

## ECONEWS #198

A monthly newsletter funded by your donations that dreams of a world blessed by the harmony of nature, the pleasures of community, and the joys of personal fulfillment, guided and protected by our active citizenship.

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### THE ECO-PERSONALS

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

\* **Lovely room to rent**, close to ocean, downtown, \$30/night, 250-382-3810.

### MADRONA FARM

Madrona Farm is facing its final funding deadline. The 27-acre farm on Blenkinsop Road in Victoria has been serving the community since 1952, and in 2009, Natalie and David Chambers grew 128,000 pounds of food, all without pesticides. Theirs is a real community farm, which, if preserved, will be the pride and joy of Victoria for ever - for that's what stewardship ownership by The Land Conservancy (which is the goal) means.

The public response has been terrific, and so far, people have donated \$930,000 towards the goal; every day brings donations totaling between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for Madrona. They need to raise a further \$760,000 by January 14<sup>th</sup>, but Ed Johnston, Chair of the Farmlands Trust, has said that if someone will donate \$200,000, he'll match it. Somewhere out there, there's a donor who will feel really proud to help make this happen. Please send out a vibe, to help Madrona find this person! For the rest of us, it's give whatever we can on-line at [www.madronafarm.com](http://www.madronafarm.com), or by mail to The Land Conservancy (marked for Madrona Farm), 301 - 1195 Esquimalt Rd, Victoria, V9A 3N6.

### MIRACLE IN SAMBOJA

If there's a corner of the world where things are so bad you want to give up in despair, the island of Borneo, Indonesia, would easily fit the bill. Starting in the 1950s, industrial and illegal logging degraded the wildlife-rich tropical forest so much that it became vulnerable to fire, turning into a hot barren grassland covered with elephant grass. By 1998, when the Indonesian forestry expert Willie Smits first visited, the area around Samboja had become a moonscape, without even birds or insects. And the orangutan apes that had lived there for millennia - all gone.



Determined to turn things around, in 2001 Willie Smits bought 5,000 acres, and with his team from the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation they collected the seeds from 740 species of tree, planting them in a micro-biological mixture made from sugar, excrement, food waste, sawdust and cow urine.

Things grow rapidly in Borneo, and within six years the trees were up to 35 metres high. Cloud cover has increased by 12%, rainfall by 25%, and the local temperature has fallen by 3-5°C, helping people and wildlife to thrive. Nine species of primate have returned, including the orangutans, along with 116 bird species and more than 30 species of mammal. Smits says, "The whole system is coming to life. I knew what I was trying to do, but the force of nature has totally surprised me."

The village of Samboja Lestari has a population of 10,000, who are being involved through agro-forestry and handicrafts, leading to a rapid fall in unemployment, and rising local incomes. Local crime has disappeared, and hospital visits are falling. There are plans for an arboretum with 5,000 species of tree, a botanical garden, and several 'forest schools' for the reintroduction of orangutans, sun bears and other species.

The long-term goal is to restore 18.5 square kilometres of Borneo back to its natural habitat; the same approach could be applied to tropical deforestation the world over. You can sponsor the Samboja reforestation at 3 Euros a square metre through [www.create-rainforest.org](http://www.create-rainforest.org), or adopt an orangutan through [www.redapes.org](http://www.redapes.org). And for climate change, what could be better?



### ECUADOR'S YASUNI

You may recall that EcoNews covered this story last year. Ecuador was willing to leave the oil in the pristine Yasuni Amazonian rainforest underground if the international community would recompense it for half the lost revenue. And here's the good news - the proposal is going to go through very soon! The UN Development Program will manage a Trust Fund, with contributions from various countries, which will be spent to develop renewable energy resources; avoid deforestation and protect biodiversity in 40 national parks and indigenous lands representing 38% of the country; on reforestation; and on social development and sustainable job generation. As well as preserving the rainforest, Ecuador will avoid the release of 407 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by keeping 850 million barrels of oil underground in the Yasuni National Park. See [www.yasuni-itt.gov.ec](http://www.yasuni-itt.gov.ec).

### AVATAR

Speaking of protecting rainforests from greedy exploitation - you have GOT to see the new movie Avatar, set on the planet Pandora, where the Na'vi people are trying to protect *their* rainforest in the year 2054. On no account should you miss this movie! It's at Victoria's Silver City in 3-D - and everywhere.

### GREEN FAMILY MEETINGS

We all need to adjust our daily behaviours so that in the end, we have both a zero carbon and a zero ecological impact - or as close to this as we can get. This is a lot more than following a "Top Ten Green Things" list, and some

changes, such as installing solar PV panels or an air or ground-source heat pump instead of burning oil or gas are expensive. The full list of potential changes for just one dimension, such as changing the way you travel, can easily seem overwhelming.

To address the task, I have created an 8-week Climate Challenge Circles course as a free download to accompany my new book *The Climate Challenge*, which you can access here: [www.earthfuture.com/theclimatechallenge/downloads.html](http://www.earthfuture.com/theclimatechallenge/downloads.html). If you feel motivated to form a Circle with your friends, that would be amazing. Whether you do or don't, the material contains detailed charts on Sustainable Food, Green Electricity, Keeping Warm/Cool, Transport, and "Everything Else". The charts recognize that some things are easier than others, so each has four action columns labeled This Week, This Month, This Year, and Future Year.

My thinking is that we need to tackle the process of going green as a family, and this approach enables you to hold a Green Family Meeting when you can work your way down the lists together, and decide if and when you want to tackle each item. This could lead to your family creating a Green Action List that you could review every month, or once a year. I created the lists with climate change in mind, and the "Everything Else" list needs four times more material, but it's a good start. I see the need to create a Green Family Handbook, so if you have any feedback, or would like to help with this task, please get in touch. Guy, 250-881-1304.

### WHAT ARE THE BEST CLIMATE SOLUTIONS?

We're all aware of the problem, but what *are* the best solutions that can really address the scale of the problem? On Thursday Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, from 1-4:30pm, Guy Dauncey, author of the new book *The Climate Challenge: 101 Solutions to Global Warming* is offering a short course at Royal Roads that shows the best solutions from around the world that we should be implementing in our communities, in BC, in Canada, and globally. To register call 250-391-2600, Ext 4801, Code GLEL 1802. \$55.

PS I have written about the Copenhagen climate talks and what needs to happen next at [www.blog.earthfuture.com](http://www.blog.earthfuture.com).

## SEEDS OF VICTORIA

Certified Organic (IOPA 1046)  
Local Seeds \$2.95 per packet  
See 2010 on-line seed catalogue:  
[www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath/Seeds\\_Catalogue.htm](http://www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath/Seeds_Catalogue.htm)

### ELECTRIC CARS

Everyone's talking about them - but when will they arrive, and will we be ready for them? Mercedes Benz have produced an electric version of the Smart Car, and they are making 1,000 in 2010, of which 75 will be available for lease in Canada, with full ramp-up in 2012. It'll have a range of 135 km, with lithium batteries replacing the fuel tank. No word on the price, or where in Canada they'll be distributed. It could cost as much as \$50,000 (ouch!), but the running cost will be less than \$1 a day.

Nissan is planning to start building its 4-door electric Leaf at their factory in Smyrna, Tennessee in late 2012 - range 160 km, designed for rapid 80% service station recharge in 30 minutes or slow recharge at home. The Smyrna plant could roll out 200,000 Leafs a year if the demand is there. Daimler and BMW are promising 2012 for their electric vehicles (EVs); Volkswagen says 2013.

Without strong government action, however, EVs may be as slow to build a market as the Toyota Prius, which was launched worldwide in 2001. Germany has set a goal to increase EV production to a million a year by 2020 and 5 million by 2030. In the US, Obama wants to see a million plug-in hybrid EVs on the road by 2015. Spain, with 6.5 times fewer people, wants a million by 2014. To put this in perspective, a million EVs in the US would represent less than 0.5% of the vehicles on the road today. All these countries are piling on the incentives to bring the price down - £5,000 in the UK, \$7,500 in the US. The big factor may be China, which is offering EV subsidies worth up to \$8,800, and wants to be the world's EV leader, producing 500,000 hybrids and EVs by 2011.

There's also got to be trialing, to ensure local recharging works. Britain is giving 340 EVs to selected customers around the country, to analyze the way the cars are used. Their EV strategy has a £250 million budget. If Canada's federal government could get the tar sands out of its eyes, the equivalent would be \$250 million, since we have half the population. In London, UK, the

mayor is planning to have 100,000 EVs on the streets by 2015, and 25,000 public charging points.

Vancouver is being very pro-active on the EV front, as part of Mayor Robertson's plans to make it the world's greenest city by 2020. There are 3 Mitsubishi i-MiEV's on trial, and Nissan-Renault has signed an understanding with Vancouver and BC Hydro to bring the LEAF EV into fleet use a year before it goes on sale worldwide.

To address the scale of the climate emergency, we need to be planning that by 2030 40% of all vehicles have zero-carbon emissions, 100% by 2030. It's totally doable, but we're going to need far more political noise to persuade our governments that it's essential.

### ACTION OF THE MONTH

#### SAVE THE FLATHEAD VALLEY

The Flathead Valley in BC's far southeast corner is as biologically rich as the Okavango Delta or the Serengeti in Africa. Home to a free-flowing river, and unmatched in North America for the variety, completeness and density of its carnivore species like grizzly bears, it is a magical place never settled by humans - but now threatened by an ineffective land use plan that allows coal-bed methane drilling, coal-mining, and gold-mining. Yuk! It is also adjacent to Glacier National Park in the US and Waterton National Park in Alberta, which are already protected,

Flathead Wild is working to create a national park in the lower one-third of Flathead River Valley and a Wildlife Management Area in the rest of the valley - in every sense of the word, it's an ecological no-brainer, but there's one missing piece - the lack of a strong, loud, persistence voice arguing for its preservation. Our BC and the federal government really need to hear from us, and you can help this happen. Just pick up the phone or write - it's that easy.

**Action:** Go to [www.flathead.ca](http://www.flathead.ca) to see how amazing it is, and then embark on your first political act of the New Year, calling for its preservation:

\* Premier Gordon Campbell, P.O. Box 9041, Stn. Prov Gov't, Victoria V8W 9E [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca). 250-387-1715

\* Federal Minister of Environment Jim Prentice, Suite 105, 1318 Centre St NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 2R7

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