

FREE
MAGAZINE

Issue 5: 2011

Tread Lightly and Listen to the Land

THE FOOTPRINT PRESS



Passages from Silverdale, Mission,
Abbotsford and beyond.

Message from the Editorial Committee

Tracy Lyster, Phyllis Young, Val Pack, Catherine McDonald, Bruce Klassen, Nik Cuff, Don Mair, Mike Diener

Cover photo: Silverdale Wood Ducks, Bruce Klassen

This issue of the Footprint Press is dedicated to that which binds us all together: Water. Without water, there can be no life. More than 65% of our bodies are composed of water. We cannot exist for more than 3 days without water before our bodily processes begin to break down. Water is a precious gift of Nature, born out of the sky, captured by the trees, and delivered to the creatures of the Earth through her streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

But Nature doth have her limits. Only about 2% of the planet's water is fresh and of that, more than half is at risk of disappearing within the next decade as the polar ice caps and glaciers melt.

Given the importance of water to all life on earth, we trust governments to look out for our water. But has this trust been betrayed? As the global population skyrockets to over 7 billion people, governments are failing us all by allowing the pollution and destruction of our precious watersheds. More and more of our dwindling fresh water resources are being consumed by industry and agriculture. A fresh water shortage will spawn a food shortage as is currently happening in the Horn of Africa.

The most economical plan we could have for high quality sustainable water would be to protect our sensitive watersheds. But instead, municipal, provincial, and federal governments have subsidized growth and development in these areas without protection or regard for the impact on our water. Urban sprawl into sensitive watersheds reduces supply while runoff from driveways, roads, and houses introduces contamination into streams, rivers and underground aquifers.

In our economic system scarcity creates value, so many corporations are now trying to privatize access to water. To facilitate this, corporations want water officially designated as a need, rather than a right. If water is only a "need," the private sector, through the market, could provide this resource on a for-profit basis. If water were officially recognized as a universal right, governments would be responsible for ensuring that all people would have equal access. Sadly, there is a strong push for the commodification of water, and moves toward privatization of water, such as the proposed P3 water treatment center at Stave Lake in Mission, are already occurring in our own back yards.

We abuse water because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we come to understand water as the basis of all life on Earth, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

"The way we treat rivers reflects the way we treat each other." Aldo Leopold

Concerns about a Private Public Partnership for the Stave Lake Drinking Water Project

Mike Gildersleeve

On April 4th, 2011, residents in Mission became aware at a public hearing that our Council was going to vote on sending an application for Federal P3 funding that would involve the privatization of the proposed Stave Lake Water Supply and Treatment Project. We heard that Mission and Abbotsford Councils had been working on a plan to enter into a minimum twenty-five year Private-Public Partnership (P3) for designing, building, financing, and operating a new water treatment plant and distribution system at Stave Lake.

Needless to say many citizens from Mission came out to this meeting and spoke out forcefully and eloquently about their concerns regarding this move towards privatization of our water. Many consider water as a sacred trust that must remain in public hands. Over a period of five hours, speaker after speaker rejected the proposal to forward an application for funds to PPP Canada for the project. Only one speaker, representing the Chamber of Commerce, spoke out in favor of the proposal.

At first we were told that this would be a public consultation meeting. Then we learned that Council would actually be voting to proceed with the proposal. We also learned that the Deloitte and Touche report, commissioned by Council on the cost benefit analysis (business case) for this P3 project, was not even completed, and the only information available was an executive summary on an uncompleted report. A spokesperson from CAUSS questioned Council on the timing of this vote, considering Council, and most importantly the public, did not have complete information on which to base their decision. The only response was silence.

We had also been told that this deal would only go ahead if both Mission and Abbotsford Councils voted in favor. Finally, after five hours, Mission Council decided it was time for the vote, and to the amazing surprise and delight of those that stayed on, and to the very evident look of shock on Mayor Atebe's face, the vote was four to three against sending the application for P3 Federal funding. For the record, Councilors Stewart, Plecas, Scudder and Stevens voted against and Mayor Atebe and, Councilors Horn and Gidda voted in favour. On the same evening, Abbotsford Council decided to postpone their vote to a subsequent meeting. Mayor Peary of Abbotsford, on hearing that Mission Council voted against the application, decided to immediately bring forward a revised proposal on their own, with no opportunity for citizen input, leaving a legacy of a complete absence of any kind of democratic process.

Lynn Perrin (Waterwatch Mission-Abbotsford spokesperson) said Abbotsford was dividing the two communities with its move to proceed with the new proposal, particularly without first seeking public input. Before the public had an opportunity to think about the consequences of privatizing

their water services for 25-50 years, Mayor Peary declared war on any person or organization that believes water is a sacred trust that must not be left in corporate hands (Abbotsford Times, April 19th, 2011).

Looking at this whole proposal leaves us with many questions. Why are local governments being put in the position of having no choice but to opt for privatization because of a Federal funding windfall? Abbotsford has now submitted their application for approximately \$66.5 million (which is 25 percent of the estimated \$284million cost).

This certainly puts unfair leverage and pressure to vote in favor of privatization, of in this case, a vital public resource, when it comes time for citizens to vote in an upcoming referendum this November. "Public-private partnerships, or P3's, are an increasingly popular infrastructure development model with governments in many provinces and countries. In B.C., they are now strongly encouraged for most new capital projects." (Stuart Murray- Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives). In the Federal government's Economic Action Plan, it's understood that 25 percent of their funding for mostly infrastructure projects, will be channeled through PPP Canada. To clarify, P3's are a form of privatization in which a private company (or consortium) takes over the design, building, operation and in many cases, financing, of public infrastructure projects. To date, municipal P3 activity has been concentrated in the following key sectors: transportation (roads and bridges), public transit, water and wastewater treatment, and civic buildings.

The idea of private sector consistently resulting in better value for money is not supported by the evidence. We have a few examples locally such as the Abbotsford Regional Hospital and the Golden Ears Bridge, which raise serious questions about escalation of costs. This year, public taxpayers had to provide a \$30 million subsidy to a private company, because the traffic projections for the Golden Ears Bridge have not been met. For the Stave Lake Water Project we have seen dramatic escalation, of over \$140 million, in projected costs over a few years, and this continues to increase. If the P3 funding is approved, the funds will only help fund the capital costs. Long-term operating costs will still be the responsibility of Mission and Abbotsford taxpayers. In the business case report (Deloitte and Touche) a P3 will cost more than \$1million per year more to operate than a publicly run system because of public sector staff integration, the higher cost of private financing, and the need to pay a profit to the operator.

In Mission many residents are concerned and question the community need and the benefits to the community

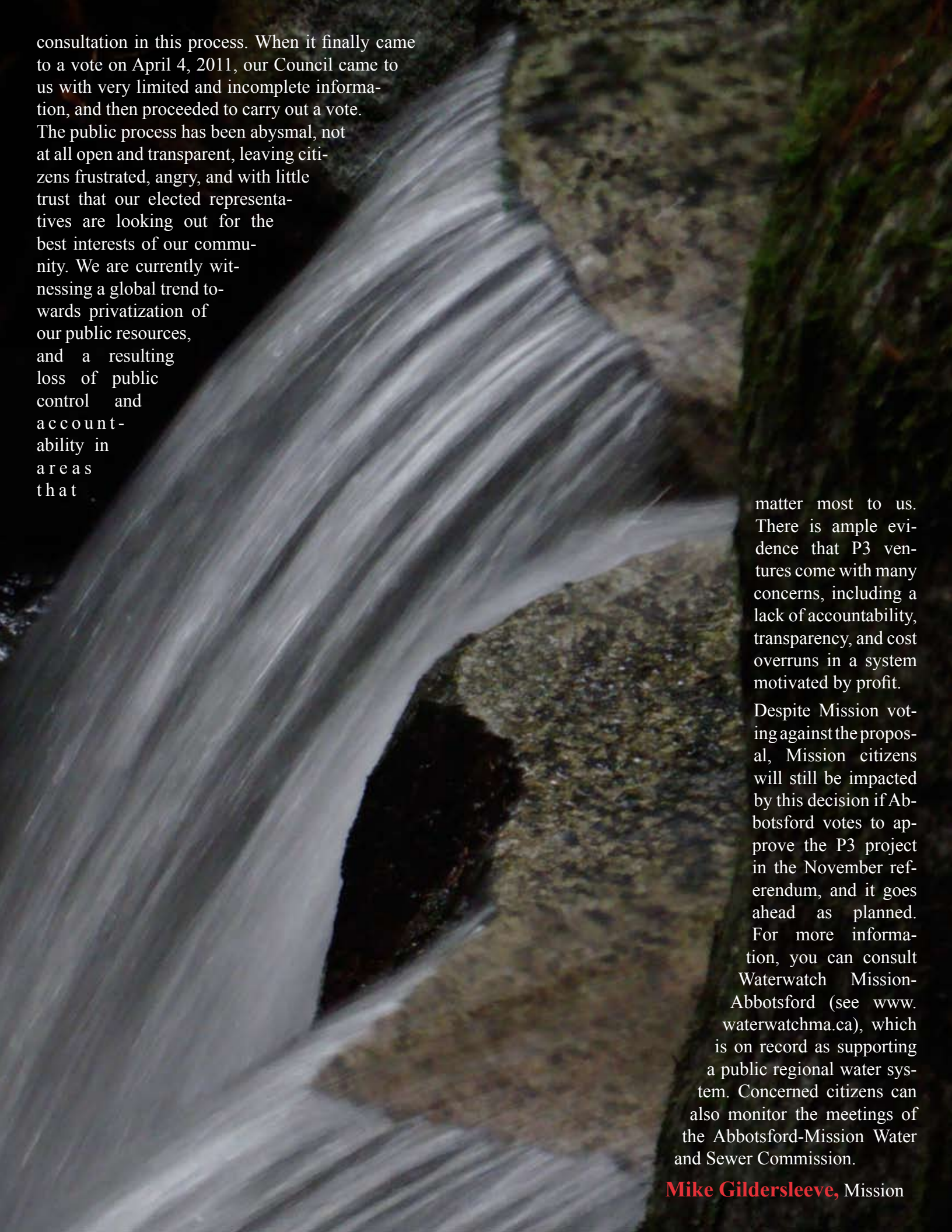
of this project and worry that this proposal is more about addressing and satisfying the "development at any cost" aspirations of Mission and Abbotsford Councils, than the immediate needs and concerns of the community. What we see is development being subsidized by our tax dollars, increasing costs along with loss of control over our water, and the prospects of our water being turned into a commodity and sold back to us.

The majority of future development in Mission will likely end up being connected to the P3 project. We see that there is a plan for this future water line from Stave Lake to be installed down Clay Road, conveniently giving easy access to Genstar/Madison's mammoth housing development in Silverdale. Could it be that we as taxpayers are covering costs, while Genstar/Madison profits? At the time of the public hearing for the Genstar/Madison project in November 2008 it was printed in the Mission Record, that "the citizens of Mission are not now, nor will they ever be responsible for the infrastructure for Neighborhood One. Genstar/Madison will pay \$85 million to take services to the area before the first home is built. These services include water, sewer and roads." (Mission Record, November 13, 2008). What we are seeing instead is the high costs to taxpayers to service sprawling urban developments.

We have been told that this P3 project would not proceed until it is voted on in a referendum in November, 2011. In spite of this, Abbotsford has already begun construction of the Gladwin Road Installation of Water Transmission Main and Sanitary Sewer pipeline up to where it is planned to cross the Fraser River to Mission.

Even though Mission voted against this proposal for privatization of our water, people remain confused because of the subsequent actions of our Council that are facilitating Abbotsford in their application for approval of P3 funds, leaving us wondering if Mission is still in support of this project. What's to stop Mission from applying for a water license from Stave Lake at some future date? Recently, Mission's Chief Administrative Officer, Glen Robertson, drafted a Memorandum of Understanding that Mission agrees to Abbotsford taking over the P3 infrastructure from Stave Lake and permit using Mission's right of ways. Mission would then inherit the Cannell Lake and Norrish Creek system (i.e. the existing system). We have already heard that this aging infrastructure is in need of expensive upgrades and badly needed maintenance. Questions remain about how these actions will benefit Mission.

For me, this proposal has highlighted a number of key issues and concerns with our current Council. There has been a pathetic lack of citizen engagement and public



consultation in this process. When it finally came to a vote on April 4, 2011, our Council came to us with very limited and incomplete information, and then proceeded to carry out a vote. The public process has been abysmal, not at all open and transparent, leaving citizens frustrated, angry, and with little trust that our elected representatives are looking out for the best interests of our community. We are currently witnessing a global trend towards privatization of our public resources, and a resulting loss of public control and accountability in areas that

matter most to us. There is ample evidence that P3 ventures come with many concerns, including a lack of accountability, transparency, and cost overruns in a system motivated by profit.

Despite Mission voting against the proposal, Mission citizens will still be impacted by this decision if Abbotsford votes to approve the P3 project in the November referendum, and it goes ahead as planned. For more information, you can consult Waterwatch Mission-Abbotsford (see www.waterwatchma.ca), which is on record as supporting a public regional water system. Concerned citizens can also monitor the meetings of the Abbotsford-Mission Water and Sewer Commission.

Mike Gildersleeve, Mission



Cohen Commission: Will Wild Salmon be a Priority?

Elena Edwards

October 25th of 2010 saw the first day of what would be a year-long Federal Inquiry into the Decline of the Fraser River Sockeye Salmon, with Justice Bruce Cohen appointed to oversee a process that would examine a variety of potential impacts on the survival of the Fraser River Sockeye salmon.

In the 11 months since the commission commenced, topics examined have been the structure of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), the Wild Salmon Policy (and its lack of implementation to date), Aboriginal Worldview, Cultural Context and Traditional Knowledge, Harvest Management, Commercial and Recreational Fishing, Freshwater Ecology, Climate Change, Habitat Management and Enforcement, Habitat Use, Logging, Enhancement and Restoration, Municipal Wastewater, Predation, Contaminants, Monitoring and Enforcement, Urbanization, Pulp, Paper and Mining Effluence, Gravel Removal, Aboriginal Fishing, Effects on Marine Environment Habitat, and finally, Diseases and Aquaculture.

For most of the 116 days of this \$25 million public inquiry, the 130 seats of the courtroom sat empty, save for the occasional 10-15 people. All of that changed when the topic of disease and Aquaculture entered the courtroom from August 22-September 8th. Accompanied by bodyguards, Dr. Kristi Miller, head of Molecular Genetics for DFO, testified on Aug. 24th and 25th. Dr. Miller was present to testify about her discovery of a parvovirus that is likely causing serious levels of pre spawn mortality in wild salmon. Dr. Miller had been instructed by DFO and Privy Council to not discuss her findings with the public,

in spite of her own concerns that keeping it secret would backfire. Her concerns were valid as the story of “Canada Muzzling its top Scientist” was taken up in papers from Vancouver to Seattle.

From Dr. Miller’s testimony came the disturbing truth that she has been unable to continue with her study that would verify the source of the virus due to government cutting her funding. This raised some serious concerns given the nature of her discovery and the urgency with which it should be addressed, not only for the sake of wild salmon but for the health of those consuming fish that may be diseased.

In the days following Dr. Miller’s testimony, Dr. Alexandra Morton, an independent biologist who has been blowing the whistle on open net fish farms for over 20 years, was sworn in to testify to a courtroom packed with supporters to bear witness.

Very few days in the commission heard such heartfelt honesty spoken with a clarity that has been rare in the proceedings. As one bearing witness to her testimony, my hair still stands on end to think about it.

In the two days of Dr. Morton’s testimony, the suspicion that the Canadian government is more interested in protecting fish farms than wild salmon became clear as the lawyers for the government of Canada and the Province were ruthless in their attempts to discredit Dr. Morton and her years of research, going so far as to suggest that she attended a radical university, that was famous for political activism, as an attempt to portray Dr. Morton as a radical activist. Dr. Morton’s response of “I hope we’re going to get back to the sockeye here at some point” was met by cheers from the audience.

Under questioning about Dr. Morton’s ongoing public campaigns to raise awareness and support to see the removal of fish farms, it was Dr. Morton’s response “There’s nobody restraining my freedom. I’m not paid by anybody, so I try to communicate as clearly and as fairly as I see possible” that drove home the point that those employed by government and industry are not free to do that which is so needed, to be free to speak the truth, as clearly and fairly as possible.

Under questioning from the council as to a perceived conflict of DFO regulating aquaculture, Dr. Morton let it be known that after years of looking at impacts of the farms from inside and out as a biologist, she did not see a way for the fish farm industry to exist legally or biologically in the ocean.

It became increasingly clear, throughout the testimony, that there has been a criminal amount of failure to protect salmon habitat, to regulate the many industrial prac-

tices impacting wild salmon, to enforce existing regulations (with over \$1 million dollars in outstanding fines for habitat destruction), and to communicate with each other, First Nations and the public. Constant complaints of lack of funding for staff field work, expert scientists disagreeing about various issues impacting wild salmon, and the obvious support of government to a fish farming industry, may very well be the final nail in the coffin for wild salmon.

Justice Bruce Cohen has until June 2012 to deliberate over the evidence and testimony put forth over the past year, and to submit his recommendations to Ottawa. At this point, it is uncertain as to whether or not there will be justice for wild salmon, but one thing will remain clear from this commission - if the government and DFO structure continue down the slippery slope of compromising wild salmon, the future of the Fraser River Sock-



eye salmon and all that depend on them will have the fight of their lives.

Elena Edwards

Elena Edwards is an independent activist, writer and campaigner who is dedicated to protecting wild salmon. She has been attending the Cohen Commission since November of 2010. She resides wherever the salmon take her.

Invasion of the Eastern Grey Squirrel

Zoey Slater



Although the Eastern Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) seems normal and almost natural to our urban landscape, they are not really supposed to be here. They may thrive in our local parks and backyards, but for the most part they have become an unwanted addition to our communities.

So where did they come from ...

Eastern Grey Squirrels are native to central and eastern North America, but in 1909 they were introduced to Stanley Park in Vancouver and since that time have spread throughout the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. Introduced species can be extremely damaging to an ecosystem and are often one of the most serious threats to biodiversity next to habitat destruction.

The Southwest of British Columbia is home to two native squirrel species, the Douglas Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*) and the Northern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*).

Both species live in coniferous forest habitat but may also be found in local parks or treed backyards. The Grey Squirrels, who despite what their name suggests can actually be grey or black, tend to prefer a mixed hardwood forest and are able to live in a much more fragmented landscape, hence the reason why they do so well in an urban environment. There is concern that Grey Squirrels may out-compete our native squirrels for food sources and eventually displace them as has been seen with the Red Squirrels in Europe. Although, there is no current evidence to support this theory, Grey Squirrels can have a negative impact on their local environment.

Grey Squirrels have been known to damage trees and even kill them by stripping their bark. They also will eat bird's eggs and nestlings and even compete with birds for cavities in trees. They have been observed breaking into nest boxes by gnawing at the small opening until they can fit in. Grey Squirrels can also be a nuisance to homeowners when they decide to nest in your attic, tear up insulation and chew on some wires.

It is not likely that there will be a solution to this issue anytime soon; however we as individuals do not have to perpetuate the problem. I know there are people out there that like to feed the squirrels or put out bird feeders that are not squirrel resistant, but believe me Grey Squirrels don't need any assistance on our part. Also to trap a squirrel you consider a pest and relocate to a wooded area is just another way we as humans upset the balance of nature. Human interference through relocating species, whether it is a plant or animal has affected our planet in an extremely detrimental way and will continue to impact biodiversity throughout the world.

Zoey Slater

Mission

Social Sustainability: Our Future Depends On It

Roopchand Seebaran

The concept of sustainability gained international prominence in the early 1980's when the UN created the World Commission on Environment and Development to address concerns about the deterioration of the human and natural environments, and the resulting impact on social and economic development. Following the Bruntland Commission's report, sustainability became a household word, with environmental sustainability as the major focus of the sustainability initiative. Later, other forms of sustainability, such as ecological, economic, forestry, financial, seafood, energy, and agricultural, entered the discussion. More recently, social sustainability has been recognized as an important component of the sustainability matrix.

What is Social Sustainability?

In my view, the concept of social sustainability includes three inter-related components that focus on both the social and natural environment of our local communities and the larger society.

First, social sustainability involves a process that preserves and strengthens the social capital and social capacity of citizens in all societies across the globe. This means recognizing the abilities and assets of individuals in our society and using these collectively to grow and enhance both our individual and community capacities. It includes developing our knowledge and skills to advance the quality of life, and involving citizens in the planning and development process on an ongoing basis in order to build robust and vibrant communities.

Second, it focuses on taking action to ensure the survival, long-term stability, and quality of life of the human species, locally and across the globe. Social sustainability acknowledges the fact that human beings have a symbiotic relationship with the natural environment. There is awareness and recognition of the reality that our survival depends on the health and sustainability of the earth's ecology. Social sustainability, therefore, involves active efforts to preserve the plant and animal life that make up the natural environment in which we live.

Third, I consider social sustainability as the foundation of the sustainability matrix. Unfortunately, different forms of sustainability, including environmental,

financial, agricultural, and the like, are usually viewed as separate silos, disconnected from social sustainability. This is a flawed perception. Clearly, to be successful, all the other forms of sustainability depend on vibrant and robust social sustainability efforts for their preservation and enhancement. And, we must recognize that they all require the active involvement and participation of citizens in their local and wider communities.

Ideas for Promoting Social Sustainability

Identify social sustainability as a primary social value. Citizens in every community must believe that they have a moral responsibility to ensure the long-term stability and quality of life of the human species. They should be committed to taking action on a regular basis towards this goal. This moral responsibility also extends to care and concern for the natural environment.

Ensure that human beings are not the cause of the extinction of our own species. Although we now have the technology to reproduce extinct animal species, we have to ensure that this technology does not have to be applied to us. As Prince Charles warned in his first speech as the new president of the Worldwide Wildlife Fund U.K., humankind faces extinction unless our way of life can be transformed to stop mass consumption, climate change, and the destruction of wildlife. (Vancouver Sun, Sept. 9/11)

Develop a culture and mindset that reflects social sustainability as part of our way of life. Social sustainability should be included in the curricula of our educational institutions. All the human service disciplines and professional programs, such as schools of planning, social work, and community development, should educate and train students in the promotion and practice of social sustainability.

Conceptualize social sustainability as the foundation for all other forms of sustainability. All forms of sustainability are connected. We need to eliminate the artificial boundaries that compartmentalize the different sectors of sustainability, and replace it with a holistic model that recognizes social sustainability as the foundation.

Put people first in the design and development of communities. The principles of social sustainability

should be used to guide the physical and social design of communities. This calls for community planners and developers to consider how well the physical designs and infrastructures of the built environment provide opportunities for the local residents to meet each other, develop a sense of neighbourliness, and interact with each other while walking, shopping, gardening, or engaged in social or recreational activities at local parks, open spaces and public squares.

Embrace and engage the diversity in our species. We need to acknowledge the various resources of our diverse peoples. Action must be taken to preserve and reclaim the resources of endangered cultures and their languages in which much traditional wisdom resides. Sustainability of our cultural diversity should be given high priority.

Take action to improve the quality of life in local communities, as well as those across the globe. While governments at all levels can do much to facilitate and encourage social sustainability, citizens need to become informed about community issues and involved in collective efforts to address them. It is our civic responsibility to be actively concerned about the quality of life in our local communities and in society at large. In this effort, we can draw inspiration from examples of social sustainability such as that carried out by our own local icon, Greenpeace, the world's largest independent environmental organization. Although Greenpeace has focussed on environmental sustainability, it could not have achieved its remarkable success without a simultaneous emphasis on social sustainability.

Think of the future generations and the legacy we will leave for them. Our actions now must be guided by concern about what kind of social and natural environment we will leave for our children and the children of future generations. We need to consider how our actions today--and tomorrow--will affect them.

Some Encouraging Signs

What is proposed here is admittedly no small order, but some reasons for optimism include the following:

Some municipalities in BC, including Vancouver, North Vancouver and Burnaby, have already developed strategies and initiatives that focus on social sustainability.

This year, 60 Maple Ridge students from kindergarten to Grade 7 will have their education delivered outdoors in parks, gardens and riverbanks. Teachers will be educating the students about the environment and raising their awareness about ecological issues. (Vancouver Sun, Sept. 2/11)

In an upcoming episode of CBC's *The Nature of Things*, David Suzuki will explore the health and sustainability of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. In exploring these cities, he found that people are getting over the mindset of "it can't be done" or "it's too expensive". He calls for building cities for people, not cars. (Vancouver Sun, Sept. 12/11)

A recent article in the National Post (Sept. 8/11) reports that across Canada there is a record demand for environmental engineers in a variety of specializations and sub-specializations, including water resources, air quality, noise pollution, remediation and reclamation.

Here in B.C., student demand for degrees focused on sustainability and the environment has led to the creation of several new programs at post-secondary institutions. UBC, SFU and BCIT all have new programs with a focus on sustainability. The new SFU faculty of environment has programs and courses in a host of disciplines including environmental science, geography, development and sustainability, and sustainable community development. (Vancouver Sun, Sept. 3/11)

Concluding Comments

Over the past few years, the word "sustainability" has lost some of its earlier significance, becoming something of a clichéd, "politically correct" term. Although it is still used by advocates for genuine sustainability efforts, others such as unethical and socially irresponsible developers, (e.g. some oil, gas and mining companies) have appropriated the word in order to market themselves as champions of sustainability. But it is obvious to analysts of this subject that their focus is on "profit sustainability"--at all cost.

Despite the opposing forces, citizens everywhere must see social sustainability as part of their individual and collective responsibility. Those citizens, groups and organizations that are currently taking action to sustain the social and natural environment need to be acknowledged and applauded. People not currently involved should be encouraged to take up the challenge. The goal of achieving social sustainability is a worthy cause, not only for the pursuit of social and environmental justice, but for the survival of our species. It is a legacy worth leaving.

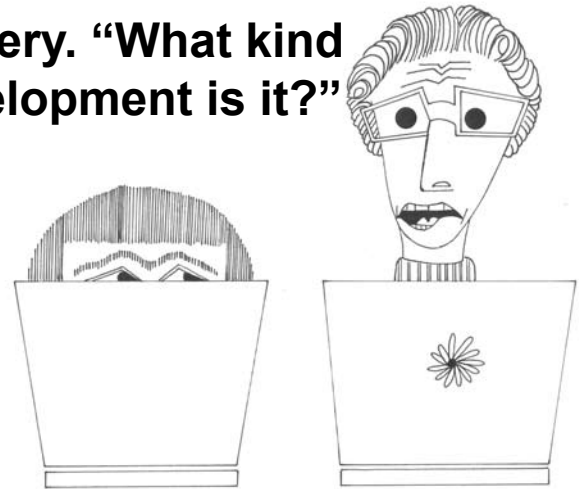
Roopchand Seebaran, an Emeritus Professor in the UBC School of Social Work, specializes in Community Development. He has lived in Mission for 15 years.

The Pitch



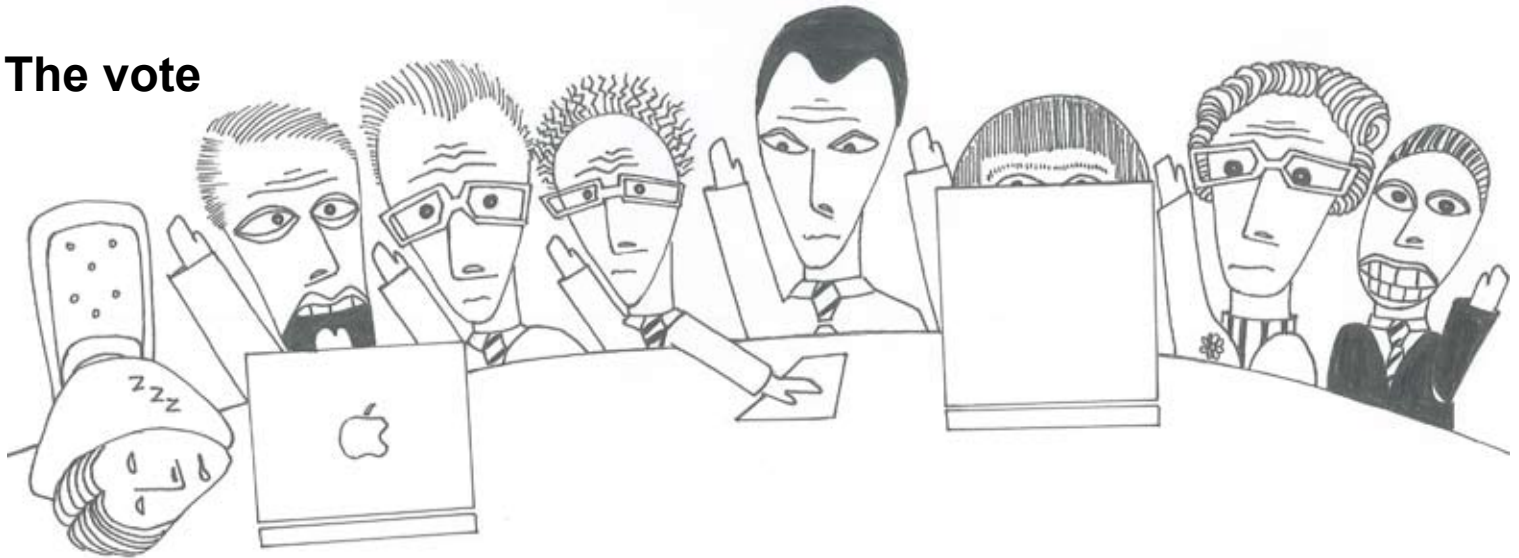
“this proposal will bring blahblah\$\$\$tax dollars bl
ah blah stop the leakage blah progress\$\$\$blabbl”

The query. “What kind of development is it?”



“Remember. Don’t ask. Don’t tell!”

The vote



The outcome



“At least its not Wal-mart.”

Change of Pace: Mission Sprawl Report

Tracy Lyster, CAUSS

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987). For this to be true, development must: 1) balance social justice with economic growth to ensure development is equitable; 2) balance economic growth with environmental realities to ensure development is viable; and 3) balance environmental realities with social justice, to ensure development is bearable. Sadly, municipalities all over the Fraser Valley have turned their backs on sustainability in favour of a sprawl-model of development. The environment and health of local residents is being sacrificed in a shortsighted attempt to jumpstart a failing economic system. These types of sacrifices have done little to prevent the ongoing collapse of European, American, and Asian financial markets. In Mission, like other communities, sprawl has been allowed to consume some of our most valuable public resources - our prime agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas, our wetlands, and our rivers.

Two days prior to the last Municipal election, in a fact sheet by Randy Hawes MLA and others, Mission residents were told that Genstar would pay all of the costs for the expensive infrastructure necessary to service their Silverdale development (Mission Record, Nov.13/08). Mr. Hawes encouraged Mission voters to vote for the current Council. On Dec.22/08, Council voted in favour of Genstar's Neighbourhood-1 (1) and to enter into a 20-year legal contract guaranteeing the urban zoning designation between the developers and Mission (2). On Sept.14/09, Council varied the urban-residential zoning for Silverdale's Neighbourhood-1 to designate agriculture as a “primary use” until the developers were ready to build (3). Council ignored warnings from municipal lawyer Jenny Beam, that the zoning variance would result in millions of dollars of lost tax revenue for Mission, and would be a benefit to a business, which is considered illegal and unethical under the Community Charter (see legal submission on causs.ca). Mission staff told CAUSS that the developers would reimburse Mission for lost tax revenue, but had no written agreement to back up this promise! Statements that the developer would contribute a portion of the costs of the Nelson Street intersection upgrade were also not borne out. Instead, taxpayers paid the full costs, totaling several million dollars. An Es-

crow agreement was signed with the developers, which, Ms. Beam stated, released the developers from their obligation to provide amenities to Mission. The Escrow agreement comes due in 2013 at which time the developers can choose to cancel the development. Desperate for this development to occur, Council entertained building a \$300 million water treatment and transmission line extending to Silverdale and then across the Fraser River to Abbotsford. The water treatment center would be built and operated by an undisclosed private corporation. Massive opposition to this sprawl-water proposal came from Mission and Abbotsford residents alike and Mission voted against the proposal April 4/11 (4). However, Mission Council continues to support Abbotsford's plan to build the water transmission line through Silverdale, and on Aug.15/11, Mission Council voted to earmark millions to piggyback a sewer line on the proposed infrastructure, across the Fraser River. What was promised as the largest infrastructure investment ever made by a private developer in Mission, has become a massive public bailout of a private corporation.

Mission's sprawl model has spilled into several other development approvals over the past year. On Aug.30/10, Council quietly approved a Wal-Mart as the gateway to Mission without regard for the impact of predatory pricing on local small businesses (5). The public were denied the opportunity to tell Council whether or not they wanted Wal-mart as Council denied knowledge of who the mystery big box was until all approvals were received and the decision was finalized (see the Extra at FootprintPress.ca).

Directly across the street from the Wal-Mart site, hungry eyes have descended on an environmentally sensitive ravine ecosystem necessary for the health of the Silvercreek wetlands which are located below and immediately west of the ravines. Mission staff claim that obliteration of the ravines, streams, and forests of this area is necessary for the economy. Council voted to ask MP Randy Kamp to intervene when the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada recommended the shopping center be “redesigned or relocated”(6). Backroom deals with Federal agencies, local environmental stewardship and conservancy groups have been in progress for the past year. Meanwhile the public has had no say about the future of the ravines despite concerns by hundreds of local residents about the abundant wildlife living in the area.

The specter of destruction of our remaining farmlands continues as the District considers employment opportunities which could be created on lands currently designated as Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Council voted to support a proposal to exclude ALR lands to expand

the Silvercreek Industrial development June 15/09 (7). As recently as Aug.15/11, Council voted, on economic grounds, to appeal a decision from the Agricultural Land Commission not to utilize 33 hectares of prime farmland during peak harvest for parking and camping purposes.

Our environmental bylaws are falling one after another. Formal variance processes to allow developers to appeal recommended setbacks, designed to protect streams and other fresh water sources, have neutered Mission's Streamside Protection Bylaw. Another bylaw, designed

to protect air quality through a ban on new drive-thrus, was overturned Aug. 22/11 in order to facilitate car-dependent drive-thrus in a commercial development at Lougheed and Cedar (8). Other developments are now also free to request permission to construct more drive-thrus.

Clearly, Mission has abandoned the quest for truly sustainable development by sacrificing our community's unique identity and environmental heritage for short-term economic gain of a small number of individuals and

large corporations. The myth about sprawl is that development will result in lower taxes for existing residents. While this may be true in compact communities in which the three principles of sustainability are heeded, given the massive public expenditures already made and in progress to subsidize sprawl, nothing could be farther from the truth.

Tracy Lyster
Chair, Citizens
Against Urban
Sprawl Society

How they voted	James Atebe	Terry Gidda	Paul Horn	Danny Plecas	Mike Scudder	Jenny Stevens	Heather Stewart
1. Silverdale Neighbourhood 1	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. 20 year phased development agreement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3. Agricultural use zone N1	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	absent	Y
4. P3 at Stave Lake	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
5. Wal-Mart	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6. Appeal DFO rejection of ravine devel't at Wren	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
7. ALR exclusion for Silvercreek Industrial expansion	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
8. Reverse drive-thru ban	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

DOING WHAT WE CAN

Sustainable Saturdays – A Sustainable Living Awareness Booth at the Abbotsford Farm and Country Market

Marlisa Power

“Sustainability: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations. Sustainability is important to making sure that we have and will continue to have, the water, materials, and resources to protect human health and our environment.”

Last Spring, I began thinking about how and where to promote Sustainable Living in Abbotsford; how could I make a difference? – be it even a small difference.

The answer I came up with was a Sustainable Living information booth (Sustainable Saturdays) to promote Sustainable Living at a sustainable venue - The Abbotsford Farm and Country Market. The Abbotsford Farm and Country Market, located at the end of Montrose Street in Historic Downtown Abbotsford, is hugely successful after 7 seasons. The Market provides a place where local B.C. food producers/artisans can highlight and sell their products. It provides local residents as well as visitors to Abbotsford, an opportunity to purchase local quality healthy products in one location on a weekly basis. The money generated is kept local and the resources used are local; a fine example of sustainability. It is also a warm friendly atmosphere where you can connect with the producers.

In June, I approached Bruce Fatkin, Market Manager, with the concept of Sustainable Saturdays. Sustainable Saturdays is a booth I created to promote Sustainable Living on a very high level. At the Sustainable Saturdays booth, market visitors had an opportunity to gather information on zero waste (reusing, recycling, composting), reducing our carbon footprint, buying local, invasive plants and more. Visitors to the booth shared stories about what they personally are doing to be sustainable. Inspiring examples include two neighbours combining their backyard spaces in order to plant vegetables to feed their families, homemade laundry soap recipes and green smoothie recipes, condo/apartment dwellers storing compost scraps in bins on their balconies to drop off at friends or family with backyard composters – impressive!

I so enjoyed these inspiring Saturdays at the market! There is a definite interest in living Sustainably. People get that we have an obligation to our own and future generations. I acted as the Green Cheer Leader encouraging and thanking Green Doers for their efforts. People have many questions on the how tos of Sustainable Living – especially condo/apartment dwellers.

I believe we can all make a difference be it large or small. We all have immense power to change the status quo. Our buying power as consumers is tremendous – *“Every time you spend a dollar; you are casting a vote for the kind of world you want.”* Our ability to change the little things we do around our homes is infinite – turning off the lights, not letting water run, composting, recycling, using greener products, reducing our automobile trips. We need to connect with others to promote and enable Sustainable Living.

I encourage all to engage and to vote in the upcoming municipal election (November 2011). Find out how each of the local candidates plan to promote Sustainable Living and Planning. If elected, how will they help our cities develop so that we can live, work and play, while producing minimal carbon and having the least impact on our natural resources?

Next summer, I hope to add to the Sustainable Saturdays mandate. In addition to promoting Sustainable Living, I would like to highlight sustainable local vendors and provide advocacy groups with a public outreach venue. In the meantime, our family continues to look for ways to reduce our waste and carbon footprint.

Marlisa Power,

Abbotsford Resident 4Difference

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Announcing a New Citizens Advocacy Group in Maple Ridge

Bernice Rolls

The Flight of the Hummingbird

A fire threatened the forest. All the animals fled to safety, that is, all but the hummingbird. She flew to the creek and brought back a drop of water to put on the fire. She continued to fly back and forth, back and forth, bringing water to the fire. Finally the bear asked, *“why are you doing that ?”* Without stopping, the hummingbird looked down at the animals and said *“I’m doing what I can.”* An aboriginal parable

see also www.hummingbirdworld.com

The Hummingbird Connection is a non-partisan network of citizens who care about our community, both today and for the future, “doing what we can” to encourage citizen participation in democratic government. As the municipal government has the most direct effect on our lives, our first project is to increase voter turnout in the November election. To contact please e-mail hummingbirdconnection@LIVE.ca

Maple Ridge Chapter of Raging Grannies

With some coaching from the Vancouver group, the Maple Ridge Raging Grannies debuted at the Farmer’s Market this summer and plan to be busy writing songs and performing in the lead up to the municipal election in November. Beginning in Victoria in 1986, Raging Grannies are politically conscious, but non-partisan older women who, through satirical songs and skits, are taking action for a better world for our children and grandchildren by raising awareness of issues related to peace, environment, agriculture and social justice. Watch for them wearing their trademark outrageous hats!

Bernice Rolls & Oosha Ramsoondar

Maple Ridge



Getting to know our local Species at Risk: Oregon Forestsnail

Val Pack

Silently, slowly inching its way through life, literally travelling at “a snail’s pace”, is a small-shelled creature, belonging to a scientifically named group of gastropods, (Gastropoda). It is also a member of a wide group of molluscs (phylum Mollusca), including approximately 94 different classes of land-based snails and slugs, in B.C., and is related to other invertebrates, which include shellfish, such as oysters, and clams.

Native to B. C., the Oregon Forestsnail, scientifically known as *Allogiona townsendiana*, has the dubious status of being Red-listed, (of Special Concern), according to the B.C. List Status. This classification means that the Forestsnail faces imminent danger of being extirpated, (becoming locally extinct). However, if the reasons for this loss continue on a widespread scale, it could become totally extinct throughout B.C. As development of all types, (housing, malls, farmland and gravel pit expansions), destroys its habitat areas, so goes this snail. Tragically, according to one expert’s statement, “it is on the verge of extinction in B.C.”

The Forestsnail has a dark brown-coloured body, sometimes appearing lighter-coloured, with evenly spaced circles on its paled brown shell, and when mature, reaches the approximate diameter of a loonie coin. It has the distinction of being one of the largest snails in its southwest B.C. habitat.

The Oregon Forestsnail can be found locally in mixed forests, including the Silverdale area, particularly in those locations having Big Leaf Maple tree growth. This snail



also frequently prefers large areas covered by stinging nettles. Recently, these snails have been found immediately north of the Lougheed Highway near Wren Street, in a local ravine consisting of two creeks, which sadly and unbelievably, is at risk of being covered over to make room for a proposed shopping mall!

Eating a varied diet of fruits, flowers, leaves, stems, decaying materials, fungi, lichen, juicy plant barks, and even moist cardboard and paper, the Oregon Forestsnail also has a preference for eating stinging nettles, clearly evidenced in Spring when emerging nettle shoots display bore holes created by this particular snail.

On the lower sides of its head, close to the shorter of two sets of tentacles, is where its uniquely designed mouth is located. Inside the mouth, is a radula, comparative to a “rough tongue”, a muscular, eating structure, covered by thousands of very small “teeth”, located on over one hundred rows along the radula. As a herbivore, eating a vegetarian diet is accomplished by scraping and pushing away the food particles with the radula. Placing bits of lettuce or apple in a snail’s path, is an interesting way of observing this eating process.

Related to the eating process, is a land-snail’s need for moisture obtained through its food, though it may also drink small amounts of water. Limestone and chalk from rocks, supply the calcium required to maintain healthy shell strength.

Movement for the Oregon Forestsnail is accomplished through creeping on a flat “foot”, which consists of mechanisms of rippling, muscular contractions and expansions, pushing the snail along. Specifically contained within the foot is a mucous-producing gland which results in a frontal, slimy track, enabling less arduous travel for the snail.

Unlike the gills required by most of their aquatic counterparts, Oregon Forestsnails and other land snails, rely on lungs for breathing oxygen.

The Oregon Forestsnail has eyes located at the tops of two, 0.5 inches-long antennae on their heads. These eyes appear on the longer pair of their two pairs of tentacles, however, it is thought that a snail sees little else besides its own shell! The purpose of the shorter pair of tentacles is to aid in smelling and feeling.

Typically living a lifespan of about 5 years, the Forestsnails reach maturity at approximately age two, when the mating ritual begins. Forestsnails are hermaphrodites, (being both male and female, with the ability to produce sperm and eggs, simultaneously). The mating activity generally starts in March and April, when they congregate amongst stinging nettles, and wood debris, in groups of between 8 to 14. However, up to 47 snails have been observed in 4 observation areas over a 4-year study. Mating activity has also been recorded to take place for over 225 minutes!

Following the breeding period, the Forestsnail searches for a location featuring soft soil to dig, in order to establish a nest. This involves digging out an area between 2.5 to 4 cm. deep, where, generally peaking in April and May, an average of 34 small, round, white or yellowish eggs are laid. For protection and concealment, they are covered over with a mixture of earth, mucous, and excrement. Hatching takes place between 63 and 64 days later, when the babies emerge. Hours later, the hatchlings begin leaving the nest, and within a month, the majority of them have left.

As the young Forestsnail grows, its shell also grows, forming a spiral shape. At the shell opening, new shell growth appears. This new shell helps to protect the growing snail from both the elements, and some predators. A snail's soft body also allows it to travel on branches, while its "foot", preceded by a mucous trail, offers travel over otherwise treacherous materials such as pointed needles, razors, knives, and scissors.

Wandering slowly about until Fall's first frost, the Forestsnail is usually unseen by human eyes due to its camouflaging brown colouration. Hibernation for this snail begins in the early days of November as the Forestsnail, following the usual snail hibernation practices, disappears

beneath the cover of leaves and soil and reappears sometime in the middle of March.

While some consider all snails as lowly, little creatures, the bane of ardent gardeners, they are fascinating and unique small animals, and as members of the gastropod family, the endangered Oregon Forestsnail plays an important role in helping the ecosystem. They eat dead plants, clean up other miscellaneous debris, and also help to form the diets of their predators which include: ground beetles, snakes, toads, turtles, and birds, including ducks, geese, and chickens. Therefore, as significant members of our ecosystem, everything should be done to ensure the healthy, continuing survival of the Oregon Forestsnails.

In order to help these fascinating little creatures survive, please refer online to Species at Risk & Local Government, where you will learn some interesting facts, such as how your local government can help Species at Risk, that the B.C. Conservation Data Centre has the most complete list of Species at Risk, and that, under the B.C. Wildlife Act, only 4 (0.25%) of endangered species, are protected! Further information on the Oregon Forestsnail, or on other snail groups, can be found online or at the library.

Val Pack,
Mission



Snail Study: Megan Sjogren, UFV



THE FOOTPRINT PRESS

The Footprint press is published each season as a non-profit community newspaper. Articles are submitted by dedicated residents wishing to share their vision of a more sustainable and just society and who seek to live harmoniously with nature. Circulation is 2000+ on recycled paper. The paper can also be viewed on-line at FootprintPress.ca or call us at 604 820-7592. Your support is appreciated and your participation is very welcome. Special thanks to the staff of DeltaView for their generous donation to CAUSS which helped fund this issue. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the publishers as a whole or individually.

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