

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

25 Years of Environmental Action

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

JULY 2014

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REAL Action Grants

REAL is celebrating its 25th anniversary by offering ten "REAL Action Grants" of up to \$250 to schools, community groups and neighbourhood associations in the region to make environmental improvements that benefit their community.

REAL will accept applications from the community for projects that demonstrate an eco-friendly practice that would benefit a group or the community at large. Projects could include ways to conserve water, reduce solid waste, reduce energy use, promote local food, implement adaptations to climate change or naturalize a space.

REAL began in 1989 on the premise that individuals could make an environmental difference by "thinking globally and acting locally". We want to give other groups the opportunity to put their eco-friendly ideas

into action. As a non-profit organization, REAL understands the challenge of finding funding, and wants to support community groups who have great ideas to improve the environment but may need a little financial support to make them a reality.

Simple projects will be encouraged, such as developing a nature trail, planting trees in a school yard, installing composters or rain barrels, buying reusable dishware so disposables are not needed, or putting on a workshop. The project can be standalone or part of a larger project. *(Cont'd page 7)*



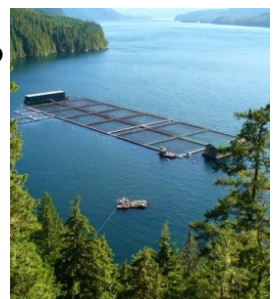
***Fish Farming* by David Hoffman**

From the perspective of world-wide food requirements, there seems to be no alternative to farmed fish. Protein is an important component of diet, and while there are alternatives to animal protein, for all practical purposes fish will be in heavy demand as a foodstuff everywhere.

Currently, aquaculture provides about one-third of the world seafood supply (including shellfish), and this amount is bound to increase to meet the growing global demand for fish that can not be met by wild fishing alone. Although some popular farmed fish -- like trout, tuna and salmon -- are also caught in the wild, others, such as tilapia and catfish, are almost all farm-raised.

Different sources of animal protein in our diet place different demands on

(Cont'd page 2)



Fish Farming (Cont'd)



natural resources. Farmed fish grow faster than their counterparts in the wild. And, using the so-called “feed conversion ratio”-- an estimate of the feed required to gain one pound of body mass -- farming salmon is about seven times more efficient than raising beef. For this reason, fish farming looks to be here to stay. But at what cost to our environment and our health?

The majority of Canadian farmed Atlantic salmon are raised in the ocean waters of British Columbia (where it is not a native species), New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland/ Labrador. Atlantic salmon are held and grown in open pens floating in the ocean. These are usually located in areas protected from storms, often in sheltered bays or near the mouths of rivers.

As with all large-scale farming, aquaculture requires maintaining animals in large densities, providing them with food, and treating them with pharmaceuticals to maintain their health under these unnatural conditions. Unlike most land-based farming, however, diseases, parasites, and food and pharmaceutical waste freely flow from the open pens into the surrounding marine environment with potential negative effects on nearby populations of wild salmon, prawns and lobsters.

The aquaculture industry has been active in Canada since the 1980s, with Atlantic salmon being the most important species in terms of production volumes and market values.

Many populations of Atlantic salmon in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as several Pacific salmon species, are at risk of extinction according to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, so the risks from open-pen salmon aquaculture are especially important.

Raising fish in inland ponds, lakes and tanks is less environmentally invasive than farming in the ocean, but some concern exists over untreated waste water discharged from poorly run fish farms contaminating ground water, while energy and water supply costs are considerable. The Suzuki Foundation, for one, is supporting experiments in closed-containment salmon farming and early evidence suggests the approach may be economically viable; however, but it still remains for commercialized experience to prove it.

To the environmental impacts can be added potential health effects on humans. Some studies show that fish meal, which is the primary component of aquaculture feed for carnivorous species, like salmon and tuna, has elevated levels of environmental toxins, particularly dioxins, like PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl), which accumulate in the flesh of farmed fish. In addition, the near-shore waters where the fish pens are located may absorb run-off from land-based sources of pollution. Omnivorous fish, like tilapia and catfish, are fed vegetarian pellets, and don't have dioxin problems, but that is not to say they are free of antibiotics and (in some parts of the world) even growth hormones.

The debate over environmental impacts continues: in B.C., Ecojustice is taking the federal Department of Fisheries to court seeking an order to quash DFO licenses that allow companies to transfer farmed fish into waters shared with wild fish. At the same time, the concept of “containment fish farming” is gaining interest.

Only one fact seems clear: Wild catches will not meet our demand; they are not meeting it now. World-wide, farmed fish will provide a larger and larger share of consumption, with continuing negative effects on the aquatic environment and potentially to our health.

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Two Rivers Food Hub

The Two Rivers Food Hub project is the culmination of many years of work supporting local food and farming in our area. Its goal is to create a viable and sustainable food hub in the Smiths Falls area within this next year. The group is currently at a critical juncture, pulling together grant applications to help pay for the construction of cold storage space, vegetable processing and commercial kitchen equipment.



In Eastern Ontario, most farms have remained small to medium sized, and as a result, most food processing, food terminals, and farmer development have been focused in Southern Ontario. The creation of the Two Rivers Food Hub to service this area of Eastern Ontario would mean greater opportunities for local farmers. Instead of each farmer having to solicit clients, as well as purchase and build storage, cleaning and processing facilities, a food hub service-based system would offer all this in one central location. On site would be the space and equipment needed to clean, grade, package and store crops of all kinds. The hub would have a client base of restaurants, institutions, and municipalities. And a commercial kitchen would allow start up food processing companies to conduct their product development or to produce their commodity in a licensed facility without having the expense of building their own.

The Two Rivers project is looking for seed money from the local food community the hub will serve and anyone who supports a local food system and wants to see it thrive. By partnering with Rideau Community Health Services, the group will also be able to issue tax receipts for charitable donations.

For more information, contact Cheryl Nash, at (613) 268-2907 or info@ecoperth.on.ca, or Ray Elgersma at (613) 257-5126, and follow their progress on their Facebook page "Two Rivers Food Hub".

We're Growing Again !

Construction has been completed on three new plots at the REAL Community Garden, bringing the total number of plots available for rent to 11. All 11 have been allocated and planted.

We had some interest from new gardeners early in the year, and quickly decided we would try to find the \$1500 required, even though we had missed the deadlines for foundation funding. ecoPerth came through once more with \$250, and REAL decided to contribute \$500 to the community projects. A very big thank you to the Rideau Community Health Services for agreeing to support us with \$750. The funds covered the cost of the supplies and construction of the beds, with volunteers pitching in to spread gravel, lay the landscape fabric and plastic liners, and fill the beds with triple mix.



Thanks to Donna and Peter McKenna, the Mills Community Support Group, and Dave, Barb and Kevin Hicks for their volunteer labour, and several people who have donated plants. Greg Watters has been keeping the grass surrounding the gardens under control and Angie Peladeau of Heritage Harvest Farms will be tending the Stone Soup Sharing Plot. You are welcome to sample the produce from that plot only!

Our garden has been growing since 2010 when we started with four straw bale plots. Eight raised cedar beds (the corner plots) were built in 2011, and the Stone Soup Sharing Plot was added in 2012. This year three plots were added, in what will likely be the last expansion of the garden at this site. The Community Garden Steering Committee is Donna Bowes, Cheryl Nash, Terry Graydon and from REAL, Susan Brandum, Barb Hicks and Donna McKenna.

Turtles On the Move - Slowly !

Ontario turtles are at significant risk from road mortality, as they often need to cross roads to get where they are going. In June it is usually females looking for sand, gravel or earth in which to lay their eggs. But later in the summer, younger turtles will be looking for a pond or other water body to call home. Seven of Ontario's eight turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act, so any turtle you encounter could use some help. In this area, you are most likely to encounter the Snapping Turtle and the Midland Painted Turtle crossing roads, around roadsides and railway embankments, advises naturalist, Simon Lunn. You may think the female turtles are far from water, but they are usually travelling to known nesting locations. Here's how you can help them to cross roads safely:



Photo courtesy of Simon Lunn

- Slow down and watch for turtles where you see turtle crossing signs, so you do not accidentally run one over.
- If you need to help a turtle cross the road, pull your vehicle all the way over and leave your four way flashers on. This may alert other motorists that something is going on.
- If there is not much traffic, stand back and let the turtle go.
- Help turtles to continue on in the direction they were heading. They know where they are going. Never transport them elsewhere.
- If you must physically move the turtle, handle it gently and as little as possible.
- Keep the turtle low, as they may struggle and will be injured if they fall from any height. Be aware they may empty their bladder as you do this.
- Never pick up a turtle by the tail, as that will damage their spinal cord, which is fused to the underside of their shell.
- Small and medium sized turtles can be picked up with one hand on either side of the shell.
- But don't try one hand on either side with snapping turtles. Snappers can be aggressive and have long necks, so can easily snap at you. Pick them up by the back of the shell, turn them around and slide them along in the direction they were going.
- If the snapping turtle is heavy, or you are reluctant to handle them, pick them up enough to get them on a car mat, piece of heavy cardboard or folded up blanket. Keep one hand on the back of the shell and with your other hand drag the mat to the other side.
- Another option for a large turtle could be to get them to bite a stick and pull them along.
- The Toronto Zoo Adopt-a-Pond program has a short You-Tube video with a very cooperative actor turtle, demonstrating some of these techniques. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lgd_B6iKPxU.

If you find turtle eggs in a spot where they are in danger, do not move them yourself, but contact the MNR. They take from 50-90 days to hatch, depending on temperature. The eggs must be oriented the same way when they are moved. In the meantime, you could try some temporary fencing around the nest to keep predators, including the family dog, away from them. Ontario Nature is a good source of additional information on turtle protection. http://www.ontarionature.org/protect/species/reptile_and_amphibian_stewardship.php

If you suspect the turtle is injured, consult the Turtle Shell website <http://www.turtleshell.org/emergency/> or the Rideau Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, 613-258-9480 for advice.



The third annual Green Communities Canada (GCC) Awards were handed out during their AGM at the end of May. The awards recognize GCC's finest and provide an opportunity to celebrate the amazing work being done by member organizations and their people across the country.

Susan Brandum, REAL's Environmental Projects Manager, was recognized for Lifetime Achievement. Sue helped develop the Well Aware and ecoENERGY programs. She has championed social enterprise, developed amazing partnerships, and served as an extraordinary leader and well-respected voice for the environment.

Resilience Awards were handed out to several Green Communities, including REAL for 25 years of service.

For the full article, see

<http://greencommunitiescanada.org/gc-awards-gcc-salutes-its-own/>

5th Annual Bottle Drive

REAL's 5th Annual Bottle Drive at The Beer Store is coming August 8th and 9th. That's when REAL volunteers accept returns at the Smiths Falls store, and cash them in as a fundraiser for our organization. We usually raise in the neighbourhood of \$500.



So time to review what you can and can't take back for recycling, and which returns earn money.

- Containers should be empty, rinsed if possible, and caps, corks and plastic rings removed.
- Sort your empties before you arrive.
- Separate beer bottles from wine and spirit bottles.
- Sort beer bottles by colour and put them back into their cases or 24-pack cartons available at the store.
- Wine and spirit glass bottle should be sorted into clear and coloured.
- Put cans back into their original packaging.
- Other containers: sort by Tetra, plastic and other miscellaneous empties
- Loose empties should be transferred into the black totes provided.
- Broken bottles are not accepted.
- If The Beer Store sells it, they will take it back. However, bottle caps, plastic rings and bags do not generate a refund.
- Avoid peak times to make returns, and call ahead if your load is particularly large.

What do they become? Only beer bottles are actually refilled and reused as beer bottles. Other clear glass can be recycled into new glass bottles, and coloured glass can become coloured glass bottles or fibreglass. Cans become sheet metal which could become more aluminum cans or any other aluminum product. Plastic bottles are recycled into plastic strapping and felted automotive parts and miscellaneous plastic products.

If you would like to volunteer for a couple of hours at this event, contact Karen Schecter, (613) 283-4604 or schecter@vianet.ca or Volunteer Coordinator, Leann Merriman, (613) 205-0818.

Returns Paid

- * **Glass or plastic bottles, tetrapacks, bag in box:** less than or equal to 630 ml - 10 cent deposit; greater than 630 ml - 20 cent deposit
- * **Cans:** less than or equal to 1 litre - 10 cent deposit, greater than 1 litre: - 20 cent deposit

REAL Deal Store

Busy Summer Expected. The tempo at the REAL Deal has increased noticeably over May and June. Donations are up and good quality used items are being sold just as quickly. Much of this can be attributed to garage sale remainders, but the nicer weather does get more people out and about, and there are more people from further away coming to see what the REAL Deal has to offer. This is part of a continuing trend as sales for February, March and April were over projections.

Please, if you are bringing us the remains from a garage sale, call ahead if it is a large load, and try to arrive by 3:30 p.m. Our volunteers leave right at 4 p.m., and we need some time to get donations weighed and out of the weather before closing.

E-Waste. The response to the e-waste collection service has exceeded our expectations. The walk-in bin located near the customer entrance is being filled every three or four weeks. Staff often arrive to see a long line of TVs waiting for disposal. We are not as concerned about these materials being left out in the weather, but we would prefer that e-waste be dropped with us during store hours. Note that according to our agreement with OES, we will need you to sign a waiver allowing us to sell that item, if you tell us it is in good working order. Otherwise we must put it in the e-waste collection bin and cannot make it available to anyone else for sale or free of charge.

New Fencing. Visitors to the store will have noticed new chain link fencing, completed May 26, extending the back yard enclosure into the parking area. This will give the store more room to display renovation materials, make vehicle drop-offs and pickups safer and easier, and give us more room for our garbage and scrap metal bins. It should also make snow clearing in the winter simpler. Eventually we will to acquire a substantial sized coverall for product display or donation processing, depending on the season.



Park 'n Pedal. Also included in this fencing extension is the long awaited Park 'n Pedal enclosure. Once the locking arrangements are established, people will be able to leave their bikes in the enclosure over the season, and park their cars in our parking lot when they want to go biking in town. The unique "crab" ended bike rack in the enclosure was a prototype built for us by Kilmarnock enterprises.

Volunteers. A number of volunteers have returned after an absence, including Ed Crawford, John Lockett and Heather Warren. New to REAL Deal receiving is Arthur Janes, who settled in to REAL Deal routines very nicely, and, bonus for us, likes to be busy! Jon Fisk, Brenda King, Barb Hicks and Una Pugh continue to work sorting in the smalls department, and Bonita Lucas is our volunteer cashier. Store Assistant, Don Harvey, broke an ankle at the end of May, and will be on lighter duties while he heals. Arthur is acting Store Assistant and managing the yard while Don is off his feet.

Summer Student. Thanks to a federal HRSDC grant, we will be hiring a student to work in the REAL Deal store for six weeks this summer, starting in early July.

More Volunteers Needed. We urgently need additional volunteers to keep up with the increased pace, especially in smalls. That's where volunteers unpack the boxes, assess and price items. Please speak to Tracy if you're in the store, or give her a call during store hours at 283-7999. Leann Merriman, our Volunteer Coordinator, will be in the store Saturday June 21, July 5, July 19 and August 2 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m. to process new volunteers, so don't be shy! Many hands make light work, and we would be happy to have you for a half or full day a week.



REAL Action Grants (Cont'd)

The application process will be a simple one. Full instructions are available on REAL's website, www.REALaction.ca. Applications will be accepted until September 19, 2014. However, up to four projects whose applications are received before June 30 will be given early acceptance. Projects must be completed by the end of June 2015. Successful applicants will be announced on Saturday, October 18th, at our annual local foods dinner at the Smiths Falls Curling and Squash Club.

Other 25th anniversary projects in the early planning stages are the screening of one or more environmental films and a celebration video. REAL has never produced a video, and would like to create something just a few minutes long that would capture the essence of REAL, and could be posted on YouTube with a link from our website. If you know someone who might be able to help us with this, please get in touch!

In REAL Life



April's Pitch-In Smiths Falls has wrapped up. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to clean up a park, a roadway, their neighbourhood, their schoolyard ... anywhere it was needed. Thanks to Bonita Lucas and Brenda King for coordinating this year. Over 1000 residents participated.



Since last issue we learned that the Carleton Place Hazardous Waste Depot will have a shorter season this year, opening Saturday mornings, 8 a.m. until noon until August 30th only. Residents of these communities may use these facilities: Carleton Place, Mississippi Mills, Beckwith, Drummond North Elmsley, Montague, Smiths Falls and Perth. If you do not live in one of these jurisdictions, please consult with your own municipality for hazardous waste options.



We are sorry to announce the resignation of Margot Allen from the REAL Board for family reasons. Margot joined the board in June 2013 after having been a REAL member for several years. A life-long environmentalist, she spent about 10 years with Friends of the Earth in Quebec City, and is also involved in the Merrickville environmental community. Margot was instrumental in motivating REAL to take action on the Energy East Pipeline issue.



Sue Brandum and Alan Leonard had the opportunity to talk to about 100 residents during the Smiths Falls Home Show May 3 and 4 about home heating, conservation programs, energy audits, the REAL Deal and well issues. Thanks to Brenda King and Leann Merriman for staffing REAL's display at Merrickville Goes Green eco-Fair on May 10.

- E-magazine discusses how vigilant, well-prepared citizens can keep polluters out of their neighbourhoods. <http://www.emagazine.com/earth-talk/keeping-polluters-out-of-our-neighborhoods>
- Good news: Brazil is reducing its carbon emissions by reducing the rate of deforestation, but still increasing beef and soy production. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/06/140605-brazil-deforestation-carbon-emissions-environment/?utm_source=NatGeocom&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=pom_20140615&utm_campaign=Content
- May 31 Quirks and Quarks program on accidental discovery of micro-plastic fragments trapped in Arctic sea ice. It is the first story in the podcast http://podcast.cbc.ca/mp3/podcasts/quirksaio_20140531_17759.mp3

<http://www>

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info@REALaction.ca

We're on the Web
www.REALaction.ca

Environmental
Projects Manager
Sue Brandum
613-267-2257
sbrandum@cogeco.ca

**REAL Deal Store &
Environment Centre**

85 William St. W.,
Smiths Falls ON
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat
10am—4pm

Well Aware, Energy Audits,
RAIN or other programs

Phone: 613-283-9500

Send contributions to Septem-
ber issue by August 15, 2014 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Bottle Drive Fundraiser for REAL

**Fri. Aug. 8 and Sat. Aug. 9
outside The Beer Store, Smiths Falls**

**Call Karen at 283-4604
or schechter@vianet.ca**

**We need two volunteers for
each of these times→**



Friday

2 - 4

4 - 6

6 - 8

Saturday

10 - 12

12 - 2

2 - 4

4 - 6

**We ask people if they'd like to
donate their empties, take them
from them, and cash them in.
It's easy! Volunteers must be at
least 19 years of age.**

Make a REAL Difference

Please return this form to:
REAL
Box 1061
Smiths Falls, ON
K7A 5A5

Or bring to
The REAL Deal

Make a Donation

☐ I would like to make
a donation of

\$ _____

A charitable receipt for
income tax purposes will
be issued. To donate by
credit card, go to
www.Canadahelps.org.

Volunteer

☐ I want to help

Become a Member

I would like to become a member

- ☐ Individual membership \$15
☐ Family membership \$20
☐ Student membership \$5
☐ Corporate membership \$50

Contact Information

Name

Street/RR Address

Town, Province

Postal Code

Home Phone

Work Phone

Best time to reach me

Email address