

# Chapter Action Updates

by Philippe-A Charbonneau

The Powell River chapter of the Council of Canadians joined with other chapters across Canada for the "Defend Our Climate Day of Action" in May.



Council of Canadians chapters have been active in communities across Canada protecting water and public health care, defending our climate, challenging unfair trade deals and standing up for democracy. Here are a few highlights:

## Defend Our Climate, Defend Our Communities

On Saturday, May 10, Council of Canadians chapter activists joined rallies across Canada to speak out about climate justice. The "Defend Our Climate, Defend Our Communities" rallies were part of a second national day of action following a successful first showing last November.

People across Canada stepped up to defend their communities from pipelines, dirty energy projects and runaway climate change at more than 60 local rallies.

## Husky withdraws its fracking application in the Northwest Territories

At the end of May, Husky Energy withdrew its application to horizontally drill and frack up to four wells in the Sahtu region of the Northwest Territories. The company has decided to postpone drilling for two years.

This was welcome news to the Council's Northwest Territories chapter, which had joined a coalition of social justice and environmental organizations and people in the Sahtu Region and across the territory, calling for an environmental assessment of the fracking application.

## New Brunswick chapters defend the forest

A "Rally for Our Forest" took place on Tuesday, May 13, at the New Brunswick Legislature in Fredericton. It was endorsed by numerous groups including the Council's Fredericton, Moncton and Saint John chapters.

The rally called on the province to keep intact the rules that protect the forest from J.D. Irving and other forestry companies, saying the province needs a forest strategy that respects ecological limits, builds resilient communities, and creates meaningful employment. Groups also asked that woodlot owners and workers be given a viable shot at making a living without having to pack up for Alberta, and that Aboriginal treaties and rights be respected.

## Comox Valley protests Raven Coal Mine

In May, the Comox Valley chapter held a rally in downtown Courtenay to protest fossil fuel projects, including the Raven Coal Mine. Many organizations, First Nations and concerned citizens have shown their opposition to Compliance Coal Corporation's proposed mine project.

The proposed coal mine would be approximately 3,100 hectares in size with a surface footprint of 200 hectares. Located about five kilometres from Baynes Sound in the Cowie Creek and Tsable River drainages, the project has prompted concerns about water safety. Baynes Sound is the narrow western off-shoot of the Strait of Georgia that separates Vancouver Island from the mainland of British Columbia.

The mine would produce 650,000 to 1.1 million tonnes of highly volatile bituminous coal. The life of the mine is estimated to be about 16 or 17 years.

The Council of Canadians' Comox Valley chapter has been actively raising concerns about the proposed Raven Coal Mine since 2010.

## London chapter opposes dump near Ingersoll

In late June, the London chapter protested against the Walker Environmental Group's proposed Zorra landfill site near Ingersoll, which is located about 160 kilometres south-west of Toronto in Ontario. The 200-acre landfill would receive garbage from all over the province. The proposed site is located in a mined-out portion of a quarry owned by Carmeuse Lime in Zorra Township on the boundary with Ingersoll and near the Thames River. The landfill could contaminate drinking and groundwater.

If approved, the dump would operate for 20 years, but it could be expanded to continue to take garbage after that time. Every day an estimated 100 trucks would take a total of 3,500 tons of garbage to the dump. The company is also reportedly examining whether moving the garbage by rail to the site is a viable option. The community has raised concerns about the pollution of local drinking water, the odour from the garbage, toxins and dust in the air, and the number of garbage trucks this would put on the road.

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