

Waste incinerators harmful to Fraser Valley: Study

By HELENA ZHU
Epoch Times Staff

VANCOUVER—An air quality study released Monday advises against adding any new sources of air pollution to the Fraser Valley's sensitive airshed—including one or more waste incinerators proposed for Metro Vancouver.

"The Fraser Valley is already the subject of considerable scientific attention by virtue of its complex topography and the nature of its air pollution chemistry," said University of British Columbia Professor Ian McKendry, author of the study, in a press release.

"Given forecast population growth, rising background pollutant levels, and global climate change, the addition of any new sources of combustion in the Lower Mainland, including mass burn waste incineration, is simply not advisable."

Commissioned by the Fraser Valley Regional District, the study notes that "serious and reasonable" concerns regarding the impact of mass waste incineration on human health must be addressed before moving forward with the proposal.

The study compares the Lower Fraser Valley to other air quality "hot spots" such as the Los Angeles basin, Tokyo, and Mexico City. It also makes the point that locations in Europe that already have waste incinerators do not generally share the same complex airshed characteristics as the Fraser Valley.

McKendry, a professor of the Geography Department at UBC, reviewed the current geographical and meteorological conditions, concentrations, and sources of air pollution, and the impact of this pollution on human health in the Lower Fraser Valley.

He then factored in the potential impact of additional waste incineration in B.C.'s Lower Mainland.

"There is a large body of credible published evidence to suggest that there is sufficient cause for concern around the potential health risks posed by modern waste incinerators, especially from dioxins and nano-particles," he said.

"At a minimum, the current research suggests the adoption of the 'precautionary principle' when evaluating the merits of additional waste incineration in the Lower Mainland."

Given the region's rich agricultural base, there is also a concern that air pollution may have an impact on vegetation, including economically important crops, as well as the general ecological health of remote sites in the region.

"This study highlights the growing risk and uncertainty associated with the health impact of incinerator emissions and reinforces the need to take every precaution before agreeing to add additional sources of pollution to the air we breathe," said Patricia Ross, chair of the Fraser Valley Regional District.

"Given the increasing risk we face, the people of the Fraser Valley deserve to see an open and informed examination by a provincially appointed independent entity."

The study also found that because of a significant upward trend in pollution that comes across the Pacific to the Fraser Valley from growing sources in Asia and beyond, air pollution is no longer a local problem.

Renowned environmental crusader wins top aboriginal award

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

Danny Beaton's passion for the environment emerged after two life-changing experiences: He sobered up after almost two decades of alcohol and drug abuse and had a vision that had a profound effect on him.

"I had a vision of an orca killer whale that was crying, and it shook me up," he said.

"I was stoned for 19 years and finally when I got free of the poison, my brain became clear and I reacted to all the destruction and injustice I could see to Mother Earth, and that's where it all started."

'I had a vision of an orca killer whale that was crying, and it shook me up.'

— Danny Beaton

That was 20 years ago and since then Beaton, a Turtle Clan Mohawk of Grand River Six Nations in Ontario, has been campaigning for environmental causes in Canada, the United States, and South America.

On March 26 in Regina, Beaton, 56, will be one of 14 aboriginals recognized for their achievements at the 17th Annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards (NAAA). He will receive the award for the category of "Environment and Natural Resources."

Across the country, Beaton has worked with Northern Cree, Innu, Inuit, Apache, and Ojibway to protect their cultures and traditional territories from various development schemes.

"There are a lot of struggles going on all across Canada right now," he says.

"Our elders are saying, 'Don't stop defending Mother Earth, because the earth is sacred to us, and you can't just allow the earth to be destroyed, allow rivers to be dammed, allow forests to be clear-cut. We have to continue to stand up for Mother Earth and do everything we can.'"

Beaton "works both sides of the border," and one of his successes

was helping stop oil exploration in the caribou calving grounds of Alaska's Arctic National Refuge. The caribou are central to the economy and way of life of the Gwich'in Nation.

He has also helped protect the sacred remains of the traditional Seminole territories in Florida and worked with the indigenous peoples from the Amazon Rainforest to bring their concerns about deforestation to a wider audience.

As part of his work Beaton has produced and directed four films, three of which have been broadcast nationally in Canada. A traditional native flute player, he uses his artistry and communication skills to affirm native cultures through film, photography, music, writing and teaching.

He has lectured in schools, colleges and universities in Canada, and has also lectured and performed in Japan and the United Kingdom. In 1992 he received the Governor General's Medal for outstanding contributions to his fellow Canadians.

The NAAA awards are given by the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF), a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to deliver programs that provide the tools necessary for Aboriginal peoples, in particular youth, to achieve their potential.

The awards ceremony, which will feature performers including Buffy Sainte-Marie and Crystal Shwanda, will be hosted by Tinsel Corey of Twilight fame and Raul Trujillo, who appeared in Apocalypse.

Other award winners include Dr. Raoul J. McKay (Education), Tom Crane Bear (Culture, Heritage, and Spirituality) and Monica Pinette (Sport).

Recognized as a trail blazer in Canada for the women's modern pentathlon, Pinette competed in both the Athens and Beijing Olympics. In Athens, she was one of the first Canadian women to compete in the sport at an Olympic Games. She was also the only athlete of aboriginal descent to compete in Athens.

Through its education program, since 1985 the NAAF has awarded more than \$32 million in scholarships and bursaries to about 8,400 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students nationwide.

One of Beaton's more recent causes was the effort to stop Dump Site 41 in Simcoe County, Ontario, a landfill slated to be built on top



Danny Beaton protests against Dump Site 41, a landfill slated to be built on Alliston aquifer in Tiny Township, Ontario. Alliston aquifer is reputed to contain some of the purest water in the world. COPYRIGHT JIM E. SIMPSON

of Alliston Aquifer, reputed to contain some of the purest water in the world.

Opponents claim the landfill would contaminate not only Alliston Aquifer but also nearby Georgian Bay.

To raise awareness, Beaton led a five-day 120-kilometre "walk for water" from Tiny Township to Queen's Park in Toronto. He launched a Facebook petition against the proposed dump that received 9,000 signatures, and locals set up a peaceful blockade to

prevent construction from going ahead.

Last August, Simcoe County councillors voted 22-10 in favour of a one-year moratorium on the controversial landfill. The decision will be followed by a future vote to scrap the project entirely, according to the Council of Canadians' website.

"Water has been disrespected in so many ways over and over again, basically for profit," says Beaton. "That is life and that is negative, but there is still the positive force.

The corporations do not have to function for the negative—we can have trade and commerce in a positive way."

He adds that he strives to "bring native values and philosophy to main-stream society where there is a missing link towards solving problems."

"It is about coming together in unity and solving the environmental problems Western society created from greed or profit through mismanagement of Mother Earth."

Anti-racist groups prepare to counter neo-Nazi hate

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White pride demonstrations have taken place on this day in Calgary and Toronto in recent years, but observers say gatherings have not occurred in British Columbia for some time.

Anita Bromberg, National Director of Legal Affairs for B'nai Brith Canada, an organization that fights anti-Semitism, racism and bigotry, says members of the Aryan Guard in Ontario seem to have come together and set

up in B.C.

"It is unfortunate to see that this kind of open display of intolerance would come to the streets of any place in Canada," says Bromberg.

"To watch these guys march down the street if you were, for instance, a holocaust survivor—it's a pretty scary moment."

Bromberg follows and has studied the websites of groups such as the Aryan Guard and Storm Front, and

says "a quick perusal would suggest that their attitudes are unfortunately very hurtful if not hateful."

Aryan Guard founder Kyle McKee, who was arrested in Winnipeg last December, is charged with two counts of attempted murder in connection with the November bombing that police say targeted residents of a Calgary apartment.

March 21 has been recognized the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination since 1960 after the massacre of demonstrators demanding an end to apartheid in Sharpsville, South Africa.

It has only been since 2000 that neo-Nazi and white nationalist organizations have claimed March 21 as White Pride Worldwide Day against what they call multi-racial supremacy.

The white pride movement has been growing alongside a burgeoning music business worth over \$3.4 million, according to Interpol and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Ironically, although white power music has been driven underground due to bans throughout Europe, the United States has become a Mecca and haven for the industry due to First Amendment protections.

Power music song lyrics fan feelings of anger, blind rage, and violent tendencies and frequently include exhortations to kill.

"In their view they're a victimized group because as more and more immigrants come into Canada they see their white world fading away," says Bromberg.

Just last week a man who had been

suspended from his job at an Edmonton car dealership for making racial comments walked into his former place of work and opened fire, killing one man and seriously wounding another before turning the gun on himself.

The man, described by his co-workers as a white supremacist, had a swastika tattooed on his body, according to news reports.

The planned activities of neo-Nazi groups have spawned a country-wide network of racism-resistance groups who are firmly countering the aggression.

The Calgary-based One People's Project: Hate Has Consequences has declared on its website that it plans to confront the racist groups non-violently should they show up.

South of the border, a neo-Nazi group called the Illinois National Socialist Front is planning to march in Chicago on March 21. South Side Chicago Anti-Racist Action is calling for "other groups inside and outside of Chicago to stand with us against fascism" and join in a counter-rally to confront the group.

Bromberg supports the anti-racist groups' actions, saying the best way to counter white supremacists is to "shine a light on their activities."

"No one is denying them their pride. What we're denying them is the right to be intolerant, because there is no such right in Canada," she says.

"We've seen how a belief in the supremacy of the white race once led the world into chaos. We certainly don't want that intolerance here on our streets."

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