Petroleum at another port outside the state of Michigan," said Paul Baltzer, director of communications for Koch Industries Inc.

He did not further identify the location.

Detroit Bulk Storage - which handles a number of aggregate and other materials - also owns property further downriver in River Rouge in a heavy industrial area close to Zug Island and site of the planned new Detroit River bridge. The company has been storing small amounts of petcoke at that site and there have been discussions whether that location would be more suitable.

There have also been talks on whether it's feasible for the company to cover the product during storage.

"At this time, Detroit Bulk Storage is listening to the concerns in the community and exploring all options," Cherrin said.

The company has local connections as its operated by Noel Frye and John Frye - who grew up in Windsor and reside in Michigan. Their father Jack Frye and other family members currently operate Southwestern Sales - a similar aggregate and cargo company located on Windsor's riverfront in the city's Brighton Beach area.

Jack Frye indicated Friday he was uncertain of the latest news regarding the site, while Noel did not return a message left by The Star and was said to be on vacation.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has been responsible for ensuring there are no environmental violations on the site and made repeated visits and issued reports on its findings which detailed concerns about blowing petcoke dust.

"We have been informed by Detroit Bulk Storage they have discontinued taking shipments there," said Brad Wurfel, spokesman for MDEQ. "We will continue to work with them and do what's necessary to minimize community impacts for the pile as long as it's there."

Local MP Brian Masse (NDP - Windsor West), an outspoken critic of the petcoke, said it was "good news" the company will cease bringing in more to the site which sits in clear view of Windsor's riverfront parks and thousands of west-end residents.

"It's an initial start to addressing this black eye," he said. "Detroit is struggling with a number of issues. This has been a scar on their waterfront and its removal is a step forward."



August 14, 2013
Media Release
For Immediate Release

Agreement between ERCA and US Fish & Wildlife Signed

Lasalle – American and Canadian partners gathered at Riverdance Park in LaSalle today to sign an agreement between the Essex Region Conservation Authority and the US Fish and Wildlife Services to ensure that lands on both sides of the border will be managed collaboratively in the spirit and intent of the 2001 Conservation Vision, the US Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, and the Western Lake Erie Watersheds Priority Natural Areas initiative.

“It was less than a year ago that we gathered on Fighting Island with our partners from Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada to form a historic collaborative agreement making the Western Lake Erie Watersheds a Priority Natural Area,” ERCA Chair Joe Bachetti reminded the guests gathered.

“This first-in-Canada Priority Natural Area was designed precisely to focus public and private partner investments into projects with a higher-level of coordination and impact,” said Jeff Watson, MP Essex. “In addition the PNA provides the vision and geographic focus to better engage the broader community as stewards in restoring, enhancing and conserving the area’s unique environmental values and health, making Windsor-Essex-Pelee Island the place to live, work and visit.”

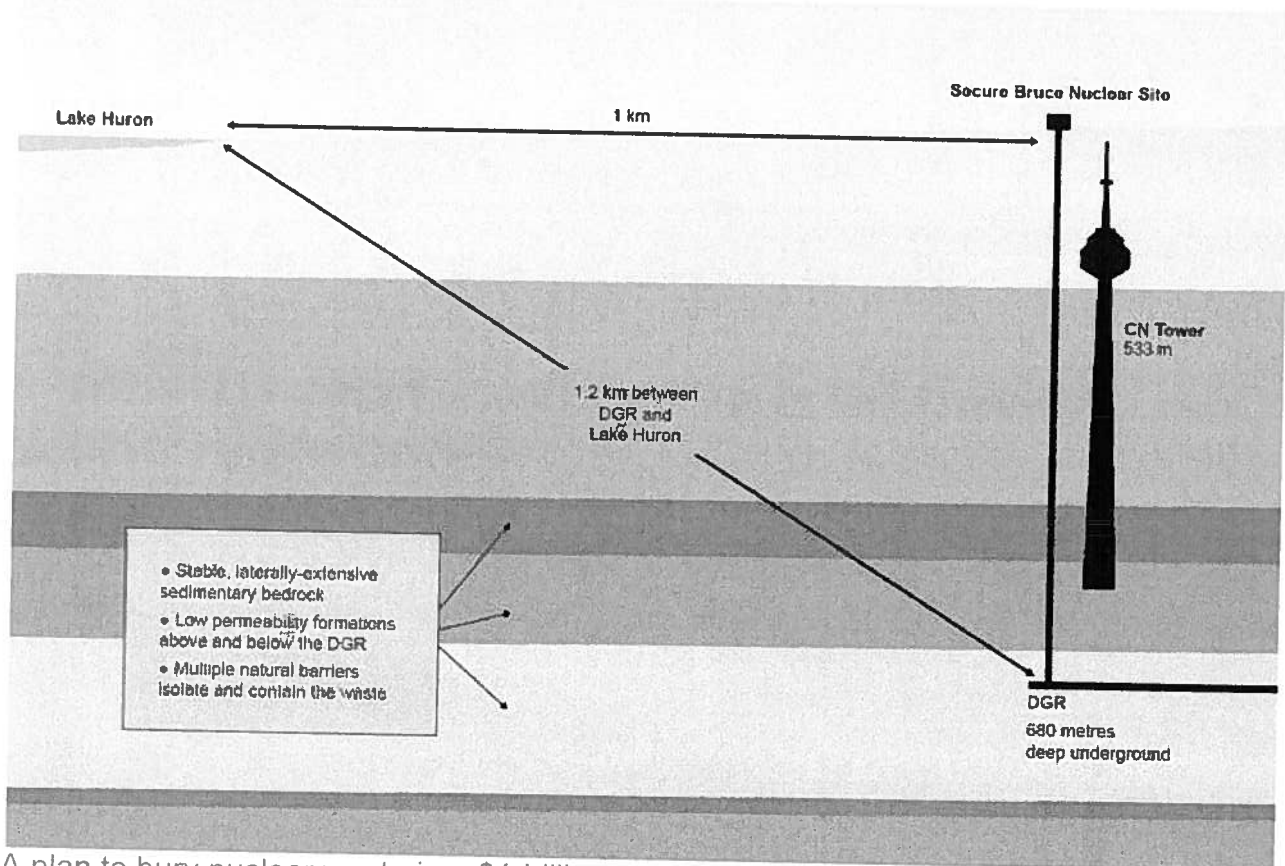
As a next step towards realizing this ultimate goal, today, an Agreement between the Essex Region Conservation Authority, on behalf of its partners, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service was signed. “Canadian and U.S. partners have a strong history of working together, and this Agreement is the next step in continued cooperation and collaboration across political boundaries,” added Dr. John Hartig, Refuge Manager for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

As part of this agreement, ERCA and its partners have created a Canadian Registry of Lands, similar to the US Detroit River’s International Wildlife Refuge. This registry does not result in a transfer of ownership, but instead, recognizes a voluntary commitment to manage lands that have been registered with conservation and habitat protection and restoration as top priorities.

“Today, we will make the first additions to that Registry of Lands, and sign 3,800 acres of ERCA conservation lands in the Detroit River and Lake Erie watersheds to the registry,” announced Bachetti. “We will also work with our PNA partners, municipalities, and private landowners to recognize their commitments to conservation as part of this Registry. In total, there are more than 11,300 acres of existing protected areas in the watershed, and our goal is to recognize them as part of this shared conservation vision for the Detroit River and Western Lake Erie watersheds.”

Since 1973, the Essex Region Conservation Authority has served as a community-based organization dedicated to protecting, restoring and managing the natural resources of the Essex Region.

Concerns raised over proposed nuclear waste repository



A plan to bury nuclear waste in a \$1-billion repository 680 metres below the earth's surface at the Bruce nuclear plant in Kincardine, Ont. is setting off environmental alarm bells in Windsor and Detroit. (Courtesy of Ontario Power Generation)



Brian Cross

Aug 15, 2013 - 5:48 PM EDT

Last Updated: Aug 18, 2013 - 5:45 PM EDT

A plan to bury nuclear waste in a \$1-billion repository 680 metres below the earth's surface at the Bruce nuclear plant in Kincardine is setting off environmental alarm bells in Windsor and Detroit.

"It's a bad place to be having a whole pile of nuclear waste underground like that," Derek Coronado of Windsor's Citizens Environment Alliance said of the Ontario Power Generation plan that will be the subject of more than a month of hearings in Kincardine and Port Elgin starting Sept. 16.

Locally, a Save the Great Lakes from Nuclear Waste town hall meeting is scheduled Monday starting at 6:30 p.m. at Detroit's Wayne State University law school to raise awareness about a plan that – according to State Sen. Hoon-Yung Hopgood (D. – Taylor) – is too close to the Great Lakes, which tens of millions depend on for their drinking water.

The repository project is for low-level and intermediate-level radioactive waste from the Ontario nuclear plants at Bruce, Darlington and Pickering, not highly radioactive used nuclear fuel. But Hoon-Yung is worried that once a permanent repository is approved and operating, high-level waste could end up going there.

"My concern is, quite frankly, they build this thing, invest millions and millions and they're looking around and asking: 'Where do we put the high-level waste?' And they decide to use this facility. It just seems to make too much sense to me," the senator said.

OPG spokesman Ted Gruetzner said the repository is not intended for high-level waste. "Nor would it ever be used for that," he said.

"We think this is a very safe project to go forward on and we have strong community support as well."

In fact, he said, it was the Town of Kincardine that approached OPG about finding an alternative to the current way the Bruce plant stores its waste – temporarily in secure silos or caches either on the ground or 20 or 30 feet below ground. The "deep geological disposal facility" being proposed would put the waste in stable rock formations that are 450 million years old, according to the OPG. The rock – hundreds of metres below the Lake Huron lake bed – will limit movement of any radioactivity to less than one metre every thousand years.

"It takes it out of the elements and protects it from things above ground and puts it in a safe place for future generations," said Gruetzner, who said the facility could be operating by 2020.

The low- and medium-level waste includes anything from mops used at the plant to reactor components, resins and filters.

The environment alliance's Coronado said any cracking of the rock formations in which the repository is housed, any leaks underground, could result in radioactive material getting into the Great Lakes, located 1.2 kilometres from the proposed repository. He questioned why the first underground repository in North America has to be located so close to the lakes.

But OPG's Gruetzner said the repository will be well below the water table. "This has been determined as the path for the best protection of the environment and the public over the long term."

Another process is underway to find a national solution for storing the high-level waste, some 2.3 million used fuel bundles (they're about the size of a fireplace log, and if they were stacked like wood they'd require the volume of about six hockey arenas) being stored at the country's nuclear power plants. Started in 2002, the Nuclear Waste Management Program, is looking to find a location for a 500-metre-deep repository and have it operating by 2035. It's being envisioned to eventually hold about 4.5 million fuel bundles.

Early in the process, about 21 communities — including 10 in Northern Ontario and six in Southern Ontario near the Lake Huron shore — have expressed interest in hosting the repository. Spokesman Mike Krizanc said all used fuel is now managed on an interim basis at the power plants. It's initially placed in big pools of water for seven to 10 years to cool it down and reduce its radioactivity, then it's put in concrete and steel dry storage containers.

"These measures have always been considered interim, they were never considered permanent," he said. It will probably take seven to 10 years to identify the community to host the site. The citizens have to be willing to accept it, he said, plus it has to have host rock that's suitable to isolate and contain the waste for a "very, very long time. We say indefinitely."

It will be built in rock that's been isolated from the surface and where nothing has happened for hundreds of millions of years, he said. And in addition to being separated from the surface by 500 metres of rock, there will be multiple barriers of steel and copper and clay, to protect the waste from being disturbed, even by an ice age thousands of years in the future when there could be three kilometres of ice on the surface.

Petcoke removal hailed as victory

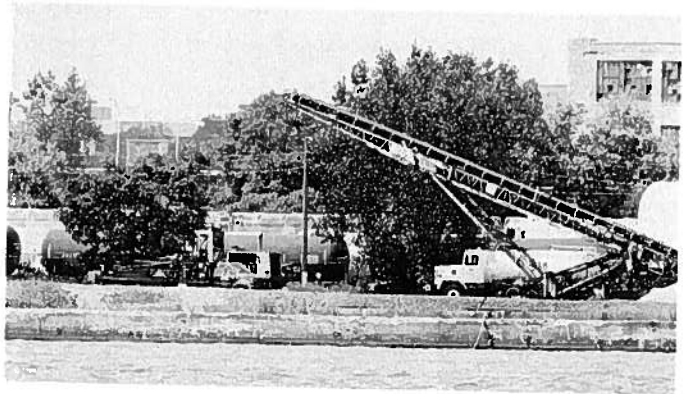
Crews have removed the petroleum coke piles from the banks of the Detroit River. The petcoke is going to an unidentified location in Ohio for the time being. But MP Brian Masse warned "just because it's no longer here, we can't pretend it's a complete solution."

Photograph by: Jason Kryk, The Windsor Star, The Windsor Star

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Dave Batta Gello, The Windsor Star | Aug 21, 2013 | Last Updated: Aug 21, 2013 - 9:05 UTC

One of the first Windsor residents to speak out more than six months ago about the piles of petroleum coke on the Detroit riverfront was still pinching herself Tuesday after a ship hauled away the last of it.



"I'm stunned," said Ruth Germain, a condo resident on Windsor's riverfront across from the petcoke site. "I didn't think there would be the political will to be interested. The fact it was ugly was not the issue. But you could see the dust blowing around and after breathing it in, you just felt sick. This gives you hope."

She believes months of controversy surrounding the Alberta oilsands byproduct could have been avoided if Detroit Bulk Storage, the company responsible for piling the material next to the river, kept it covered or provided better storage as done elsewhere - including the nearby Marathon Petroleum Corp. refinery which produces the petcoke. The oil manufacturer keeps it in a silo in southwest Detroit.

"They could have avoided this whole issue with the correct handling and storage," Germain said. "Even being in that location if they just kept it covered there would have been no dust in the air. But instead they allowed so much dust that it was just a total disregard for the neighbours."

Petcoke started to be produced in much greater amounts at the nearby Marathon refinery in Detroit last fall after it completed a \$2-billion upgrade which allowed it to process heavy Canadian crude oil brought in by pipeline from the Alberta oilsands.

The petcoke was located just east of the Ambassador Bridge on industrial and railway lands belonging to bridge owner Matty Moroun. Detroit Bulk Storage has been leasing the land to store the petcoke before it is shipped for use around the world. The petcoke was purchased by Koch Carbon, owned by billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch.

A Koch company official said recently it was moving petcoke storage to an unidentified location in Ohio for the time being.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality made repeated visits to the riverfront site to ensure Detroit Bulk Storage was not harming the waterway or air.

It did issue warnings to the company regarding blowing petcoke dust - especially when it was being loaded onto cargo ships.

An MDEQ official went by the site Tuesday and confirmed the product has been removed, said spokesman Brad Wurfel.

Detroit Bulk Storage is continuing to pursue municipal permits for the site, but that does not necessarily mean it is for the storage of petcoke, he said.

"This company handles a lot of different aggregate," Wurfel said. "(MDEQ) staff will continue to monitor this site. We are aware the company has decided to select a different location for its storage needs of this material. We will continue working with them if it's anywhere in Michigan to make sure any issues around air or water impacts are appropriately addressed."

A spokesman for Detroit Bulk Storage said plans for the site are "uncertain," but the company "diligently worked to comply with the city's request" to have the petcoke removed from the riverfront before the end of this month.

"We are hopeful that we will continue to grow our business in the city of Detroit," said Daniel Cherrin.

State Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D - Detroit) was a leader across the border to get the petcoke removed.

"This is a real victory," she said.

"This shows it doesn't always take money or political connections to get respect for our community. Arrogance doesn't work in Detroit any more. People can get arrested for being too arrogant - like our former mayor.

"The next time this happens, my only hope is that it doesn't take six months to get it fixed. A lot of people spent their whole summer working on this issue."

Tlaib believes the companies involved are likely to find a new site in the Detroit area to store the petcoke.

"There is a theory they are leaving the city and I don't believe that to be true," she said. "I have heard they are seeking out other properties in Detroit. It is my hope it will be a transparent process so the community is aware and involved. The lesson that should be learned here is you can't have 40-foot piles (of petcoke) with no wind barriers, without permits and in violation of ordinances."

MP Brian Masse (NDP - Windsor West), an outspoken critic of the decision to store petcoke on the riverfront, said Tuesday its removal is "great news."

"This is wonderful for the short-term, but we don't want to see something like this happen again," he said.

Masse is considering sponsoring a private member's bill calling for a comprehensive study on the environmental and health impacts of petcoke. U.S. Rep. Gary Peters (D - Detroit) has already introduced similar legislation in Washington.

"They are going to continue to manufacture petcoke and we have to have better public policy in this country," Masse said.

"Hopefully this leads to a greater discussion.

"If this ends up piled in another neighbourhood, upstream from us or somewhere else, the same things that happened to us will occur again. Just because it's no longer here, we can't pretend it's a complete solution."