

Chapter Action Updates

Council of Canadians chapters have been active in communities across Canada challenging the Harper government's so-called "Fair" Elections Act, speaking out against global corporate trade, fighting fracking and more. Here are some recent highlights.

WINNIPEG CHAPTER JOINS "STOP CETA WALK"

Members of the Winnipeg chapter joined University of Winnipeg students for a "Stop CETA walk" that was led by their very own Trojan Horse. The 10-foot-tall horse was a symbol of the federal government's secrecy as it negotiates the Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union.

STOP THE DRILL IN LETHBRIDGE

The Lethbridge chapter is fighting an oil drilling project in the west part of the city by Calgary-based Goldenkey Oil Inc. The proposed drilling site is close to the city's water treatment plant and upwind of several west-side neighbourhoods. According to the No Drilling Lethbridge website, Goldenkey Oil Inc. has licensed the mineral rights for 23 square kilometres within Lethbridge city limits underneath about 4,000 homes where more than 10,000 people live. In mid-October, the Council of Canadians and Kainai Lethbridge Earth Watch organized a rally opposing oil drilling and fracking within city limits. The drilling proposal comes despite city council's support for a 2012 resolution against any new oil and gas development within municipal boundaries. In Alberta, drilling licences – even within cities – are granted by the Alberta Energy Regulator, which is funded by the oil and gas industry.

KELOWNA, NELSON CHAPTERS PROTEST NORTHERN GATEWAY PIPELINE

As the National Energy Board's Joint Review Panel held a one-day closed-door hearing on the Enbridge Northern Gateway

Project, the Kelowna chapter hosted close to 400 people in a packed meeting to share community opposition. Event speakers included both Green Party Leader Elizabeth May and President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Philip. Despite massive community opposition, the Joint Review Panel recommended approval of the pipeline. Local resistance to the project continues.

NO MORE CORPORATE TRADE DEALS

In late January, Council chapters joined communities in Mexico, Canada and the United States for an Intercontinental Day of Action to say "no" to NAFTA, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and other corporate trade deals. Council of Canadians chapters in Hamilton, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Comox Valley, London, Toronto and Brant took part in the day, which included rallies outside the offices of politicians, marches, public events, banner drops and more.

THUNDER BAY CHAPTER JOINS TREK AGAINST ENERGY EAST

Members of the Council's Thunder Bay chapter joined First Nations, Citizens United for a Sustainable Planet, Lakehead University students and others for a two-day, 20 km trek to "walk the line." The route followed the Energy East pipeline, which TransCanada wants to convert to ship tar sands crude and other oil from Alberta to the east coast. Opposition to the pipeline is building. In April several Ontario chapters hosted public forums featuring Maude Barlow and Eriel Deranger of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation to talk about how the Energy East pipeline is "Our risk. Their reward."



The Council's Calgary chapter braved bad weather to make some noise outside the federal Conservative Party convention in November.

THE "UNFAIR" ELECTIONS ACT

Members of the Council's Ottawa chapter were on Parliament Hill in February to help deliver close to 30,000 petitions objecting to the Harper government's proposed sweeping changes to Canada's Elections Act. The Council of Canadians and the Canadian Federation of Students joined forces to speak out against the proposed legislation as the Conservatives tried to rush the bill through Parliament with little debate.

HAMILTON CHAPTER PUSHES RESOLUTION

In February, the Council's Hamilton chapter celebrated their city council's decision to pass a municipal resolution against fracking. The resolution is an important first step in defending communities from fracking, and lays the groundwork for bylaws and zoning protection from this invasive extraction process. For more information about how to pass a resolution in your community, visit www.canadians.org/fracking-resolution.

TOXIC SOIL AND WATER DON'T MIX

The Council of Canadians Victoria chapter protested outside an Environmental Appeal Board hearing, demanding that British Columbia's Ministry of the Environment reverse its decision to grant South Island Aggregates Ltd. a permit to dump toxic soil near the Shawnigan Lake watershed. South Island Aggregates wants to dispose of 100,000 tonnes of contaminated soil per year at its quarry located south of Shawnigan Lake.

Want to get involved? Visit our website at www.canadians.org/chapters to find a chapter near you.