**GREN Minutes, June 5, 2017**

Christian Science Nursery School, Kitchener

1. **Textile Waste**—Guest speaker Sabine Weber

Sabine’s presentation will be posted on the GREN website shortly. Highlights included:

* 85% of used textiles end up in the landfill
* 64 new garments consumed per person per year (U.S. average), for an average of 82 pounds per person
* 15% is donated for recycling. 6.75% reused as clothes. 4.5% recycled and converted. 3% made into new fibers
* 50% is natural fibres, which require lots of water and land to produce. Biodegradation of these in the landfill produces methane and leachate
* 50% synthetic, which don’t biodegrade
* Many clothing retailers dump overstock into waste bins rather than donate
* Nova Scotia is the first province proposing to ban textiles from the landfill. Markham has banned textiles going to the landfill.
* Last fall, Ontario included textiles in their list of wastes to be addressed, for the first time

We discussed what GREN might do in this Region to reduce textile waste.

* Sabine reported that Waterloo Region’s waste management people have textile waste on their radar and maybe will do something in a few years. There’s no current budget or effort to address it.
* Markham’s progressive approach was discussed as useful, which involves a ban on textiles to the landfill as well as the municipality partnering with a few local charities which must agree to take not only clothing they can sell for reuse but textiles for recycling.
* We could encourage a direct approach to retailers and connect them with local companies which can use/reuse their textiles.
* We could use well-publicized clothes drives.

It was agreed to put textile waste on the GREN agenda as a discussion item ---to see whether GREN will take on this issue.

2. **Wellington Water Watchers**—Guest speaker Rob Case

* Rob noted that WWW is 10 years old, with a mandate to protect and celebrate water, do river clean up, etc.
* He recounted the up-and-down history of their fight with Nestle to protect groundwater supplies and to reduce/stop the use of bottled water. Nestle has water taking permits at Hillsborough, Aberfoyle and Elora.
* He noted that WWW has had recent success in getting the attention of the media (internationally as well as locally) and the province concerning Nestle’s permits to take water.
* It’s helpful that 6 Nations has become involved and demanded consultation.
* Now, the premier says need to look at regulations around groundwater taking for water bottling (good next step) and has put a moratorium on water-taking permits until the matter is sorted out.

The current WWW campaign is **Water for Life Not Profit**, asking Premier Wynne to 1) Say no to Nestle in Wellington County; 2) Phase out the bottled water industry in Ontario within 10 years; 3) Respect the duty to consult Indigenous communities; 4) Ensure public ownership and control of water.

For more information and to support this cause, go to [www.SayNoToNestle.ca](http://www.SayNoToNestle.ca)

3. **Updates**

**Concerned Citizens of Brant (CCOB**) - John J. reported that CCOB recently lost its appeal to protect the aquifer in Paris, ON, and are now appealing to the Minister, with the support of CELA. The main issue is atrazine contamination. GREN will write a letter in support of the appeal to the Minister. We will also put information on the GREN website to encourage people to write in support of the appeal. For more information, contact info@ccob.ca

**Note that CCOB is holding a fundraiser on Wednesday, June 14, 6:30-9:00, St. Paul’s United Church, 48 Broadway W., Paris, ON, featuring Maude Barlow discussing her new book *Boiling Point: Government Neglect, Corporation Abuse, and Canada’s Water Crisis.***

**Biosolids in Waterloo Region**---Bob Burtt has arranged for Kauro Yajima from the Region to speak about the plan for biosolids in the Region at the Sept. 28 GREN meeting.

**Yorklands Green Hub in Guelph**—Norah Chaloner hopes to attend a GREN meeting to discuss an initiative to acquire 70 acres of the former Ontario Reformatory “to establish a public ecology centre with a focus on stewardship and sustainability engagement for more resilient communities in the face of water, food and energy security as well as heritage appreciation.”

**Kitchener’s Urban Forest—**Check out the Kitchener website for information concerning the recent urban forest initiative in Kitchener.

**Greenbelt--**-Kevin Thomason reports that the province has introduced 4 strong plans for the greenbelt. Developers are not happy. However, there is no plan for immediate expansion of the greenbelt into the outer ring (which includes Waterloo). There will be a consultation with the province on such expansion this summer.

**FLAP (Fatal Light Awareness Program)** Kevin updated us on research about methods of preventing bird fatalities from running into windows. Toronto has some good new guidelines we could push here in Waterloo Region as regulations for new commercial buildings.