



**"No matter how cynical you become,
it's never enough to keep up."
Lily Tomlin**

June 2016

Abuse of Sensitive Castle Landscapes Not Defensible

SAGE AGM TBA July 2016

June 7 - Lethbridge Green Drinks. 4:00 pm Owl Acoustic Lounge 411-3 Ave S. Informal gathering to discuss environmental issues, projects and solutions. First Tuesday of each month.

OWC AGM. June 16th from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. at the Enmax. [Register at OWC.](#)

Municipal Government Act Review, July 15th, Lethbridge Lodge. Resister at mgareview.alberta.ca/

June 4th AEN Spring Meeting with Alberta's Climate Plan. [Register online.](#)

Keen For Green - June 11th

From Sophia Larney, Outreach Coordinator for Environment Lethbridge:

National Environment Week 2016 is June 4th to June 11!

To help Lethbridge celebrate, various organizations will be hosting events, workshops and presentations throughout the week to celebrate our environment and to display some of the different environmental initiatives taking place around the city.

With everything from urban farm tours to a vermiculture workshop, you'll be surprised to see just how much is being done around the city for the environment— and just how

News Release (Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition & Alberta Wilderness Association):

Illegal use during the recent province-wide OHV ban is a symptom of ongoing abuse within the area that will become the Castle parks. A recent stewardship report by the **Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition (CCWC)** reveals an incident requiring RCMP intervention when individuals illegally entered an area closed to Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use according to the Castle Access Management Plan. This was particularly egregious given the province-wide OHV ban at the time. The CCWC and **Alberta**

many ways you too can get involved.

The week will wrap up with a big celebration at Henderson Lake featuring Environment Lethbridge's *Keen for Green Fest* and Helen Schuler's *Nature Play Day*. The event will go from 12-4 and will feature live music, a barbecue, activities, displays and demonstrations for all ages. What better way to celebrate Environment Week than by spending time appreciating one of our beautiful parks with friends and family!

Make sure to stop by, and to check out the other events happening for the week. For a full schedule and information on individual events visit www.environmentlethbridge.ca.

Wilderness Association (AWA) are requesting support from both the OHV community and the Government of Alberta to permanently ban OHVs in the newly designated Castle Parks.

"This incident is just one more example of the continuing disregard by motorized recreationists not only of the existing Castle Access Management Plan but also of the recent explicit province-wide closure of all Public Lands to these vehicles," says James Tweedie, CCWC President. "A ban on OHV use in the Castle would not only protect the area, but would also make enforcement easier and cheaper."

"We are asking for the OHV ban to be extended permanently in order to protect the Castle Parks from further OHV damage. We are requesting this closure be put in place before the upcoming long weekend, which traditionally sees the most OHV vandalism of any period of the year," adds James Tweedie. "The risk to the provincially-protected Castle Parks from continued OHV vandalism is not just from fires, but from further degradation and destruction of species at risk habitat including significant grizzly bear and native trout habitat."

"The Castle contains vital habitat for many wild species and its headwaters provide water that many Albertans depend on," says Joanna Skrajny, AWA

Conservation Specialist. "Sensitive headwaters landscapes are simply not capable of supporting motorized recreation and the enforcement to manage lawless recreationists is more than we can afford. OHVs must not be permitted in the Castle, allowing motorized recreation is simply not scientifically defensible."

OHV use has high impacts on riparian zones and wetlands because of soft soils and the fragile nature of stream beds. The OHV trails themselves deliver sediment to streams when it rains, which can kill westslope cutthroat trout eggs and stress adult fish, decreasing their chances of recovery. OHVs driven through stream beds or other waterways disturb aquatic habitat, destroying the ability for fish to reproduce.

For more information:

James Tweedie, Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition, 403.628.2422

Joanna Skrajny, Alberta Wilderness Association, 403.483.4683

**Environment Week
June 4 to 11, 2016**

**See the events page in
this newsletter,
courtesy of Environment
Lethbridge**

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret

www.cowspiracy.com

2014 1h 30min

Kip Anderson & Keegan Kuhn

Leonardo DiCaprio, Executive Producer

This low budget documentary, larded with citations, boldly asserts that "animal agriculture is a leading driver of climate change, contributing more to global greenhouse gas emissions than the combined exhaust of all the world's vehicles".

While cattle production is the primary focus, the film also considers the 26 million rainforest acres cleared for palm oil, massive production of soy, killing wild animals to protect livestock and the 75% of world fisheries "exploited or depleted".

There are of course faults with wide ranging polemics employed here, but there is little doubt that humans are deliberately clearing immense land and sea areas in the service of feeding ourselves. In stark terms, we and the animals we raise, now make up some 98% of the zoomass.

The filmmakers ask: Why isn't this reflected in the concerns of large environmental organizations like GreenPeace and Sierra Club?

Interviews with the heads of various ENGOs reveal some startling lack of knowledge or interest in the issue of food. Initially attempting to avoid the question, Salazar-López of Amazon Watch eventually bluntly states: "a lot of people just keep their mouths shut because they don't want to be the next ones with a bullet to their head."

In Brazil alone, more than 1,100 activists, small farmers, judges, priests and other rural workers have been killed in land disputes in the last two decades, according to the Catholic Land Pastoral, a Brazilian watchdog group. One particu-

larly high profile case is that of US nun and rainforest activist, 73 year old Dorothy Stang, shot six times at close range allegedly by the hired hand of a wealthy Brazilian rancher.

We don't need to go to Brazil to witness intimidation to recall how some have been treated here. The filmmakers interview ex-rancher Howard Lyman, famous for speaking out on "mad cow" on the Oprah Winfrey show and for being sued by National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

While not every rancher has the power to drain our vital fluids should we cross them, as a group they have tremendous power. In Alberta in the 1990's local singer K.D. Lang was ridiculed for her pro-PETA stance and even supremely popular Premier Ralph Klein was forced to abandon land & leasing reform legislation in 1999. More recently a move by Earl's restaurants to source beef only from certified humane producers was met with flag waving outrage (and some misplaced anti-Muslim rhetoric) that saw Earl's back quickly away from the fray.

Recently, Premier Notley faced stiff opposition on Bill 6, legislation to regulate worker safety on farms and ranches. One curious mounted protestor had a sign taped to a hockey stick claiming Notley needed a helmet – whether that was a threat of violence or an acknowledgement the Premier was in a rough game, we don't know as it never played out. Notley's government has begun looking into the land lease legislation Klein had abandoned and it will be instructive to see if power has shifted so fundamentally that reform might now prevail.

It's an unfortunate ending for the film that the nirvana of vegan diets is proposed as a solution to our problems. Not because a vegan diet is without merit, but because land reform and power politics is so difficult to surmount, finagling with the social mores and memories of our culinary culture(s) is fraught with the kind of emotionality that leads to violence. Recognition of which may be the real reason some major ENGOs, while not silent, are also not trumpeting the crisis of overly populous humanity going to extremes to keep populating our planet.

Interesting Links:

Ranchers & Farmers in AB protesting Bill 6:

<http://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/albertas-top-political-stories-of-the-year>

Klein's Legacy and Notley's Future:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/alberta-grazing-lease-program-under-review-1.3151396>

Donald Trump's Energy Plan: More Fossil Fuels and Fewer Rules (New York Times)

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/27/us/politics/donald-trump-global-warming-energy-policy.html?_r=0

Petitioning for Fish Habitat

A number of environmental organizations including the West Coast Environmental Law, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada, Greenpeace Canada, Pembina Institute, David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defence, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Ecology Action Centre, Équiterre, Sierra Club Canada Foundation and Nature Canada have initiated a petition to encourage the rebuilding of the nation's environmental laws, beginning with Canada's Fisheries Act.

In 2012, within the omnibus budget bill, a number of Acts relating to environmental protection and stewardship were substantially weakened with no public participation, no participation of First Peoples, nor scientific evidence.

The petition (fisheriesact.ca/take-action) states:

We support the immediate reinstatement of strong habitat protection into Canada's Fisheries Act that was removed without consulting Indigenous peoples, scientific evidence or public participation. We call on the government to bring back habitat protection so that the Act says: "No person shall carry on any work, undertaking or activity that results in the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat."

For more information see the [Mandate Letter](#) to the Minister of Fisheries, and [Scaling up the Fisheries Act](#) from West Coast Environmental Law.

More Interesting Links:

"Ain't No Fish" (Animation with Hoagy Carmichael)

<http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/videos/animated-short-film-highlight-ocean-pollution-catchy-show-tune>

"Net Zero" (Video with Peter Amerongen) <http://www.solaralberta.ca/events/net-zero-ready-prime-time>

Fostering a conversation on stronger carbon pricing in Alberta (Pembina Institute) www.pembina.org/

In Water We Trust? Engaging Albertans in Restoration and Maintenance of Environmental Flows
<http://www.elc.ab.ca/media/103873/InWaterWeTrustELC.pdf>



MGA and the Environment

On July 15th, the Alberta Government will be conducting a review of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) in Lethbridge. Municipalities have a key role in the management and protection of Alberta's environment and, as such, this Act may have far-reaching consequences for municipal planning. It is, therefore, important to amend the MGA to require and to empower municipalities to manage and protect the local environment.

The government has selected 'sustainable and inclusive development' and 'increased municipal responsibility for land use and environmental conservation' as two of its priority areas in the upcoming review. These are important priorities given municipal authority over planning, transportation, and waste management - essential aspects for creating resilient communities that can adapt to existing and emerging environmental challenges.

The Environmental Law Network has suggested five main areas of municipal environmental responsibility, including: the protection and management of the environment as a valid municipal planning purpose; the incorporation of by-laws for purposes specific to the protection and management of the environment; the expansion of the enforcement tools available to municipalities for the purposes of environmental protection and management; the expansion of revenue generation options available to municipalities to enable environmental stewardship and land conservation; and the enhancement of opportunities for public participation in municipal planning processes.

Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE)

A Leading Voice for a Healthy and Environmentally Sustainable Community.

Visit us at: <http://sage-environment.org/>

If you are interesting in getting involved, contact us at:

sage-communications@sage-environment.org

Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right (2016)



As the United States prepares for its next presidential election, Jane Mayer offers some insight on the reigning plutocracy and their efforts to control America for their own benefit.

She assigns an historical turning point to Rockefeller's creation of the private foundation through an act of Congress as a means of controlling the wealth that would otherwise have been taxed with the benefit of appearing philanthropic to the public. Critics, including Theodore Roosevelt, assailed the idea, declaring, "No amount of charity in spending such fortunes can compensate in any way for the misconduct in acquiring them." The Reverend John Hannes Holmes denounced the private foundation as "repugnant to the whole idea of a democratic society," and professor Rob Reich suggested that private foundations, "represent virtually by definition plutocratic voices," were "troubling because they were considered deeply and fundamentally anti-democratic ... an entity that would undermine political equality, affect public policies, and could exist in perpetuity."

Jane Mayer describes the advances to clean air, clean water, environmental protection, occupational health, and social security during the Progressive Era of the United States. These organizations and regulations were anathema to the industrialists as they

were inundated with charges of pollution, negligence and willful indifference. The Koch family were particularly affronted by what they perceived as government intrusion in the free-market: From their radical libertarian viewpoint, the only purpose of government is the protection of private property.

Dark Money then takes us on a forty year journey beginning in the 1970s as a group of billionaire families created a network of private foundations designed to challenge inconvenient scientific research, to create libertarian enclaves in major universities, to foster the emergence of astroturf organizations to fight legislation, and to directly fund the election of judges and politicians at all levels. Astonishingly large sums of money were directed towards the goal of containing and controlling government.

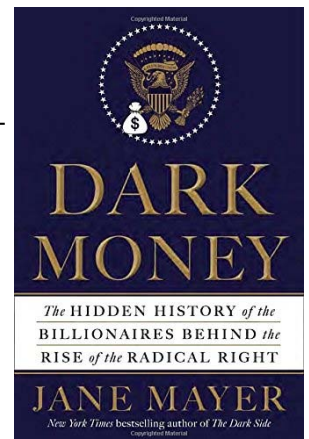
Citizens United, the Supreme Court decision to allow unlimited corporate donations to elections essentially opened the doors to this web of power. *Citizens United* endorsed oligarchy in the United States. "The system is controlled by a handful of ultra-wealthy people, most of whom got rich from the system and who will get richer from the system." As America grew more economically unequal, those at the top were purchasing the power needed to stay there.

Mayer quotes *Politico*'s Kenneth

Vogel who found that in the 2012 presidential race "the top 0.04 percent of donors contributed about the same amount as the bottom 68 percent," thus validating Louis Brandeis's dictum: "We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both"

Jane Mayer painstakingly tracks the influence of this top 0.04% on the outcomes of elections at all levels of government, the subsequent gerrymandering of electoral boundaries, and the gutting of regulations in the courts.

Dark Money is clearly written and easy to follow despite the complexity of the web of organizations and the people dedicated to achieving the goals of the wealthy. I think the book could have focused more on the ideology of this group beyond their insatiable greed and lust for power, and I would have been interested in Jane Mayer's thoughts on the repercussions of a plutocracy openly governing the United States. Nonetheless, it is difficult not to be concerned about the ability to advance stronger environmental regulations and social well-being within the current state of politics.



European Elm Scale—Lethbridge Alert (from the City of Lethbridge)

What is European Elm Scale?

European elm scale is an insect that attacks a variety of elm trees. These insects feed on the trees and produce a large amount of honeydew which eventually covers the leaves and bark in a black coloured mold. The honeydew can also become a nuisance when it covers patios, decks and vehicles. Heavy infestation may kill weakened trees and cause branch dieback in healthy trees. Often a thin canopy in a tree is a symptom of heavy infestation.

Signs & Symptoms

- Visible mature insects (10mm long, oval and greyish-brown with a white waxy fringe) on the branches or where the branches intersect the trunk
- Late leaf out in the spring
- Stunted, yellowing leaves leading to premature leaf drop and die back
- Honeydew secretions on leaves, branches, sidewalks, patios, vehicles, etc.
- Black sooty mold growth on the leaves, branches and trunk



How Can I Help?

Healthy trees stand a better chance of surviving an infestation from European Elm Scale. The following are things that you can do to help keep your trees healthy:

- Water regularly, especially during drought times (this includes mature elm trees)
- Try not to damage the root systems of the tree when landscaping or doing other home/yard renovations
- Be aware of overhead branches and try not to break or damage any elm tree branches
- Avoid compacting the soil around the roots of the tree (driving or parking vehicles on the roots)
- Mulch the area around the tree

If your elm tree is showing signs of stress from European Elm Scale we recommend contacting a qualified arborist that can administer a pesticide injection to combat the insect.

It is estimated that there are 11,000 elm trees in Lethbridge (split evenly on public and private property) so your help is critical in preserving our urban elm forest.

What is the City Doing?

We are currently assessing elm trees on City/public property to identify the trees most in need of care. Throughout May/June 2016 the City will be injecting approximately 600 elm trees with TreeAzin to combat European Elm Scale.

We have been actively working to combat European Elm Scale since 2005 when it was first identified in our community. This has included both monitoring and active treatment.

It is anticipated that 2016 will see an increase in affected trees due to recent mild winters and drought summer conditions. The mild winters make it easier for the insects to winter in Lethbridge and drought conditions weaken the trees.

If you have an elm tree on your boulevard that needs attention please email trees@lethbridge.ca. These trees will be added to our database and evaluated throughout the summer.

Keen for Green Fest

Saturday June 11

12-4pm

BBQ

**locally
grown
food**

prizes

**in
conjunction with:**



**musical
performers:
Shaela Miller
Threesome
Mwansa Mwansa
& more!**



Kiwanis Picnic Shelter, Henderson Lake Park, Lethbridge

www.environmentlethbridge.ca



/EnvironmentLethbridge



@enviroleth

ENVIRONMENT WEEK 2016

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

»»————→ JUNE 4-11 ←————«««

SATURDAY 4

10:00-2:00PM

Community Clean-Up London Drugs

Bring your difficult to recycle items such as electronics, batteries and clothing.

TUESDAY 7

1:00PM

Wind Turbine Tour Lethbridge College

Take a tour of the wind turbine program and learn about wind energy in Southern Alberta.

REGISTER ONLINE!

4:00PM

Green Trivia Owl Acoustic Lounge

Team trivia - environmental themed! Have a drink, win some prizes!

SUNDAY 5

1:00PM

Nature Scavenger Hunt Helen Schuler Nature Centre

Get outside and explore the river valley with this family-friendly scavenger hunt.

WEDNESDAY 8

2:00PM

Vermiculture Workshop The Hub 319 6th Street S

Learn about small-scale composting and the benefits of worm composting. Worm composters will also be available for sale.

7:00PM

Urban Farm Tours

Join Synergy Permaculture for a tour of their urban farm operations.

(Meeting place TBD)

REGISTER ONLINE!

Waterton Wild

Helen Schuler Nature Centre

Flora and fauna of a special place. Presentation by Jan Wilson and Jacinthe Lavoie

MONDAY 6

7:00PM

The Benefits of Bees

The Hub 319 6th Street S

Join Chelsea Sherbut for a presentation on urban beekeeping and the benefits of bees.

THURSDAY 9

12:00-1:00PM

Yoga in the Park Galt Gardens

Join Pop Up Yoga Lethbridge for a lunch time yoga session outside in Galt Gardens!

1:00PM

Creek Watch Workshop Indian Battle Park

Join Reed Forklage and try your hand at creek, stormwater and river monitoring!

FRIDAY 10

7:00PM

Solar Co-ops

University of Lethbridge

Presentation by Peter Prebble from Saskatoon Environmental Society on solar cooperatives.

SATURDAY 11

12:00 - 4:00

Henderson Lake

Come on down to Henderson Lake and enjoy live music, a barbecue, activities, displays, games and more at Keen for Green Fest and Nature Play Day!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EVENTS & REGISTRATION VISIT:
WWW.ENVIRONMENTLETHBRIDGE.CA