Recycling & Environmental Action & Planning Society

REAPS REPORT

Hotline 250-561-7327 www.reaps.org Email newsletter@reaps.org September 2022

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

4 - 5	Huble Potato Festival
6	REAPS School Presentations Begin
9	Jamming Workshop
24 - 25	Huble Scavenger Weekend

OCTOBER

1	Waste Reduction Month
9	Huble Old Fashioned Thanksgiving
31	PGRFM Pumpkin Express
31	PGRFM The Final Stop

NOVEMEBER

4 - 6	Studio Fair Arts Festival at CN Centre

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Jamming session with master canners Karen and Tamara!

Everyone at the Table PG (EAT) is hosting a jamming session.

To all aspiring canners and jam makers:

DATE: September 10, 2022

TIME: 1 to 4 p.m. (available to sign up for 1 hour session or stay for the full 3 hours).

WHERE: South Fort George Family Resource Centre

You will learn how to make and can jam. You will have a chance to make a batch of jam and take home a couple of jars of jam.

Sliding scale of payment between $25 - $40 can be cash at time of the event or e-transfer to recycling@reaps.org with note: for canning workshop.

All equipment and fruit provided.

To reserve your spot, email:
eatcanningcircle@gmail.com

We welcome all donations of jars!

REAPS is a proud fiscal sponsor of the Canning Circle.

What is the EAT CANNING CIRCLE?

The EAT Canning Circle is a food recovery and education program for the novice to learn with Master Canners and for the experienced to pass on their skills and trade tricks.
Food processed and canned is recovered, imperfect fresh foods from The PG Salvation Army Food Recovery Program.

Food waste from The Canning Circle is given to R.E.A.P.S and fed to their worms to create compost.

Everyone is welcome we meet every Wednesday 5:30pm - until done (participants can leave at anytime) at the South Fort George Family Resource Centre 1200 La Salle Ave, Prince George, BC V2L 4J8

If you would like to join our group please contact us as space in the kitchen is limited.
eatcanningcircle@gmail.com

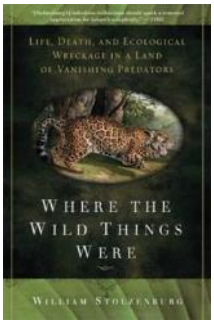
REAPS NEWS

Web Pick of the Month

www.greenmatters.com

Green Matters is for people looking to live more sustainably, fight the climate crisis, and learn about environmental justice. They bring awareness to issues surrounding the climate crisis — as well as solutions. They hope to inspire you to make simple changes to your daily habits and lifestyle, and also to empower you to fight for what you believe in.

Book of the Month



Where the Wild Things Were: Life Death And Ecological Wreckage In A Land Of Vanishing Predators

By: William Stolzenburg ISBN: 1596916249

For years, predators like snow leopards and white-tipped sharks have been disappearing from the top of the food chain, largely as a result of human action. Science journalist Will Stolzenburg reveals why and how their absence upsets the delicate balance of the world's environment.

REAPS Canada Summer Jobs Staff

Big thank you to Canada Summer Jobs for their program that provided 3 youth job experience with us for the summer.

The grant covered 8 weeks for each student at minimum wage. REAPS was fortunate to be able to top up the salaries to be above minimum wage and hire them for the full summer!

Piper will continuing working towards a Masters of Arts in History at UNBC this fall. Bo will be going into 3rd year of the Bachelor of Science for Conservation and Wildlife Studies program at UNBC. Izzie will be entering Grade 10 at Duchess Park Secondary School.

The students lead our summer outreach programs, worked on dismantling the Compost Demo Garden, created new school presentations, updating the old presentations and provided many valuable contributions to REAPS. We wish them well in their continued studies.

BC Summer Games PG

REAPS ED was asked to join with 3 other keen volunteers in March 2022 who were tasked to develop the PG 2022 Summer Games Environmental Policy and Green Goals and Objectives, as well as the Sustainability Goals, Greening the Games Plan for each of the 19 directorates.

Knowing that a sustainable event can **minimize much of their environmental impact**. This reduces the amount of waste generated and ensures proper waste and recycling management; reduces water and electricity consumption; and mitigates air, noise and light pollution.

A lot of volunteer time went into assisting with these goals. Some targets were met and others missed. In the end a quality plan was developed and will be shared with the next BC Summer Games committee.

Some numbers known as of now: 20,366 beverage containers were recycled over 4 days at meal venue locations; approximately ~2160kg of food was diverted to pigs.

LOCAL NEWS

Ginter's Meadow

source: PG Citizen

The Ginter's Green Forever community group is calling on city council to change the city's official community plan (OCP) to protect Ginter's Meadow park.

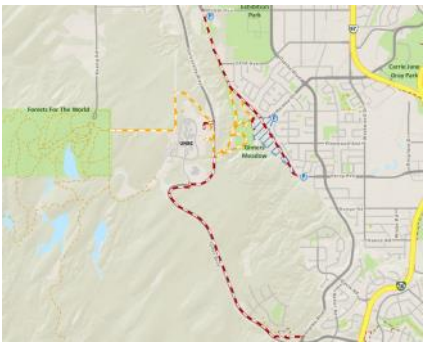
The group appeared before city council on Aug. 15, to ask council to amend the OCP and eliminate two proposed road expansions. Under the current OCP, the city's long-term plans call for Massey Drive to be extended southwest through the park to Tyner Boulevard, and Foothills Boulevard would be extended southeast to Ferry Avenue.

In a statement issued in early August, Ginter's Green Forever director Jenn Matthews said both road extensions would go right through Ginter's Meadow, which is used by hundreds of dog walkers, joggers, cyclists, horse riders and others each day.

"Adding four lanes of traffic through Ginter's will permanently destroy the existing park," Matthews said. "The OCP needs to be updated to recognize, value and protect existing greenspace and the forest for future generations to enjoy."

The group submitted a petition, with more than 3,000 signatures, to city council calling on the city to update the OCP to protect existing greenspaces and urban forests; engage in a community consultation process about how and if the greenspace around Ginter's should be developed; and for the city to conduct a hydro-geotechnical survey of the Cranbrook Hill escarpment from Tyner Boulevard to Foothills Boulevard to estimate the impact of development on the western edge of the escarpment above the park.

Currently two lots with a combined 161 acres bordering Ginter's Meadow and UNBC are listed for sale for $9.95 million. The listing advertises the land as "an excellent opportunity for a large-scale development in a fast growing residential and post secondary educational neighborhood."



UNBC Prof Looks at Ways to Extract Value From Wastewater

source: CKPGToday

PRINCE GEORGE -Imagine being able to extract valuable resources from our wastewater that can be re-used for biomedical, pharmaceutical and geotechnical purposes.

With the support of a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Discovery Grant, UNBC Environmental Engineering Assistant Professor Dr. Oliver Iorhemen is examining methods to extract xanthan, curdlan, tyrosine and phenylalanine from wastewater. If successful, the resources can be used again in everything from producing waterproof dressings for wounds to creating agents that inhibit HIV infection, to developing absorbent materials to help clean up contaminated sites

"The outcome of this research will open a new vista of opportunities for economic success as many companies in Canada require these four resources as raw materials.

The grant is worth $147,500 over five years.

Concepts of Wilderness and Economic Development

source: UNBC

First Nations Studies Associate Professor Dr. Daniel Sims has been working extensively with communities in the Tsek'ehne Nation to determine how concepts of wilderness have impacted economic development in the territories. A new grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Grant program will help Sims further his research.

UNBC First Nations Studies Associate Professor Dr. Daniel Sims hopes to explore the connection between concepts of wilderness and development in the Finlay-Parsnip watershed by examining the cycle of these planned-then-abandoned farming and mining projects between 1871 and 1956.

The watershed lies in the traditional territories of the Tsek'ehne Nation, which includes the Tsay Keh Dene, McLeod Lake and Kwadacha First Nations. Sims is a member of the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation. He first noticed this cycle while reading through past, digitized issues of the Prince George Citizen newspaper when he was preparing a forward for his master's dissertation several years ago.

TO READ FULL ARTICLE

AROUND BC

Recycle BC Reports Jump in Recovery Rates source: Resource Recycling

British Columbia's paper and plastic packaging collection rates have rebounded after pandemic-related challenges, reaching a record-high recovery rate of just over 94%.

According to Recycle BC's 2021 report, over 214,000 net tons were collected as part of the packaging and paper product program, an increase of over 5% from 2020. This amounts to a recovery rate of 94.1%, up from 85.8% in 2020.

It should be noted that a recovery rate differs from the typical recycling rate statistic used in many jurisdictions to assess materials recovery.

A recovery rate is determined by using the total weight of a material type recovered as the numerator and the total amount of that same material type sold into the market as the denominator. A recycling rate, on the other hand, typically uses the total weight of all materials recovered as a numerator and total weight of the full waste stream as the denominator.

Recycle BC is a nonprofit organization providing residential recycling services for packaging and paper for residents of British Columbia. It is financed and operated by businesses that supply packaging and paper.

Broken down by material, paper had a 101% recovery rate in 2021, indicating that some portion of the paper recovered in British Columbia was originally sold into a market outside the province. Metal was recovered at a rate of 83% and glass at 116%. Plastic had an overall recovery rate of 55%, with 67% of rigid plastic recovered and 28% of flexible plastic.

"Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were still being realized in 2021 as residents placed a greater volume of material in recycling bins, bags and depots resulting in an increase in the [metric tons] of material collected and an increase in the recovery rate from the previous year," the report noted.

In 2020, recovery rates were 90% for paper, 85% for metal and 97% for glass. For plastics overall, the rate was 52%, while rigid plastics and flexible plastics were recovered at rates of 64% and 24%, respectively.

For the second year in a row, Recycle BC also observed "significant growth" in collected metric tons, with a 17% increase over the past two years, or 30,000 metric tons more. The report suggested that the increase was due to people working from home, dining out less and doing more online shopping. It also noted that reporting timing for the year due to the pandemic could also play a role.

"More than one-third of this increase came in 2021," the report stated. "It is noteworthy that amid the pandemic we have responsibly managed such a significant increase in materials."

Overall, the program recycled 197,745 metric tons of collected material, disposed of 18,288 metric tons and managed 11,821 metric tons as engineered fuel in 2021. That's an 86.0% recycling rate for collected material.

Recycle BC also expanded accessibility in 2021, with over 2.03 million households in 183 communities having access to recycling services, which is 99.3%. However, program costs decreased 19%, "almost entirely driven by the upward trajectory of commodity prices in 2021," the report noted.

RECYCLEBC™

Funding Boost Gives Used Plastics New Lease on Life Source: BC Gov News

A $10-million investment in the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund will help grow made-in-B.C. solutions to reduce plastic pollution, create new products and increase job opportunities.

"British Columbians deeply value our environment, and we all want to find solutions to keep plastics from polluting our lands and waterways," said George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. "By reducing plastic waste at the source through systems that reuse items and by including more recycled material in the manufacturing of products, our government is helping keep more plastics out of landfills and ecosystems, creating a better future for all of us while growing the circular economy."

cleanBC

As part of Budget 2022, the Province is dedicating nearly $10 million to fund projects that will reduce the use of new plastic, expand reuse of plastics, and increase the use of post-consumer recycled plastic. This second intake of the Plastics Action Fund includes dedicated funding for businesses that are developing systems for reuse, and Indigenous-led projects.

This builds upon the nearly $5 million distributed in 2021 to nine projects through the first intake of the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund, which increased B.C.'s capacity to process and use recycled plastic by 20,000 tonnes per year.

B.C.-based projects will be selected for the second funding intake based on their ability to reduce the use of new plastic or increase the use of post-consumer recycled plastic. Interested applicants can apply online, with successful projects being chosen beginning in late September and continuing until February 2023. All projects must be complete by Feb. 15, 2024.

TO READ FULL ARTICLE

AROUND CANADA

What's the best alternative to a single-use plastic bag? It depends

source: CBC

Ottawa recently announced it will phase out some single-use plastics by 2025, but finding sustainable alternatives is trickier than you might think.

The ban, which targets six categories of plastics, is part of an effort by the Liberal government to achieve zero plastic waste by 2030. A study commissioned by Environment and Climate Change Canada showed that, in 2016, Canadians threw away three million tonnes of plastic waste, only nine per cent of which was ultimately recycled. The rest ended up in landfills, waste-to-energy facilities or the environment, where it can harm wildlife while taking hundreds of years to break down.

One of the single-use items on the banned list is the plastic checkout bag that many Canadians use for groceries and other kinds of shopping. Up to 15 billion plastic checkout bags are used every year in the country, according to government data.

They're also one of the major sources of plastic litter found on shorelines. In 2021, almost 17,000 plastic bags were collected during community cleanups.

Even before the federal government's move, some jurisdictions including P.E.I., Nova Scotia and a number of B.C. communities had already banned single-use plastic bags. Some major retailers such as Sobeys and Walmart have also stopped offering them.

The majority of Canadians are shifting away from single-use plastic bags, too. In a 2019 survey, 96 per cent of respondents said they used their own bags or containers when grocery shopping, though only 47 per cent of those said they always did so.

The challenge for eco-conscious shoppers is that alternatives to single-use plastic bags also leave an environmental footprint.

The study found the environmental ranking of bags varies depending on which criteria you consider. For example, one type of bag may score well in cutting down on litter but be a poor option when it comes to water and land use to make it.

The number of times a reusable bag is used is also crucial, the study found. On the lower end, a paper bag needs to be used four to eight times to have less impact on the climate than a single-use plastic bag. Meanwhile, a cotton bag needs to be used 50 to 150 times to be environmentally superior, according to the study.

Given the impacts from all life cycle stages, one of the best options for shoppers would to skip the bag altogether whenever possible, said Tony Walker, an associate professor of environmental studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

If you do need a plastic bag alternative, here's a closer look at the pros and cons of some common options.

TO CONTINUE READING

Thousands of Plastic Bottles from Iqaluit's Water Crisis to be Turned into Clothes and More

source: CBC

Hundreds of thousands of bottles of water were flown into Iqaluit during the city's water crisis last fall. A fuel contamination in Iqaluit's water supply meant the city's approximately 8,000 residents were unable to drink the tap water for two months.

During that time the City of Iqaluit set up water depot stations where residents could pick up flats of plastic water bottles.

"This was a bit of a sudden influx of plastic that the city was going to expect to see in the landfill," said Brian Tattuinee, the business development manager for Nunavut Sealink and Supply Inc., which is partly owned by Arctic Co-operatives Limited.

"So we thought we could help alleviate some of that environmental impact from this emergency." There are no recycling facilities in Iqaluit, forcing all the city's waste into the landfill regardless if it is recyclable or not.

When the water crisis began last October the co-op committed four sea cans to be filed with the plastic bottles to be sent south.

Tattuniee said with the help of the city and the Nunavut government, four more sea cans were donated and filled. He said this has saved approximately 265,000 litres of plastic from the landfill.

The eight sea cans full of plastic water bottles were sent from Iqaluit to Montreal Polymers, a plastic recycling company at the end of July. The bottles will be processed at the plant and turned into small plastic pellets that are washed and used to make fibre like polyester. Those are then sold to companies that resell the material to industries that make clothes and other items.

AROUND THE WORLD

Meet the girl turning trash into treasure in Malaysia

source: euronews.culture

Sydney Steenland has been living on a boat with her family since she was a child. Her family moved onto the boat initially after they got into financial difficulties. This unique lifestyle however gave Sydney the opportunity to see parts of the world that most children could only dream of.

"*As we travelled, we saw some pretty amazing places and exquisite nature, but we also saw some pretty horrible things, like plastic everywhere. It didn't matter where we went, what country we were in, what the financial status of the area was, there was always plastic around in every environment*," explains the 16-year-old.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, at least 14 million tons of plastic end up in the world's oceans every year. Plastic debris is the most abundant type of marine litter, making up 80 per cent of all debris found worldwide.

Witnessing the extent of plastic pollution in the world's oceans, Sydney and her family decided to set up a social enterprise project. The Sea Monkey Project recycles discarded plastics and turns them into ethical souvenirs.

"*Whatever you care about in the world, whether it's poverty, hunger, climate change, plastic pollution, it can be anything. But when you want to start doing something, you have to physically start doing it. It can be anything, it doesn't matter how small*," Sydney tells Scenes.

The Sea Monkey Project has upcycled more than 22,500 products and has organized close to 10,000 educational workshops. Sydney and her family set up the project when she was 11 years old and named the project after their family boat.

READ FULL ARTICLE

Amazon Recycling Program

If you have a flip phone that you haven't used in over a decade, or maybe even a broken tablet, Amazon will pay for a shipping label that you can use to send it in to get recycled. Apparently, this recycling program has been a thing for a while now.

Amazon's recycling program lets you ship your small electronics for free from any UPS dropoff point (you just have to provide the packaging). Amazon then transfers the devices it receives to a licensed recycling facility, and notes that it will remove or destroy any "identifying marks or personal information" during the process. Amazon still recommends performing a factory reset on your device (if it still works) before sending it in, however.

According to Amazon spokesperson Saige Kolpack, the company's recycling program isn't new — it's actually been around "for years" and Amazon just relaunched a new page in April to make it easier for customers to find. It isn't to be confused with Amazon's trade-in program, which lets you send in Amazon devices, cellphones, video games, and other electronics in exchange for an Amazon gift card. You don't get anything in return for sending in devices to be recycled, other than the personal satisfaction that you're doing a small part in helping the environment.

Information for Customers in Canada

To recycle your Amazon devices and accessories through the Amazon Recycling Program, please visit the website of our certified recycler through this link: Amazon Recycling Program. The information you enter at that website will be used to generate a UPS shipping label for you to print. Simply follow the packaging guidelines and then drop your packaged Amazon device or accessory off at the nearest UPS location. Amazon covers all the costs associated with shipping and recycling your Amazon devices and accessories through our Amazon Recycling Program.

All Amazon devices and accessories sent for recycling through our Amazon Recycling Program will undergo material reclamation by a licensed recycling facility, and all identifying marks or personal documents will be erased or destroyed before or during the recycling process.

amazon

Rainwater Is No Longer Safe to Drink, Study Finds

source: Popular Mechanics

Remember when you were a kid, and it was fun to tip your head back during a rainstorm and open your mouth to drink the drops? You shouldn't do that anymore. That's because you'll be ingesting too many particles of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), the hazardous chemicals that leach from the ultra-durable plastics we've created for about the past 120 years.

Earth is officially past its safe zone for plastic contamination. The PFAS "boundary has been exceeded," according to a study published August 2 in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology.* PFAS are known to be hazardous to both the environment and human health. At this point, these "forever chemicals" are all over the globe and have seeded the atmosphere. Most importantly, they don't break down in the environment.

"Based on the latest U.S. guidelines for PFOA in drinking water, rainwater everywhere would be judged unsafe to drink. Although in the industrial world we don't often drink rainwater, many people around the world expect it to be safe to drink and it supplies many of our drinking water sources," Ian Cousins, a professor at Stockholm University's Department of Environmental Science, and the lead author of the study, says in a news release.

There are thousands of different PFAS substances floating around. The study compared the levels of four common forms (PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, and PFNA) in various sources: rainwater, soils, and surface waters such as streams, lakes, and oceans. They found that levels of at least two forms of PFAS in rainwater, PFOA and PFOS, "often greatly exceed" the safe levels in drinking water, as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) advises. Levels of the chemicals also exceed environmental protection agencies' standards in different parts of the world, too.

PFAS continually cycles from the sea into the air through sea spray, the study found. Air currents carry it into the atmosphere, where it seeds rain clouds and ends up back on Earth.

Microplastics—the end result of all the plastic products and industrial waste we throw away—are one source of PFAS, and they often wind up in oceans and other waterways, impacting wildlife. While trash in landfills takes thousands of years to completely degrade, it forms minute bits of plastic that are tinier than 5 millimeters long. Their size means they end up everywhere, even in our blood, where they range in size between 700 nanometers and 5,000 nanometers. (A human hair is about 17,000 nanometers).

Reaching the U.S. safety levels for PFAS in the environment is impossible without "huge cleanup costs in drinking water treatment plants given that most drinking water sources on the planet will have PFAS levels above the advisory levels," according to the study.

But something needs to be done, Jane Muncke, managing director of the Food Packaging Forum Foundation in Zürich, Switzerland, says in the release. She wasn't involved in the study, but agrees with the authors that the results are alarming. "The vast amounts that it will cost to reduce PFAS in drinking water to levels that are safe based on current scientific understanding need to be paid by the industry producing and using these toxic chemicals. The time to act is now," she says.

TO READ FULL ARTICLE

RECYCLING & ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION & PLANNING SOCIETY

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1950 Gorse Street

Phone: 250-561-7327
Fax: 250-561-7324
E-mail: newsletter@reaps.org
Website: www.reaps.org
Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/REAPSPG

Dumpy's Tip of the Month

Storing Leaves for Compost

Fallen autumn leaves are a great source of brown material for your compost bin. Now is a good time to stockpile dead dry leaves for that ideal source of browns to use in the summer months when you tend to have an abundance of greens. The best way to deal with your autumn leaves is to stock them in a dedicated leaf compost bin.

RECYCLE CRAFT CORNER

Fall Nature Craft

Collect maple keys and twigs.

Position keys on the twigs and glue in place.

Recycling and Environmental Action Planning Society (AKA REAPS)

The REAPS Report is published six times a year, on the first of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Articles, originals or reprinted with permission, are submitted by members and represent the opinions of the authors only, not necessarily those of the Society, Board, or members as a whole.

Deadline for submission is two weeks prior to publication date. Articles, suggestions for articles, or comments in general are *much* appreciated, and can be submitted to the REAPS office via email at newsletter@reaps.org

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletters via email please email REAPS and state UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

RECYCLING and ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name:_____

Mailing Address:_____

_____

City: _____ Postal Code_____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Membership Fee:

- ☐ Individual ($8.00)
- ☐ Family ($15.00)
- ☐ Business ($25.00)
- ☐ Student ($5.00)
- ☐ Senior ($5.00)

I'm interested in volunteering: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Things that I would like to take part in are:

- ☐ School presentations
- ☐ Master Composter Program
- ☐ Spring Plant Sale
- ☐ General Garden Work
- ☐ Information Booths
- ☐ Fundraiser Events
- ☐ Public Workshops and Presentations
- ☐ Board of Directors

Renew today: E-transfer: recycling@reaps.org

PayPal at www.reaps.org (state membership)

Cheque payable to:
R.E.A.P.S.
Box 444 Prince George, B.C. V2L 4S6