



# Manitoba Eco-Network

Annual Report 2005/2006

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## Message from the Chair

As usual this has been a busy year for many people involved in environmental non-governmental organizations. The Manitoba Eco-Network has also had a busy year. Along with the usual business involved in acting as an umbrella organization for 48 member groups the staff at the MEN have been busy planning, organizing, and facilitating several exciting events.

The summer of 2005 saw another successful Organic Lawn Care Project as well as the continued development of the GIS / Mapping Centre Project. A Member Forum was held in Onanole with some great feedback from members. The Steering Committee and the Staff of the MEN had a full day retreat to revise old thinking and develop new strategies. A fantastic party was held in honour of all the donors and volunteers involved in the Green Office Development Project. Thank you to everyone who was involved in making the Eco-Centre possible!! It is a great space to work and meet.

The MEN has also been experiencing some challenges this year. While we have seen continued funding from Manitoba Conservation and a renewal of the Water Caucus project we have also been experiencing some uncertainty with the Climate Change Connection. It was unknown whether CCC would be re-funded for the coming year.

Hopefully with continued support from all our funders, member groups, and volunteers the Manitoba Eco-Network will have a fantastic year to come!

Keep fighting the good fight! It is always worth it!  
Sincerely,

Amy Hawkins-Bowman, Organic Food Council of Manitoba  
Chair, Manitoba Eco-Network

## Steering Committee

Amy Hawkins-Bowman, Organic Food Council of Manitoba (Chair)  
Lise Smith, Consumers' Association of Canada – Manitoba Branch (Vice-Chair)  
Joseph Prymak, Consumers for Responsible Energy (Treasurer)  
Alana Lajoie-O'Malley, Eco-MAFIA (Secretary)  
Alan Diduck, University of Winnipeg Environmental Studies  
Elizabeth Fleming, Member-at-large  
Kristina Hunter, Faculty of Environment, University of Manitoba  
Pete Walker, Manitoba Federation of Labour – Environment Committee

## Staff/Contractors

Anne Lindsey, Executive Director  
Liz Dykman, Coordinator  
Anke Kirch, GIS Project Manager  
Adam Melnyk, GIS Technician  
Glen Koroluk, Water Caucus Coordinator  
Rachel Van Caesele,  
Climate Change Connection Manager  
Susan Lindsay,  
Climate Change Connection Coordinator  
Judy Silva, Bookkeeper  
Tom Bailey, Organic Lawn Care Educator  
Eszti Nagy, Organic Lawn Care Educator  
Heather Laird, Eco-Journal Editor  
David Henry, Eco-Journal Layout  
Carmelle Kozak – Youth Serves Manitoba Intern



*Glen, Rachel, Tara, Liz, Anne & Anke*

## Activities

### PUBLIC EDUCATION

**Eco-Journal** – published 5 times during the year with a circulation of 800-900 per issue. Featured topics included: Winnipeg community gardens, agricultural composting, the Garrison project, Manitoba's migrating songbirds, northern smelter pollution, the Floodway, and the proposed Manitoba Lowlands National Park.

**Website** – website is frequently updated, and includes searchable public registry database and user friendly events calendar. [www.mbeconetwork.org](http://www.mbeconetwork.org).

**Displays** – Organic Agriculture Conference, Brandon.

### Presentations

Liz made a presentation at the Science Teachers Association of Manitoba Special Area Group Conference. The presentation included information on the key environmental issues in Manitoba, and the work of the Eco-Network.

We hosted a briefing on the COP11 Climate Change Conference with two Winnipeggers who attended the meetings.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Membership Development** – We maintained our group membership at 47 over the past year, and reached out to rural groups through our Forum, which was held in western Manitoba. We continue to communicate regularly with all member groups and have improved our communications to our individual members by offering a monthly electronic bulletin of events and news.

**Capacity Building Project** – This collaborative project with Sustainability Network and the Saskatchewan Environmental Network wound up with a Legal Toolkit Workshop held June 7. The workshop was attended by 16 individuals and included presentations by staff of Sierra Legal Defence and Manitoba's Public Interest Law Centre. This day-long workshop was well received, with excellent information presented about how to use legal means to further environmental causes.

**Member Forum** - This year we took our annual member group forum out to rural Manitoba, with the goal of increasing our outreach to environmental activists and groups outside Winnipeg. The event was a great success, with participants attending from Thompson, Flin Flon, Swan River and The Pas, as well as many from western Manitoba. The event was held in Onanole, just south of Riding Mountain National Park, and included presentations on current issues, capacity building workshops, informal networking, and a meeting with the Minister of Conservation. The event was held in conjunction with a water caucus meeting.



*Forum participants at Onanole*

## **CONSULTATIONS AND GOVERNMENT LIAISON**

We hosted a visit of Minister of Conservation, the Hon. Stan Struthers for a tour of our new office space.

Staff participated in the following consultations and meetings:

Roundtable discussion with Federal Environment Minister, the Hon. Stephane Dion, on the government's Climate Change Plan for Canada.

Meetings with Water Stewardship Minister, the Hon. Steve Ashton and officials from the department of Water Stewardship.

Information session on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act regulation of Greenhouse Gases.

Consultation on the Social Economy Capacity Building Program at Western Economic Diversification, Canada.

Consultation on the Federal Government Directive on Regulating, along with several member group representatives.

Meeting of Voluntary Sector organizations to discuss an awareness campaign about the Sector.

Consultation on the University of Winnipeg's Sustainability Initiatives on February 1.

City of Winnipeg consultation on Community Gardens.



*Executive Director Anne Lindsey gives Min. Struthers a tour of the EcoCentre*

Consultation held by Green Manitoba on Extended Producer Responsibility.

Consultation Workshop on National Agri-Environmental Standards hosted by Environment Canada and Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada.

We distributed information on these and many other consultation opportunities to Member Groups of the network.

In addition, our coordinator made a presentation on the topic of Green Meetings to Environment Canada staff, and our Executive Director participated in two research projects on Capacity Building in the ENGO sector with the Winnipeg Foundation and the George Cedric Metcalf Foundation.

In November, we hosted a delegation from the Chinese Central Party School who were here as the guests of the Canada School of Public Service, learning about sustainability issues in Canada.

Staff and representatives of our Water Caucus met with various Deputy Ministers and officials on the Planning Act, water regulations and proposed phosphorus regulations.

Staff and Water Caucus members attended a CCME consultation on Wastewater Effluent Regulations in Canadian jurisdictions

## PROJECT WORK

### Climate Change Connection

Climate Change Connection had a busy and productive year in 2005-2006. The Connection completed its final Community Workshop on Climate Change in Inglis, Manitoba, rounding off a thirteen-community tour of the province. The workshop series provided the Connection with a first-hand understanding of what Manitobans think about the causes and impacts of climate change, as well as the potential solutions.

From this body of work came the impetus to produce "Creating Climate-Friendly Communities: A



*Checking the label – "you are what you wear"*

Resource Guide for Community Leaders”. Researched and written by Andrea Swain, the guide provides information on getting started, building community capacity, securing funding, and action planning. The 56-page guide is currently available at no charge from Climate Change Connection.

This past year the Connection started outreach to the youth sector. The Connection, in partnership with Resource Conservation Manitoba, held three youth conferences in Winnipeg, Brandon and Morden. The conferences differed from location to location, with speakers hand-picked and presentations tailored to each community. At every event, youth enjoyed the Skill Wheel, the “You Are What You Wear” consumer activity, and an action planning session to GHG reduction projects for schools.

In an effort to provide the business sector with a tool to understand the risks associated with ignoring climate change, as well as abundant resources for making changes to reduce risk and improve efficiency, the Connection produced “The Bottom Line on Climate Change: A Manitoba Business Guide” specifically for small and medium-sized enterprises.

As a clearinghouse for climate change information in Manitoba, the Connection continued to provide information and materials to curious stakeholders. In an effort to have ready answers to frequently asked questions about climate change, the Connection put together three “Hot Topic” info cards – “Hurricanes”, “The Kyoto Protocol”, and “Breaking Records”, a piece that explores the rising seasonal temperatures in Manitoba. The Connection also gave presentations to all ages and sectors, and displayed the improved and updated display board at numerous events.

It was an excellent year for the Connection. We look forward to maintaining our momentum and continuing to offer Manitobans information and encouragement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

## **GIS Mapping Centre Project**

In addition to providing mapping services to member groups, the GIS/Mapping Centre’s work focused on the initialization of two major, long-term projects that will benefit the general public and the environmental community: a web-based interactive map for the Manigotagan River and a web-based interactive Winnipeg and Region Green Map.

The goals of the Manigotagan project are to facilitate and promote environmentally sensitive

use of the Manigotagan River and to raise awareness of its history and ecosystems. In collaboration with interested partners, the Manitoba Eco-Network’s GIS Centre will establish two maps. One waterproof paper map for orientation while paddling and one web-based, interactive map that will provide additional information, educate about the river, increase awareness of its natural environments and history.



*Mapping the Seine River*

The Green Map, which will be established in collaboration with Dr. David van Vliet from the University of Manitoba, Department of City Planning, will promote environmental infrastructure and social economy projects in and around Winnipeg. This includes a community mapping pilot in which members from the Spence Neighbourhood will create a community Green Map. Overall, the project has three goals: (1) Create a user-friendly directory so people can find out about and access existing environmental and related social/economic facilities, organizations, and services; (2) Educate the public about environmentally friendly choices in their daily lives; and (3) Create an opportunity for the environmental community to display and communicate priority areas of concern and success.

## Water Caucus

Last fall we culminated the first year of the water caucus with the report “For the Public Good”. The report captured many of the concerns brought to the water caucus table and recommended that government should improve its investment in, and commitment to water stewardship (or “walk the talk”). We pointed out that if we want to protect our public water resource, we require leadership, political coherence, consistent management, additional resources (human and financial) and community/government capacity and expertise. New data, research and access to information were also considered to be important attributes to move forward. The water caucus recommended improvements in government consultative processes for the development of laws, regulations and policy and that these improvements must also be reflected in watershed planning. It was recommended that citizen capacity, citizen trust in government, and deficiencies in information can be improved with the design and implementation of a community based water-monitoring program.



Over the course of the year, forty organizations and ten participants-at-large attended at least one of the ten water caucus meetings that were held. Topics of discussion included saving the Lake Winnipeg Physa Snail (a species at risk), protecting groundwater in the Assiniboine Delta Aquifer, watershed planning in the Roseau River, Tobacco Creek, Stephenfield Reservoir and Little Saskatchewan River watersheds and water quality problems in Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba. The water caucus also sponsored or co-sponsored three well received public forums. One forum focussed on watershed planning in Winnipeg

and the surrounding area. Another dealt with the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (a proposal in North Dakota to move water over the continental divide from the Missouri River to the Red River). The third public forum highlighted ways in which society can move beyond demand side management and towards a “soft path for water”.

Working groups were established within the water caucus to focus on a number of initiatives, which included input to government on their plans to develop water quality management zones and regulate phosphorus. Feedback was provided on the new Planning Act, the Red River Valley Water Supply project and the Pembina Valley Water Coop Water Supply project. The World Water day working group was successful in their campaign to see the City of Winnipeg council pass a resolution to endorse the Water for Life Declaration.

Plans for the new year include capturing the momentum built around the meeting in Onanole that brought forth ideas to develop the tools and resources necessary to implement a “citizens

based watershed planning” regime. We will continue to keep a watchful eye on all levels of government and encourage them to do what is best to protect our water. The water caucus and water caucus coordinator position is made possible by Manitoba Water Stewardship and the Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation.

## Environmental Awards

The 2005 awards were presented at the Annual General Meeting on May 26 to the following individuals and group:

David Barnes

A Brandon teacher and naturalist, David is a key member of Brandon’s environmental and activist community, serving as Past President and active member of the Brandon Naturalists Society, board member of the Marquis Project, and a founder of the Brandon and Area Environmental Council.

He also runs the award-winning EcoOdyssey program at Neelin High School, a program that, for half a school year, instills a sense of environmental awareness and social responsibility among students from all three high schools in Brandon and from the surrounding districts. Nominator David Neufeld commented that David’s interests and community involvement speak to his deep concern for environmental and social justice, both here in Canada and overseas, but that “we are most impressed with the way Dave conducts his personal life in keeping with his social and environmental principles.



Western Canada Wilderness Committee—Manitoba Chapter



Nominator, Dave Nickarz congratulated WCWC on several recent accomplishments on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg. WCWC has been active in the East Side Advisory Committee, while working to extend the park reserve protection status for the Poplar/Nanowin River area. Their mass mailing postcard campaign and continued pressure on the Provincial government, contributed to the backcountry protection designation for 1500 meters on either side of the Manigotagan River, and their lobbying resulted in the deferral of logging in the habitat of the Owl Lake caribou herd habitat. The forestry company Tembec has agreed to not log there until 2007, buying a much-needed respite for this most southerly range of woodland caribou, while government discussions continue about whether to place these threatened creatures on the endangered species list.

Helen Fallding



Helen Fallding is currently the Science Reporter at the Winnipeg Free Press. Lindy Clubb, an activist and fellow writer, commented in her nomination that she gains a lot of information from Helen's articles, which, she says, cover environmental issues in a fair and honest manner. Helen's research and interviews are credible, and Lindy further stated that "As advocates, we seek and seldom find good coverage by reporters and mainstream media people—I believe that Helen has helped to translate our work as engos (environmental non-governmental organizations) to the public, who in turn influence decision makers, and she has made herself available for this task".

## Organic Lawn Care

Summer staff delivered 15 workshops throughout Winnipeg, providing information on alternatives to chemical fertilizers and pesticides for lawn care. Displays of organic lawn care information were held at various community events. Tom and Eszti also responded to numerous public enquiries for information on the topic.



*2006 Organic Lawn Care Educators*

## Collaborative Projects

### Healthcare Roundtable

As part of our continued role on the Social Planning Council's Environment Committee, Manitoba Eco-Network participated in the organization and hosting of a Roundtable on Healthcare and the environment. This roundtable brought together health care providers in Manitoba interested in promoting greater awareness of the links between environment and health. It also assisted in the development of the Children's Environmental Health Project – an ongoing undertaking of the committee to create greater public awareness and action on this subject.

### Relocation Project

The 18-month effort to move the Eco-Centre into more environmentally friendly office space came to fruition when we moved to 303 Portage Ave. in May along with 4 of our member groups. The new space provides better accessibility, profile, and a better match with the values and mandates of our groups. In the fall, we organized an event to recognize the many



*Donors and volunteers celebrate the new EcoCentre*

contributions from funders and volunteers who helped to make the project happen. We have hosted many informal tours to demonstrate the use of green and reused building materials in our new space. CTV ran a short promotional feature about the project as part of its series on projects supported by the Winnipeg Foundation. This feature won an Honourable Mention at the Annual Television Broadcasters awards, and was seen by many Winnipeg viewers.

### Save Outdoor Hockey Day

Together with other groups from the EcoCentre, staff from Manitoba Eco-Network and Climate Change Connection organized an outdoor hockey game for February 16 – World Outdoor Hockey Day. The intent was to get outside and have some fun while drawing attention to climate change. The weather did not cooperate (it was –40 with the windchill), but that did not deter the players at all!



## Funders

Manitoba Eco-Network wishes to acknowledge and thank our funders over the past year.

- Core Funding: Manitoba Conservation  
Environment Canada / Canadian Environmental Network  
The United Way Donor Designated Gifts Campaign  
Province of Manitoba All Charities Campaign  
Member Forum: Canadian Environmental Network small projects
- Capacity Building Project: George Cedric Metcalf Foundation via the Sustainability Network
- Climate Change Connection: Federal Climate Change Action Fund (Natural Resources Canada/Environment Canada)  
Manitoba Climate Change Action Fund (Manitoba Energy, Science & Technology)  
Manitoba Hydro PowerSmart
- GIS Mapping Centre Project: Thomas Sill Foundation
- Organic Lawn Care Workshops: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada  
Manitoba Education Urban Green Team  
City of Winnipeg  
Winnipeg Public Library  
Winnipeg Foundation Youth in Philanthropy Grant from Daniel McIntyre Collegiate
- Relocation: Winnipeg Foundation Youth in Philanthropy Grant from Daniel McIntyre Collegiate
- Water Caucus: Manitoba Water Stewardship  
Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation  
City of Winnipeg Civic Environment Committee
- Endowment Funds Contributors:
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| Hollow Reed Holistic                            | House of Nutrition          |
| Manitoba Wildlands                              | Organic Planet Worker Co-op |


Our sincere appreciation to all our generous individual donors and supporters in the community whose contributions help to maintain the Manitoba Eco-Network and our services.

## Volunteers

Special thanks to the volunteers who helped out Manitoba Eco-Network in the past year: Peter Ginakes, who provided legal assistance, Carmel Kozak, Tom Nestor, Tom Bailey and Garth Duncan. Thanks also to the many volunteers who contributed articles to the Eco-Journal.

## 2005-2006 Member Groups

Boreal Forest Network  
Campaign for Pesticide Reduction! Wpg (CPR! Wpg)  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)  
Chemical Sensitivities Manitoba  
Churchill Northern Studies Centre  
Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth and Resources  
Coalition to Save the Elms  
Committee for Church in Society (Christ Lutheran Church)  
Concerned Residents of Winnipeg (CROW)  
Consumers Association of Canada – MB Chapter  
Consumers for Responsible Energy (CoRE)  
Eco-MAFIA (Ecological Males and Females in Action)  
Environmental Youth Centre (Thompson)  
Fort Whyte Centre  
Friends of the Assiniboine Park Conservatory  
Hopeful Aware Students Taking Action (HASTA)  
Institute of Urban Studies  
International Erosion Control Association - Northern Prairies  
International Institute for Sustainable Development  
Living Prairie Museum  
Manitoba Federation of Labour – Environment Committee  
Manitoba Naturalists Society  
Manitoba Ozone Protection Industry Association (MOPIA)  
Manitoba Protected Areas Society (MPAS)  
Manitoba Wildlands  
Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization  
Mixedwood Forest Society  
Native Orchid Conservation Inc.  
Oak Hammock Marsh  
Organic Food Council of Manitoba  
Pembina Valley Conservation District  
Project Peacemakers  
Red River Basin Commission  
Resource Conservation Manitoba  
Roseisle Creek Watershed Association  
Save Our Seine Environment Inc.  
Social Planning Council of Winnipeg  
Speleological Society of Manitoba  
Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems (TREE)  
University of Winnipeg Environmental Studies  
Water Wisdom  
Western Canada Wilderness Committee  
Winnipeg Humane Society  
Winnipeg Vegetarian Association  
Winnipeg Water Watch

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