

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Lynda Collins
Sent: July-24-12 9:57 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Dear Sir:

I am very concerned about the possibility of peat mines in the Riverton/Gimli areas. The reference numbers of these mines include Sunterra's proposal #4254.1, Sun Gro's proposal #5548, Sun Gro's already issued license #2964, Berger's already issued license #2969 and Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941.

Peat mining has no place in these fragile areas near or around Lake Winnipeg. The long-term damage to our environment outweighs any short-term economic gain. These bogs can never be restored after the mining process and their benefits are forever lost. They provide important habitats for various species of plants and animals.

As a cottage owner on the lake and a lifelong Manitoban I feel we should be preserving these natural filtration areas to ensure the continued health of the lake and to help mitigate future effects of climate change.

Thank you for your consideration of this objection to the present and proposed peat mines in Manitoba.

Yours sincerely,

Lynda Collins

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Margaret Careter [redacted]@connects.net
Sent: July-22-12 5:53 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I realize that the Government of the Province of Manitoba is always in need of extra money to satisfy the needs of the constituents but it is also vitally important not to destroy what is one of the province's greatest assets - its environment. A license has already been given to one company for the mining of peat moss, please do not allow another firm to grab at our non-renewable resources. We have grandchildren and hope to soon have soon great grandchildren. What of their future????

Margaret Carter

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Margaret Kohm [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 10:33 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: mjnjng peat moss

IL I SUPPORT THE WILDERNESS COMMITTEE AND AM AGAINST PEAT-MINING IN MANITOBA. SWITCH
TO COMPOSTING AND SELL THE PRODUCT. M KOHM [REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Bill Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 7:03 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON); Premier (LEG)
Cc: mincon@leg.gov.mb.ca
Subject: Re: Peat Bog Mining - Environment Act Licences: 2969, 2964 & Proposal 5548.00

I'm a cottage owner on Highway #234. I'm opposed to the expansion of Peat mining in our province.

Allowing new Peat mining totally disregards the Province's own Save Lake Winnipeg Act, which states very clearly that a Moratorium "*applies despite any other provision of this Act and even if an application respecting a quarry permit or quarry lease was made before this section comes into force.*"

This law was made for a reason - please stick to the science behind cleaning up Lake Winnipeg. Don't violate this law for a short term gain of tax revenue - we'll more than pay for it in the long run with future generations having to clean up our mess. Peat bogs are helping a lake in trouble.

Please stop further development of the peat bogs.

Bill Martin
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Bill Preston [REDACTED]
Sent: July-22-12 3:57 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Re: Sunterra mines

Dear Sir,

Destruction of habitat for the sake of producing horticultural products does not seem to be wise, in my opinion, even if it does provide jobs. As I understand, some of the area concerned is prime moose habitat and, as I understand also, moose are in decline in some areas of the province. I am concerned, as well, on possible detrimental effects on Lake Winnipeg. I would most certainly support The Wilderness Committee in this regard.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

William B. Preston, Ph.D.

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Bergeson/ Cooke
Sent: July-24-12 5:05 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Attention Minister for Conservation and Water Stewardship:

Once again we find ourselves forced to take pen in hand writing to you regarding our concerns about peatmoss mining in Manitoba and its drastic affects on the health first of our Lake Winnipeg, of our natural wildlife including plant life and least not the affects this mining has on our enviroment !!!!!!!!!!!
We call your attention to the following proposals:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

We have also enclosed a previous attempt to gain your attention regarding this matter in Feb. 2012 recieving no response from any of the parties the letter was addressed to !!!!

February 3, 2012

Gord Mackintosh
Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
330 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Mr Mackintosh;

We are writing to you regarding peat moss mining in the province of Manitoba and specifically the current application from Sun Gro Horticulture Canada, described as the Hay Point Peat Mine Development before the Manitoba Conservation Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch.

We can not describe how shocked and angered we had become when made aware of recently approved licenses granted in 2011, the same year of the Save Lake Winnipeg Act in June 2011. We are anxious to hear your response to how the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch under your Ministry had approved these licenses while in direct contradiction of the very act that was placed to protect our environment. Now another application is before this same board and from our own research into the company's proposal and the reports submitted from environmental scientists, we fear that once again for the sake of progress in pursuit of the all mighty dollar, the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch will ignore the professional analysis of the proposal and approve this license.

It is repeatedly brought to the attention of this government the importance of preserving our forests, park lands, and freshwater especially Lake Winnipeg the most endangered great lake

in Canada. We are not professional environmentalists by any means but we have common sense. We began taking a serious look at what was happening to our natural resources after David Suzuki presented a documentary on the "Nature of Things" called "Save My Lake". Although the program was primarily about green algae contamination brought from the evaluated nitrogen and phosphorous deposits flowing into the lake from surrounding lands, the program also identified that nutrient reduction benefits come as result of marshland restoration. Is not the boggy area where peat moss is harvested similar to marshlands in respect to acting as a natural filter system and does the peat moss also provide a natural balance to the surrounding forest areas which work together to mitigate climate change. This natural system is not only important to the health of our lake, province of Manitoba, Canada, but also to the world's global climate regulation.

Further to the restoration efforts already in progress by the government of Manitoba, it appears to us that by allowing this type of mining, it is in fact counter productive in pursuit of restoring the health of our lake, plant life, natural filtering systems, wildlife habitants and the government's own target of "reducing greenhouse emissions". The mining of peat moss is not a renewable resource and can not be restored as it takes 100's of years to develop peat moss deposits like those the company intends to harvest.

We would like to draw your attention to an article published by the Winnipeg Free Press dated January 12, 2012 entitled "Peat mine proposal raises red flags". The article quotes Stan Struthers as saying first that the proposal was not "a slam dunk" and then states that the application review process is "rigorous". We strongly disagree with his comments believing that the application process is flawed when we have reviewed the 2011 Summary Reports of Berger Peat Moss Ltd. - Peat Mine, Located at Deer lake Bog, Jiffy Canada Inc. - Peat Mine, Poplar Creek Bog and Sun Gro Horticulture Canada Ltd. - Peat Mine, Ramsay Point Bog. There was an abundance of evidence provided to the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch stating the harmful effects of the proposed mining application from several government and environmental offices like the Aboriginal Relations Branch. There were recommendations for the licenses to be postponed until further environmental studies, government regulation and protections could be placed. From our understanding, the companies responded and the application process continued with licenses approved in spite of the reservations expressed. Other oddities are Chief Hudson stating he had not expressed environmental concerns but did express concerns regarding treaty rights and land use. Aren't treaty rights regarding land use an environmental concern of First Nations people? Who decided that the issues brought up by Chief Hudson were not an environmental issue as stated in the report? In reviewing the Summary Reports we were left wondering how these applications were presented to the general public, stakeholders and First Nation Communities. Were information meetings held that would provide both the pros and cons of these mining operations from both company representatives and environmentalists before licenses were issued? The whole process is not public friendly and we feel that the advertisement of intended proposals are not adequately publicized reaching people who are going to be dramatically affected by the decisions of the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch. We are aware that the branch had published the proposal currently in process in the Interlake Spectator and on their link under the Conservation of Manitoba web site. This is totally inadequate; we would not have known anything about this proposal without first being informed through the Free Press and subsequently through the Wilderness Committee. Being long time owners of cottage lots located in the Interlake region and a member of the Peguis First Nation, including a member of Manitoba Métis, we are very familiar with the area and the lack of media access. Education would be an important aspect to informing the public in these areas about how this mining impacts their environment and traditional lifestyle beyond the possibility of employment, development or promises and compromises like buffer zones along the trapping line. No amount of buffering zone is going to make up for the loss of animal and plant conservation. It is amusing that when the Conservation of Manitoba wanted to publicize the first come first serve cottage lot program, they had no difficulty in ensuring complete and successful advertising scheme reaching the entire province and a good portion of the rest of the country.

We strongly recommend that your office review the practices conducted by the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch as they fall short of their mission statement "that developments are regulated in a manner that protects the environment and public health, and sustains a high quality of life for present and future Manitobans". They have not carried out their mission by "minimizing environmental impact of development proposals".

In summary we strongly oppose any peat moss mining in Manitoba and especially in Provincial Parks. We request that consideration be given to our concerns and all peat moss mining applications be suspended, and existing licenses be revoked that were approved in the year 2011 to ensure proper protocol, procedures and long term impact studies have been met protecting our land.

Sincerely Yours

Blair and Eileen Cooke

Sheldon and Arlene Bergeson

Cc

Eric Reder, Wilderness Committee, Manitoba Tracey Braun, M.Sc. Director; Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch Darrell Ouimet; Environment Officer, Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch Eric Robinson, Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Greg Selinger, Premier Thomas Nevakshonoff, MLA Interlake

In Short

STOP MINING PEAT MOSS !!!!!!!

We have copied this second letter and have sent it to the Free Press Again !!!!

larry.kusch@freepress.mb.ca

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Briony Haig [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 7:10 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Dear Madames & Sirs,

I am a gardener and have used peat moss in the past, but now that I know how devastating it is to the environment, and particularly our beloved Lake Winnipeg, I no longer use it in my garden and urge that it NOT BE MINED, especially in Manitoba. I am referring to Sunterra proposal #4254.1,

Sun Gro proposal #5548, Sun Gro license #2964, Berger license #2969, & Jiff Canada's license #2941. Please, think bigger than dollars and the immediate moment. Our lake desperately needs peat to filter itself and furthermore, we really do not need to be releasing the massive amounts of carbon that peat mining releases. Global warming is real and disastrous. Please, stop peat mining in Manitoba, for the sake of the lake and for everyone's health.

Thank you,
Yours Sincerely,
Briony Haig (Ms.)

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: bruce & joan [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 2:01 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat Mining

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

I would like to register my objections to the proposed Peat-Mine in the Riverton Area. Lake Winnipeg is already under stress and any removal of its natural filtration systems would do even more harm. Short term gain from Peat-mining will affect the long term health of the lake, our children and grand children's future depends on decisions made by the government of today.

Regards Bruce & Joan Priem.

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of cam bush [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 5:36 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I'm writing along with many others to urge you to please halt the issuing of any further licenses for peat mining in and around Lake Winnipeg and environs. It's deeply hypocritical for a government that is ostensibly committed to environmental protection (especially one having recently enacted the Save Lake Winnipeg Act), to then allow this environmentally destructive and unnecessary practice to take place a stone's-throw from the Lake itself, and directly in the wake of the watershed.

I have been a lifelong NDP voter, and have arrived at a breaking point where I don't know that I'll be able to vote for the party at the provincial level any longer. This (and so many other recent initiatives of the Manitoba NDP) looks like nothing more or less than the policies of the Progressive Conservatives of old dressed in orange.

Please do the right thing.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Carolyn Coupland
Sent: July-22-12 8:57 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

As a property owner on this peninsula, I am very opposed to the further destruction of the peatlands and surrounding boreal forest. I am disturbed by the current strip mines in operation within the area that are causing irreparable damage to the ecosystem, and I am also disturbed when neither I nor my family can go into the lake because of the algae blooms. I have been a life long resident of Manitoba, and I grew up living on Lake Winnipeg. Please, do not allow this further destruction of a valuable environmental resource for modest economic gain. Do not allow the expansion of these peat mines.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Cathryn Nykvist [REDACTED]
Sent: July-22-12 5:05 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stopping the Expansion of Peat Extraction near Beaver Point

Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Officer
Conservation and Water Stewardship Department
Government of Manitoba

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

I am writing to express my grave concern for the possibility of the expansion of peat extraction near Beaver Point.

This proposed action is entirely at odds with the spirit and intent of the "SAVE LAKE WINNIPEG" Act. The removal of peat in this sensitive ecological area will only serve to escalate the decline of Lake Winnipeg. It will seriously impair the ability of this ecosystem to do its job which includes:

- Cleansing the air of carbon released into the atmosphere
- Absorbing excess storm water
- Reducing runoff and runoff turbulence
- Filtering undesirable nutrients and pollutants from entering waterways --

****Most specifically and of grave importance the 'at-risk' and vulnerable Lake Winnipeg**

I entreat you and your department to do everything in your power to remedy, and as far as possible, **REVERSE** the damages inflicted on this area by the extraction of resources, most particularly of peat. And certainly, and most urgently, to ensure -- in perpetuity -- that no expansion rights to this extraction are **EVER** approved. Once this resource is removed, the natural functioning of this ecosystem will be destroyed with irreparable harm to our province, our country and to our planet.

Certainly given the NDP government's claim of commitment to a "Green Plan", any short-term, short-sighted financial "gain" can in no way be seen as compensation for the eventual horrific impact on our vital ecosystems.

In conjunction with focused knowledge-gleaning on this issue, in particular on the importance of maintaining peat bogs as the "LUNGS" of the planet,

and how other jurisdictions have handled this,

I urge the government to diligently examine the particulars of the **Burns Bog in Metro Vancouver** which has been preserved since 2004 as an Ecological Conservancy Area.

Surely Manitoba, striving to be at the *forefront* of the "Green Movement" can at least match the foresight of a decision made by British Columbia almost a decade ago.

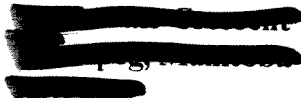
http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/parks_lscr/regionalparks/Pages/BurnsBog.aspx

With sincere appreciation for your attention, hard work and efforts to this startling and imperative matter of environmental concern and protection of our provincial resources.

Yours truly,

A very concerned citizen and resident of Manitoba,

Cathryn Nykvist

A large black rectangular redaction mark covering the signature area.

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Cheryl MacKenzie [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 7:13 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat mining

As usual, our government is considering selling out to large corporations that will impact the environment that so many people are trying to preserve. Our current NDP government is a wishy washy group of individuals who have no spine. Where is someone with integrity and common sense when we need someone to continue to protect our natural resources? Soon there will be no where in Manitoba where families can go to enjoy wilderness...everything living will be dead as the ecosystems will be destroyed. If Mr. Selinger and Mr. MacIntosh had residences in the affected areas, you can be sure nothing would be developed. Harper has cut environmental funding and now our spineless NDP government is continuing the tradition. If peat mining goes through, Manitoba will join the Canadian government in showing the world that we are not leaders in environmental sustainability. But does that really surprise anyone, considering the track record of our leaders?
C. Mackenzie

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Clay Baumung [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 2:47 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Lake Winnipeg is the most endangered great lake in Canada, struggling with disconcerting water quality issues. Peat bogs are a natural water filtration solution that improves the health of the lake. The recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects—located only a few hundred metres from the shores of Lake Winnipeg—to proceed.

Undisturbed boreal peat bogs store a vast amount of carbon, and the preservation of boreal peatlands is recognized as a globally important mechanism to mitigate climate change. It is not in the public interest to remove this essential planet protection tool.

Peatlands take centuries to form, and as such, are not considered a renewable resource. It is currently not possible to restore peat bogs to their original state after mining ends.

Allowing these mines will permanently alter the ecology of the area.

The lowland areas where peatbogs are found are important habitat for many rare and unique species, and are especially important for moose. Moose populations are declining and suffering due to a variety of causes, so additional moose habitat should not be disturbed.

Peat is mined for horticultural and garden use. In a vast majority of applications, peat can be substituted with another soil additive instead.

Peat is not an essential product, like most metals that are mined.

The peat industry only employs a small number of people in Manitoba, with very modest royalties and taxes collected for the peat by the Manitoba government. The long-term damage to our environment will be more costly than the short-term economic gain.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Kemp, Ruth

From: Eric Reder [eric@wildernesscommittee.org]
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2012 10:57 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON); Conservation and Water Stewardship, Minister; Premier
Cc: Gerrard, Jon (Liberal Caucus); Maguire, Larry (PC Caucus); Cullen, Cliff (PC Caucus)
Subject: Comments regarding Sunterra Horticulture peat mine license proposal, client file #4254.10

Wilderness Committee's comments on Sunterra Horticulture's peat mine proposal, client file #4254.10

July 25, 2012

This letter contains the comments from the Wilderness Committee on Sunterra Horticulture's peat mine proposal, client file #4254.10.

In a telephone conversation on the afternoon of July 24, staff at environmental licensing confirmed it would be acceptable to submit these comments in the morning of July 25.

The Wilderness Committee is Canada's and Manitoba's largest member-based and citizen-funded wilderness preservation organization. There are 60,000 members, supporters, and volunteers involved with the organization. In Manitoba, there are roughly 7,500 members, supporters, and volunteers. It is with the voices of all these Canadians and Manitobans that we submit these comments. Please consider the number of people involved with us when weighting the value of our concerns.

This letter does not constitute the entirety of the Wilderness Committee's comments on this proposal.

The Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of an environmental license for the Hay Point Peat Mine. The principal objections are

- that peat is a non-essential and replaceable product.
- the mine will cause a loss of habitat for species
- the impacts of peat mining on water
- the release of sequestered carbon
- lack of public access to Technical Advisory Committee comments ahead of public comment period

Peat is a Non-essential Product

Peat, as a product used in horticulture, is not essential. There are very few situations in which peat is the only product that will work to grow plants, with the obvious exception of a natural peat bog. In the vast majority of the uses for peat as a gardening supplement or soil conditioner, another product can be substituted with a product which has less impact on our environment. In comparison, for other products which are mined, such as nickel, there is no substitute. For a nickel mine, or other essential element, a case could be made for the loss of habitat, if enough of a similar habitat was set aside for permanent protection at the same time. Similarly, the socioeconomic reality might be that the financial benefit derived from a large ore body could support a case where the loss of habitat in one area was allowed if enough of a similar habitat was set aside at the same time. For peat, however, that is not the case. The product is not essential, and the socioeconomic benefits are paltry compared to the true cost of losing these peatlands. The Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of a license for this mine because of the fact that peat is a non-essential product.

Species

Rare and threatened species can be found in areas like the proposed peat mine location. Rare orchids, pitcher plants, and leopard frogs inhabit the surrounding peat bogs.

According to COSEWIC, the northern leopard frog is a species of special concern. That this species has plummeted to a level to warrant COSEWIC listing is a troubling indication of our destruction of natural environments. These peat bogs should be preserved as a precautionary safeguard, so populations of northern leopard frogs may thrive.

In peat mine licenses issued recently in Manitoba, the occurrence of rare plants has been handled by a questionable mitigation measure: transplant. This is not an acceptable way to manage rare and threatened species. In other environmental license granted recently, roads had to be rerouted to avoid rare plant species by a reasonable margin. This type of mitigation is the only acceptable method. Further, the water table in a peat mine is unnaturally controlled and changed. If water levels are allowed to be changed in an area of rare plants, the plants will be affected. Therefore, as a proper precautionary principle, any area that contains rare plants can not be mined, and the water table for that area can not be changed. To issue a license to either transplant a rare species, or affect the water table, would go against the precautionary principle.

Currently, the moose population is as low as it ever has been in southern Manitoba. The relatively intact Washow / Fisher peninsula is one of the last strongholds for moose. A chance for the moose population to recover will require undisturbed habitat. The clearing of several hundred more hectares of forest will be counterproductive. As in all species management regimes, the precautionary principle should be applied to moose recovery in Manitoba. The costs associated with moose monitoring and management will offset any financial benefit derived from operating a mine. Add to that the uncertain results of management regimes, and it becomes apparent that these mines should not proceed due to its impact on moose populations.

The Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of this license due to the detrimental impact this mine will have on species.

Water

Peat mining has a long term effect on water. All peatlands are wetlands. To mine peat, peat bogs are drained. New ditches and drainage patterns are instituted for the life of the mine. After a mine is decommissioned, these water drainage changes may not be entirely reversible. It is the position of the Wilderness Committee that drainage of wetlands over the life of the mine is an unnecessary and risky change to the local water table, water catchment capacity of the area, and precipitation and snowmelt drainage of this region. For a non-essential product such as peat, this is unacceptable.

In recently issued peat licenses, the water outflow was supposed to be at a pH of 6.5 or higher, a neutral standard. According to the peat mine proposal, the peat bogs at the mine site were measured at around pH 4. Requiring the outflow water from this mine site to be pH 6.5 would seem to change the surrounding peat bogs. This is a simple indication that the process of draining the mine into the surrounding peatlands will have an impact on an area greater than the mine site itself. This is unacceptable, and the Wilderness Committee objects to a mine here, where the surrounding peatlands will be impacted.

Tables included in the license proposal show that exceedingly high levels of aluminum, copper, iron, lead, silver, and zinc were found in water samples in these peat bogs. The Wilderness Committee objects to water containing unsafe levels of heavy metals being discharged into Lake Winnipeg, and therefore objects to the issuance of the license for this mine. The safer recourse would be to leave this localized water undisturbed.

None of the recently filed peat mine proposals have mentioned mercury. The licenses recently issued all have a schedule for testing water for different contaminants, including TSS, aluminum, iron, and lead, but nothing for mercury. There should be site testing for mercury, with results publicized before this license is even considered.

The process of mining peat bogs includes the stripping and cutting up of decomposing vegetation, which results in many small particles making their way into the water outflow. The increased sedimentation—or presence of suspended solids—will, without a doubt, increase turbidity in the receiving water—Lake Winnipeg. Other peat mine proposals state that settling sediment can potentially smother and kill fish eggs or larvae. Recently issued peat licenses have placed a limit of 30 mg of sediment (or total suspended solids, TSS) per liter in the outflow water. The total suspended solids for the receiving water bodies is far below this. In this proposal, it is listed as 7 mg/L for Lake Winnipeg, but other test areas on Lake Winnipeg found the TSS to be below the measurable limit of 5 mg/L. As such, allowing an outflow of 30 mg/L, which is four or more times the current sedimentation, will have a negative impact on the receiving water body. Therefore, the Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of a license for this mine, which will increase sedimentation in Lake Winnipeg.

Finally, as different departments within Manitoba Conservation have pointed out over the last year in comments regarding other new peat mine license applications, the government is in the midst of establishing a Wetlands Policy based upon public input collected by the Manitoba Water Council. This process has been quite involved and time-consuming. The Manitoba Water Council has submitted their recommendations to government already, but a final report or even a draft policy has not been publicized. As was suggested by the different Conservation departments, no licenses for peatlands should be issued until the Wetlands Policy is completed and publicly vetted.

Greenhouse Gas Release

The greatest threat of all from peat mining is the release of carbon into the atmosphere. For this reason alone, the Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of any license for the mining of peat in Manitoba.

The sequestration of carbon is universally accepted as the best mitigation measure to combat climate change. In the case of peat bogs, sequestering carbon is what they have been doing for thousands of years. While peat bogs may not sequester a huge amount annually, and eventually will reach a limit of the amount of carbon they can sequester, they are still locking up huge stores of carbon that they have accumulated over centuries.

There are three specific aspects of greenhouse gas release from peat mine operations: land-use change, harvesting and transportation, and the accelerated decomposition of a carbon-rich product in an aerobic environment. Contrary to the repeated statements written in the proposal for this peat mine and for the recently submitted proposals, the decomposition of peat, and the ensuing greenhouse gas release only happens if these companies mine the peat bogs, and so the mines must be responsible for these end-use emissions. Peat is an unusual substance in that it immediately becomes a carbon emitter once it is disturbed from its formative acidic, anaerobic environment.

For this mine proposal, the company is stating 161,650 tonnes CO₂ eq. for land-use changes, according to calculations established by Cleary et al.. This is 15% of the total greenhouse gas emissions for this mine, according to the proposal, which means the total CO₂ eq. for this mine is 1,077,667 tonnes. The expected life of the mine, including reclamation, is 44 years, so the annual emissions average out to 24,492 tonnes CO₂ eq.. For some unknown reason, the Manitoba government is not tracking and publishing source greenhouse gas emissions right now, but this figure of 24,492 tonnes CO₂ eq. annually would almost certainly put this mine into the top 50 emitters in Manitoba. Despite what the proposal repeatedly claims, this is a big deal. The Wilderness Committee objects to the issuance of a license for

this mine most strongly because of the unnecessary carbon footprint that it will leave.

This proposal, as well as others written recently by this engineering firm, claims there is mitigation measures it will be instituting for carbon release. These seem to be only draining and uncovering a certain amount of peat bog each year. This is not a mitigation measure, it is the currently accepted management practice for limiting the risk of fire in a peat mine area. The same amount of carbon will be released over the life of the product. It may only change the time frame in which it is released. The Wilderness Committee strongly objects to any assertion that there are mitigation measures for carbon release from peat bogs. The only way to mitigate carbon release from peat bogs is to not mine them.

The Manitoba government committed, in 2009 in changes to the Environment Act, to accounting for greenhouse gas emissions when considering Environment Act License proposals. Accordingly, the government must recognize that there are substantial and detrimental greenhouse gas releases from this peat mine proposal, and refuse issuing this license.

Technical Advisory Committee comments

This mine proposal, just like other environmental proposals, is a technical document, which touches on a variety of specialized fields of study. To properly understand and analyze the impacts of this proposal, one needs an in-depth understanding of that specific discipline. The average person does not have expertise in all of the fields of study touched on in a proposal. In fact, virtually no one will have in-depth knowledge of all of the different topics covered by an environmental proposal.

Every Manitoban employs a whole host of environmental experts, though, who do have the expertise to make informed comments about each area that is covered in an environmental proposal. The myriad departments and branches of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship are the specialists that every Manitoban pays to ensure their environment is being looked after.

The people who we, as Manitobans, employ to attend to our environmental protection are tasked with analyzing Environment Act License proposals as part of the Technical Advisory committee. Manitobans would have an opportunity to submit more informed comments of an environmental act license proposal if the advice of our experts was available to us during a public comment period.

The Wilderness Committee is formally requesting a 60-day public comment period for this license proposal be appropriately advertised and implemented after the complete Technical Advisory Committee comments are assembled and made available to the public.

When the Technical Advisory Committee Comments are available to the public the Wilderness Committee plans to make an additional formal submission to Environmental Licensing regarding this proposal.

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Eric Reder | Manitoba Campaign Director

Wilderness Committee | Canada's largest membership-based wilderness preservation organization

office: (204) 942-9292 | WildernessCommittee.org/Manitoba

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 7:40 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat mining by Sunterra

Hello Darrell,

I am totally opposed to peat mining by Sunterra near Lake Winnipeg.

It is bad enough that the Federal Government is trying to turn Canada into Chernobyl but for the Provincial Government to be doing interfering with peat which provides 'clean up' for the Lake when the Lake is in such trouble. This is truly despicable. Something has to be left for the next generation rather than a Chernobyl-like province.

Many thanks,
Cycelia Lazarowich

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Pruden Pruden [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 12:29 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: peat mining

Ideally, the leases in place should be cancelled. No further non-renewable peat should be removed. If the product is directed to gardeners and sold as soil amendment, we require a public education campaign about alternatives. I know we can't grow coconuts here, but surely some renewable resource can be developed. Sincerely, D. F. and V. W. Pruden
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Bigelow [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 10:02 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat mining Riverton.

Dear Sir,

I share the concerns of many others about the declining quality of the water in lake Winnipeg.

I live near Matlock.

I know of several people who have originated to me they and their dependents are no longer willing to swim in Lake Winnipeg.

With degradation of the quality of the water, unusual size and quantity of the pickeral, it is foolish to remove this wonderful abundance of peat.

If we don't know with certainty what the effects of the removal of peat will be, why are we taking such risks.

A few years ago a Canadian marine biologist/researcher determined that if a certain species is greatly reduced in numbers in a marine ecology, it is very likely its numbers will not return to its former state. He was presented with an award by a group in Japan I believe for his work.

We are removing resources without appreciating their true value and we are polluting our lake and rivers without concern for the long term harm of our actions.

This shouldn't be a vote based on ignorance or apathy. It requires real solutions based on real data.

Sincerely

Dan Bigelow

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Daniel Thorkelson [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 8:58 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

please stop mining peat in manitoba, it is unnecessary and hazardous to the delicate environment around lake winnipeg.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Darlene Ronald [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 4:00 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Dear Minister Mackintosh,

I am writing to voice my concern regarding existing and proposed peat mining occurring in our province:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941 Please do not let these projects go ahead as they will impact the surrounding environment and in particular, the already-in-jeopardy Lake Winnipeg.

Thank you,

Darlene Ronald

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Deborah Epps [REDACTED]
Sent: July-22-12 6:58 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship This letter is in regards to the proposed peat mines - Sunterra 4254.1, Sun Gro 5548,2964, Berger 2969,Jiffy Canada 2941.

I do not agree with the decision to strip thousands of hectares of boreal lowlands to harvest peat moss.

As Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship, it is your duty to protect our land and water. The long term devastation to our environment outweighs the short term economic gain. I question the action of peat mining in the lake Winnipeg region as the lake is one of the endangered lakes in Canada? Peat bogs are essential in maintaining healthy environment, habitats to plant and animals.

I will be following this issue closely and continue let my voice be heard.

Sincerely,
Deborah Epps
[REDACTED]

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Dexter Peters [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 10:55 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Lake Winnipeg is in a crisis and allowing profit greedy companies to rip nutrients from the surrounding areas will do little to help the struggling ecosystem. I, Dexter Peters, am opposed to the mining proposals put forward by Sunterra, Sun Gro, Berger and Jiffy Canada. Collectively they only employ a small number of Canadians and expanding will only add a small number of employees to their group. Peat, the product they produce can be easily substituted with an alternative additive instead which will do much less harm to Manitoba's fragile environment than the mining for peat. Global warming is a fact and allowing a company to expel vast amounts of Carbon into the air for short term profits is an irresponsible and harmful action to take against the one planet that is known to support life.

Please stop these companies from mining in an area that cannot handle any more environmental damage and in an area that does not want it.

-Dexter Peters

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Diane Lonergan
Sent: July-20-12 8:50 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

20 July 2012

Dear Minister:

RE: Peat Mining Proposals #5548 & 4254.1

This is a plea not to extend the existing, nor grant any new peat mining licenses - including Sun Gro proposal #5548 and Sunterra's proposal #4254.1.

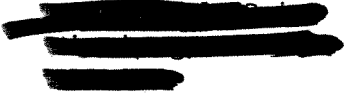
I cannot for the life of me understand why Manitoba would consider allowing any peat mining while committed by the Save Lake Winnipeg Act to restore water quality in the lake. What sense does it make for citizens of Winnipeg to be paying millions of dollars for new water treatment plants, while the government of the Province allows wetlands that clean the water to perish? While most of the problem potassium and nitrogen does not come from the same area as the peat mines, surely the purpose of the Act - agreed to by politicians of all persuasions - is to do everything possible on all fronts to preserve and improve the lake's water quality. Allowing massive peat-mining activity is the direct opposite of that intent.

The bi-partisan support for the Save Lake Winnipeg Act is a clear indication that the government's concern over water quality is one of the few issues that can be supported by all citizens of the province. For an NDP government now to speak out of the other side of its mouth by granting these extensive peat-mining licences would appear to me to be totally hypocritical.

There are no doubt other worthy reasons not to engage in peat-mining, like concerns about methane release and damage to boreal fauna. But on the issue of water quality alone, damaging wetlands on the scale proposed by these companies seems like utter folly. It would also show that the government has learned nothing from the destruction of wetlands elsewhere - for example, along the shores of the Red River.

If this government is really concerned about water quality the right thing to do is to deny these proposals.

Thank you for your attention to this letter,

Diane Lonergan


This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Don Dyck [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 3:09 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I write this letter to the government of Manitoba, the people I helped elect to strongly oppose the proposed peat mining near Lake Winnipeg. As you know, the mining of peat will have an effect not only on Lake Winnipeg but on the release of Carbon into the environment. The reason I have voted for you is that you talk about protecting the environment and Lake Winnipeg and now is your opportunity to 'walk the talk'. I reference the following proposals:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941 Thank you for your attention to this issue!
Sincerely
Don Dyck

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Don Freiling
Sent: July-20-12 3:00 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Lake Winnipeg is already in a very precarious state. Any environmentally damaging activity on or near the lake must be curtailed. The following peat mines must be stopped:

- Sunterra's proposal #4254.1
- Sun Gro's proposal #5548
- Sun Gro's already issued license #2964
- Berger's already issued license #2969
- Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

Please help save our lake!

Regards,
Don

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Donald Bouvier
Sent: July-23-12 10:36 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Attention regarding:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

I wish it to be know that my wife Barbara Bouvier and I, Donald Bouvier, both object to the continued mining of peat moss by the above companies.

I believe that the continuation of this mining near Lake Winnipeg will be harmful to the lake itself. Private and government levels have committed millions of dollars to help clean this freshwater body of water and this would be working in direct opposition to this effort. The funds gained by the government from these endeavors will not cover the future costs required to correct the problems they will aggravate additionally.

As it is my tax dollars going towards the cleanup of this body of water, I do not believe that peat moss mining should be allowed near Lake Winnipeg.

Thank you,
Don Bouvier
Barb Bouvier

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Dylan [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 11:42 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Please stop new peat moss plants.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at
wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of e corbin [REDACTED]
Sent: July-22-12 6:01 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I am not happy with this peat mining. Peat is there for a reason! Study up on this. Mother Nature knows best. What will you replace the peat with? We need this peat there as it acts as a filter. What about Lake Winnipeg? not a happy camper, e. corbin.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Eldy Birnie [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 1:07 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

With reference to :
Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

The development of Peat Mines will have a huge devastating effect on the entire ecosystem in and around the Lake Winnipeg area. This must not be allowed to go forward. Please consider the following prior to making your decision:

Lake Winnipeg is the most endangered great lake in Canada, struggling with disconcerting water quality issues. Peat bogs are a natural water filtration solution that improves the health of the lake. The recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects—located only a few hundred metres from the shores of Lake Winnipeg—to proceed.

Undisturbed boreal peat bogs store a vast amount of carbon, and the preservation of boreal peatlands is recognized as a globally important mechanism to mitigate climate change. It is not in the public interest to remove this essential planet protection tool.

Peatlands take centuries to form, and as such, are not considered a renewable resource. It is currently not possible to restore peat bogs to their original state after mining ends.

Allowing these mines will permanently alter the ecology of the area.

The lowland areas where peatbogs are found are important habitat for many rare and unique species, and are especially important for moose. Moose populations are declining and suffering due to a variety of causes, so additional moose habitat should not be disturbed.

Peat is mined for horticultural and garden use. In a vast majority of applications, peat can be substituted with another soil additive instead.

Peat is not an essential product, like most metals that are mined.

The peat industry only employs a small number of people in Manitoba, with very modest royalties and taxes collected for the peat by the Manitoba government. The long-term damage to our environment will be more costly than the short-term economic gain.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my opposition to Peat Mining.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Emily Burlock
Sent: July-20-12 10:32 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I have heard that there is a campaign to allow mining in Manitoba's Peat lands. If allowed, there will be tremendous detrimental effects on Lake Winnipeg as the Peat lands serve as a natural filter to the water. The bogs safely store a large amount of carbon and is an essential habitat many unique and endangered species living in that area. Preserving the bogs is far more profitable in the long term. Please fight to preserve these areas.

These are the reference numbers of the mines that I am referring too:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1
Sun Gro's proposal #5548
Sun Gro's already issued license #2964
Berger's already issued license #2969
Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

Thank you for you time and consideration,

Emily Burlock

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Fenella Temmerman
Sent: July-23-12 3:05 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

I am writing with concern regarding each of the proposals above, together with concern regarding the three licences already issued.

Lake Winnipeg is already endangered. How is it possible that you are granting licences to mine boreal lowlands to harvest peat moss. It is well known these peat bogs are not renewable and are important habitat for rare and unique species. Most important of all is that peat bogs are a natural water filtration for Lake Winnipeg and is actually banned through the "Save Winnipeg Act".

I ask you not to pass further licences and to revoke the existing ones.

Fenella Temmerman.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Geoff Senichenko
Sent: July-23-12 12:47 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Dear Minister for Conservation and Water Stewardship,

Please do not approve new peat mines in Manitoba. Specifically not the proposed ones that have officially applied, such as Sunterra's proposal #4254.1, Sun Gro's proposal #5548, Sun Gro's already issued license #2964, Berger's already issued license #2969, Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941. But also, do not approve any other peat mines in the future either. Peat mining is environmentally destructive to wetlands and species depending on them, but also take away the carbon storage capacity from the peatlands. Bogs also are very effective at filtering water and given the recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" that banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects and others near the shores of Lake Winnipeg to proceed.

Thank you,
Geoff Senichenko

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Gilbert Bernier [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 10:44 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

To the minister for conservation and water stewardship:

Sir, I can understand the apparent hurry being displayed by the peat industry get our province locked into longterm agreements to loot it of its peatlands, ahead of the rising awareness and rejection by Manitoba citizens. These peat bogs are a hugely important water filtration and at the same time a huge carbon sink. Ripping them out is to gut the water purifying role these play, especially for Lake Winnipeg, and at the same time initiating the release of vast amounts of greenhouse gases. What I can't understand is how eager your government, in particular your office, seems to be in moving these proposals through to signed agreements. The manner in which these proposals are channeled by your office appears seemingly to purposely thwart any real counter challenge. So what do the words 'Conservation' or 'Stewardship' mean in your title. In your stead sir, I wish to express and register my strong disagreement and disapproval of the already issued licences #2964, #2969, and #2941, and the proposals #4254.1 and #5548. Thank you. Gilbert Bernier.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Marilyn McClelland
Sent: July-20-12 3:35 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

To The Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship:

RE: Sunterra's proposal #4254.1; Sun Gro's proposal #5548; Sun Gro's already issued license #2964;

Berger's already issued license #2969; Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

Your title conveys you are a Steward of our water and work for Conservation, so as it is your job description I sincerely hope you will heed and act upon the letters received to protect the hundreds of hectares of Manitoba peatlands under treat.

How is it with the recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" in place (which bans harvesting of peat from it's shores) can any mining even be considered?
With the lake already in danger the peat is needed for filtration to keep the water pure.
Nature takes care of itself if man does not interfere!


It is also important habitat for our declining Moose population and other wildlife and has the added attraction of growing some unique flora.

While these benefits are extremely important, harvesting such vast areas of the peat removes the stored carbon that helps mitigate the impacts of climate change and this is a world wide problem.

Also, in most cases other additives can be used instead for soil enhancement eliminating the need for peat. To destroy such an important ecosystem for the very few employed people, the short term modest royalties and taxes just so a few greedy companies can get rich is short sighted and extremely irresponsible. Once it is gone that is it and all the benefits it provides along with it!

Please have the good sense to turn down any proposals and any further submissions to preserve the wild areas of Canada before they are all gone.

WITHOUT A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT THERE IS NO ECONOMY OR LIFE!!

Thank you for your time,
Marilyn McClelland


This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at
wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Marits luinburg [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 10:36 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

To whom it concerns and that would be the people who live at or on the lake.
Peat is an integral part of our ecosystem. It's a filter for toxins and aids in cleaning runoff to our lakes.

As a concerned citizen, I feel that this perpetual excising of what keeps our world in balance, for the sake of money, is a blatant wrong doing to future generations of humans. Stop selling have off our resources to companies that don't give a damn about environmental anything. And stop being fiscal pigs, As elected officials , the government and in particular the NDP has been anything but responsible. The deficit that they have created cannot and will not be saved by selling off natural resources.
Stop raping nature to pay for your stupidity.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Marlene Beaty
Sent: July-20-12 8:11 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Dear Minister,

I am writing to let you know my objection to the following proposed new peat mines near Lake Winnipeg, Sunterra's proposal #4254.1, SunGro's proposal #5548, SunGro's already issued license #2964, Berger's already issued license #2969, Jiffy Canada's already issued licence #2941.

My reasons for objecting are:

- 1 Lake Winnipeg is one of the most endangered great lakes in Canada at this time. We already have a problem with increased algae and other contaminants in Lake Winnipeg, which is causing decreased ability to use the lake for recreational purposes/tourism and commercial fishing, both sources of a healthy economy in Manitoba. The peat bogs are a natural filtration system that protect the lake from contaminants such as fertilizer and pesticides that will in time cause harm to the water quality as well as the ecology and the fish in the lake.
2. The peat bogs, if left undisturbed, contribute to the mitigation of climate change due to their unique ability to store carbon.
3. Peatlands take centuries to form and are not a renewable resource, at least not in our lifetime or even our children's.
4. The peatlands are an important habitat for many rare and unique species and are important for moose, whose populations are presently declining.
5. In most case, peat can be substituted with other soil additives, so it is not an essential product.
6. The economic gain from harvesting and job creation with peat mining is quite small and the damage to the environment very costly, especially in the long term.

Please do not allow these companies to mine for peat in these areas of our valuable public land.

Marlene Beaty

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Keith Advice [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 2:46 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT FOR STUFF WE DONT NEED. My dogs cant event go into lake winnipeg the polition and algae is so bad. you want to make it worse?

Lake Winnipeg is the most endangered great lake in Canada, struggling with disconcerting water quality issues. Peat bogs are a natural water filtration solution that improves the health of the lake. The recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects—located only a few hundred metres from the shores of Lake Winnipeg—to proceed.

Undisturbed boreal peat bogs store a vast amount of carbon, and the preservation of boreal peatlands is recognized as a globally important mechanism to mitigate climate change. It is not in the public interest to remove this essential planet protection tool.

Peatlands take centuries to form, and as such, are not considered a renewable resource. It is currently not possible to restore peat bogs to their original state after mining ends.

Allowing these mines will permanently alter the ecology of the area.

The lowland areas where peatbogs are found are important habitat for many rare and unique species, and are especially important for moose. Moose populations are declining and suffering due to a variety of causes, so additional moose habitat should not be disturbed.

Peat is mined for horticultural and garden use. In a vast majority of applications, peat can be substituted with another soil additive instead.

Peat is not an essential product, like most metals that are mined.

The peat industry only employs a small number of people in Manitoba, with very modest royalties and taxes collected for the peat by the Manitoba government. The long-term damage to our environment will be more costly than the short-term economic gain.

To ensure your letter gets official recognition, please include the following reference numbers for all of the new peat mines:

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Lee Treilhard
Sent: July-20-12 10:30 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I am so tired of going to bat for some wilderness area that is under attack, not from attacking insects or from forest fires but from faceless corporations eager to take something off, or out of, the ground with no regard whatsoever, for the many lives that may be affected & usually ended by their action. I am one individual who has a life to lead & work to do and yet busy though I am, I still have to take the time to write protest letters against corporate actions taken with local government sanction. Why mine for peat? We do not need said peat. It is quite possible to do without it--there are substitutes available. I find the action proposed quite unconscionable--our government has legislation in place to protect wildernesses so why not use them. Our governments are elected by us so why do individuals have to be called upon to leap into the breach to get these large bodies to see how destructive are their actions in mining peat in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg? We do not NEED the peat. There is little employment generated in mining the peat. There are animals, plants & insects that are already under threat of destruction that will be further endangered.

Thjese are only 3 reasons why I say " NO PEAT MINING IN THE AFORE MENTIONED AREA!"

I could list more but I think you'll have got my drift & I have other causes needing support right now.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

July 19, 2012

Mr. Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1A5

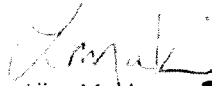
Re: Opposition to Sunterra Horticulture, Peat Mine Development
File 4254.10

Dear Sir:

The undersigned wish to register their opposition to the application made by Sunterra referenced above.

We oppose this development based upon environmental, safety and disruption consequences that are easily seen to occur as a result of this operation in a developing cottaging community along provincial highway 234.

We urge you to reject Sunterra's application in the best interests of Manitoba's environment and to ensure the avoidance of highly detrimental impacts on the people, communities and wildlife in the vicinity of this operation.



Liisa Maki



Bryan Gamble



Brian Shortt

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Lori Boast [REDACTED]
Sent: July-26-12 12:50 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I only saw my email today on this and had missed the deadline- I want an explanation as to why PUBLIC consultation is not more widely broadcast to offer concerned citizens a chance to voice their opinions on the future or THEIR natural resources. This is like someone coming a digging a pit in my backyard, and having only posted a notice for a day at a grocery store I may or may not attend. SHAME on you for not having in place a comprehensive method for all citizens to see and react to such overwhelming destruction of natural habitat.

Lake Winnipeg is the most endangered great lake in Canada, struggling with disconcerting water quality issues. Peat bogs are a natural water filtration solution that improves the health of the lake. The recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects—located only a few hundred metres from the shores of Lake Winnipeg—to proceed.

Undisturbed boreal peat bogs store a vast amount of carbon, and the preservation of boreal peatlands is recognized as a globally important mechanism to mitigate climate change. It is not in the public interest to remove this essential planet protection tool.

Peatlands take centuries to form, and as such, are not considered a renewable resource. It is currently not possible to restore peat bogs to their original state after mining ends.

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Peat is not an essential product, like most metals that are mined.

The peat industry only employs a small number of people in Manitoba, with very modest royalties and taxes collected for the peat by the Manitoba government. The long-term damage to our environment will be more costly than the short-term economic gain.

To ensure your letter gets official recognition, please include the following reference numbers for all of the new peat mines:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

I am absolutely ashamed to be Manitoban if the government I elect continues to let private interest destroy our remaining resources. When is too much too much? We do not Need Peat. No one will die or starve without Peat. The companies involved can evolve to provide other products. When will products cost what they actually cost? If the companies involved in the wholesale destruction of environment had to pay for the complete fixing of the destruction after they were done it would no longer be profitable. They would simply make the business choice to do something else. YOU make it profitable for them to destroy wilderness by not imposing strict environmental regulations on mining practices.

If you think it's OK then I propose you go and put you cabin right smack dab in the middle of this operation. If that's not palatable to you, then why is it OK where you can't see it everyday?

Out of site out of mind is no way to run a province (or a country)

I voted for you because I thought you were a better choice than the conservatives. I expect better than this, much better.

Lori Boast

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Schlichting, Marlies [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 12:06 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat Mines
Attachments: Sunterra Opposition letter.pdf

Hi Darrell,

I am a cottage owner at Leaside Beach by Pine Dock, MB and I am opposed to the Peat Mine expansion that is proposed for the area.

Marlies Schlichting,
Marlies Schlichting

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Mary Jane Eason [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 12:16 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

The Hon. Gord MacIntosh
Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship

Dear Gord:

Please put an end to the "peat rush" by banning all peat in Manitoba outright. Peat is a non renewable resource and its mining will release greenhouse gases accelerating climate change-- that alone should take priority over all other lucrative business plans. The delicate ecosystem that supports many vulnerable and species of plants and animals are being put at risk. That is no longer tenable. We must treasure our resources and protect them vigorously against developers whose only concern is profit. There can be no price tag put on the these resources. There are other solutions to peat and these need to be looked into. One of the obvious solutions is the composting of organic materials and compostable products to create soil for gardens and lawns.

There are other strong environmental reasons why peat mining should be banned and I am sure you have been made aware of them. Peat bogs protect our lakes especially Lake Winnipeg by providing a filtration system before water reaches the lakes. Can we pay for these services of nature? Of course we can't but they must be counted in the equation of developers vs conservation.

Please protect our peat and stop the mad rush to exploit this resource.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Eason
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Mike Zhou [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 6:49 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

People Need to Understand the meaning of having peatland on earth.

Before we can figure out how to live on other planet for everyone we should do what we can to protect the ONLY Planet that is keeping us ALIVE.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Norma Bergman [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 11:26 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Cc: Karen Paul
Subject: peat mining

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

I am writing to oppose any further peat mining around Lake Winnipeg. My concern is for preservation and development of wetlands. The worsening problem of serious pollution of Lake Winnipeg is complex, but consciousness is being raised, and is backed by unbiased research. It is clear that, in addition to eliminating the pollution at source, holding back run off and protecting naturally filtering wetlands will begin to reverse this tragedy.

Sincerely,

Norma Bergman and Bryan Toews, [REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: pwpaintandhammer@gmail.com on behalf of Paul Willems [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 8:28 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat Moss opposition...from owner of #1 Leaside Beach

Hello Darrell,

I'm writing to inform you of my strong opposition to the proposed peat moss mining in our area of Little Bullhead Bay and to the south along PR234.

After much searching around Manitoba we bought our cabin at Little Bullhead. With a young family of 1 year old and 6 year old we are (were?) excited that we will create a place of memories for them. One of the main reasons we bought in that location was its remote and pristine location.

We were thrilled to see the cottage lotteries happen as we felt that would bring economic growth to the area and possibility of services for new cottage owners. Its been encouraging watching this area develop.

We are devastated to hear that our pristine location is possibly going to be destroyed by the sound of machinery and the destruction of trees in our area. I simply don't understand why this same government would invite people to an area and then allow a small business to destroy it.

There is a small creek that runs into our bay that people who have been there a long time have said has entertained kids for generations. My children love to play around the creek and on the beach near by. What assurance do we have that this won't become contaminated?

Have you driven the road to Matheson Island? If so, you can attest that north of Beaver Creek PR234 gets narrower and narrower. Semi-Trucks on the road near Pine dock would be very dangerous. I have 7 years experience and over one million documented miles in a tractor trailer and I know for a fact that those drivers are motivated to run miles to make money. It is very worry some to think of sharing a 14' road with steep ditches with them.

I think the concerns of wildlife destruction is well expressed and documented, but I think business can play with those numbers and results to their own gain. BUT....how does Peat Moss mining justify itself economically compared to supporting the current cottagers that have moved and are moving in? Can you even use the term "short term gain with long term pain"?....is there gain? If I look back on this and last summer my family alone directly injected thousands of dollars into the local economy by buying gas, food, supplies. I'm not an economist, but it seems negligent for the government to let a **small** business affect this.

I strongly feel the government should not allow Peat Moss mining so close to the road in this area. If a compromise was possible my suggestion would be that the buffer from road to area being mined was greatly increased. Also, that the area proposed be greatly reduced. Truck traffic is limited and ENFORCED, also that truck speed limits are put at 50kph on any road north of Beaver Creek.

Thank you for reading and for the sake of generations of children to come I pray that the government will NOT allow Peat Moss mining in the area.

Sincerely,
Paul Willems

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Phil Geisel [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 4:01 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Stop Peat Mines near Lake Winnipeg!

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

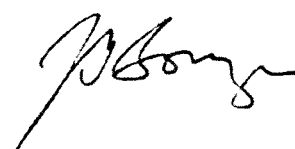

Mr. Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1A5

RE: Opposition to Sunterra Horticulture, Peat Mine Development
File: 4254.10

Dear Sir:

The undersigned wish to register their opposition to the application made by Sunterra.

Please add these names to all of the other citizens who oppose this application.

Printed Name	Address	Signature
Jean-Guy Bourgeois	[REDACTED]	
Kern Lebeck	[REDACTED]	

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Roewan Crowe [redacted]
Sent: July-25-12 10:37 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat Mining and Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act

Dear Darrell Ouimet,

It is with great concern that I am writing this email to you about the numerous peat mines proposed near Lake Winnipeg (Moose Lake Provincial Park, Moose Lake, Deer Lake, Little Deer Lake, Beaver Creek, Hecla, Riverton, Pine Dock area). I have lived in Manitoba for twelve years now and have come to love Lake Winnipeg and Manitoba's remarkable and important Boreal Forest. Both Lake Winnipeg and the Boreal Forest are amazing natural resources that need to be protected.

I was pleased to see that the Government of Manitoba has acknowledged the importance of Lake Winnipeg with Bill 46, The Save Lake Winnipeg Act. Given this commitment made by my government, to take seriously its role of steward to the natural resources of this province, I was shocked to see the proposed rapid expansion of peat mining which clearly contravenes Bill 46.

There is clear science demonstrating the impact of peat mining in this area and what this will do to Lake Winnipeg, the peat bogs, the boreal forest, the animals, etc. Not to mention the impact on the viability of the commercial fisheries and the recreational enjoyment by Manitobans. I recently purchased a lot from the Manitoba Government and built a cottage at Mill Creek Beaches. I am feeling rather set up now, thinking that instead of establishing cottage life and appreciation of Lake Winnipeg for Manitobans, the government set us up for a cash grab and will be letting mining activities ruin the forest and the lake. I hope this is not the case. The removal of the forest is clearly visible on the drive to the cottage on PR 234. Just months ago there was forest alongside the road. Now a thin stand of trees reveals the destruction of the forest and the peat mining that has started.

I urge you to do what you can to stop the peat mining at once and take seriously your role as steward to Lake Winnipeg and the Boreal Forest. I want to be able to share the pleasures of Lake Winnipeg and the Boreal Forest for years to come with the next generation of Manitobans. When the next generation asks me if I did anything to save Lake Winnipeg or the Boreal Forest, I will be able to say that I did what I could to save the lake and preserve the wildlife in our province.

Sincerely,

Roewan Crowe

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Alexis Stoymenoff
Sent: July-24-12 7:02 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

New peat mine proposals surrounding Lake Winnipeg should not be approved! Peat bogs are a unique and amazing resource in Manitoba: not only are they a super-effective carbon sink, they also help keep our air and water clean and healthy.

Please use your authority to deny these new proposals, before they destroy critical habitat and strip away a century's worth of peat that should be left alone:

Sunterra - proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro - proposal #5548

Sun Gro - license #2964

Berger - license #2969

Jiffy Canada - license #2941

Thanks for your attention!

Sincerely,

Alexis Stoymenoff

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of anders [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 3:05 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

I am writing to express my concern about allowing further expansion of non-renewable peat strip-mining of Manitoba's lowland boreal forest before fully exploring its longterm impacts on the environment.

Since I prefer to speak to those issues with which I have detailed technical knowledge, and my level of detailed awareness of these particular projects is low, let me explain my concerns:

I have yet to see a consistent precedent for an accounting structure that adequately considers the natural capital value of, for example, the value-added provided by the existing landscape, nor seen, for example, any project wherein a dollar value has been attributed to the ongoing GHG offsets (or moose habitat conservation or carbon capture or water filtering abilities or species conservation abilities) has shown up on either the "revenue" or "expenses" side of such projects.

While I recognize that people have jobs to do, and that resource extraction is an ongoing and necessary activity that "benefits" us all, it is very rare that the full impacts (and therefore real, tangible costs associated) have been fully investigated. It is often only much later, when it is too late, that the impacts are felt and we recognize that project budgets simply ignored the natural benefits of an untouched landscape to the flora, fauna and human inhabitants of the site - and end up providing little or no value to the people of Manitoba.

Further, I am fully aware that true inter-departmental cost-benefit analysis itself is systematically missing from almost all government projects, from the building of a highway overpass to the consolidation of community centres to the approval of a subdivision- and that without this cost benefit analysis, critical pieces of information are missing that might have otherwise altered the decision-making process for the better.

So, while I would appreciate gaining further knowledge of these projects before passing my own personal judgement as to their viability, I am nonetheless confident that I am right in being highly suspicious of any proposed large-scale resource extraction projects, sympathise with the concerns already expressed by others and would like to add voice to a growing number of people who are requesting further study and oversight.

Sincerely,
Anders Swanson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Here are the corresponding reference numbers:
Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Andrea Baudic [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 3:27 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Please consider disallowing peat mining in the north interlake region, in consideration of maintaining the natural filtration it offer to lake Winnipeg.
The preservation of boreal peatlands are globally important to help mitigate climate change.

Andrea Baudic

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Andreas Huber [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 1:56 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Andreas Huber, Block 1 Lot 1, Beaver Creek, Grindstone Provincial Recreation Park, Manitoba.

Attention: Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh,

My parents have owned a cottage at Beaver Creek since 1991. My wife and I have been going to this cottage for many years and we intend to keep it in the family. We are both very much against any new or expanded peat moss operations near Manitoba highway 234.

This would include the following proposals or licenses already issued:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

We cherish the nearby bog and would be quite sad and disappointed to see it be disturbed or damaged by peat mining. In addition to that bog, right next to our family cottage lot there is a stream that drains out of the proposed mine area. I fear these new mines will have a damaging impact on that stream.

If the bog is polluted, by mining, that pollution will be delivered right to our beach and will make any sort of pleasure swimming or water activities in front of our cottage impossible.

I very much fear the pollution from peat mining that will be delivered to my lakeside, which would take away most of our enjoyment of our little piece of exceptional Manitoba. Once that stream is damaged, it will never be fixable in my lifetime.

Minister Macintosh, please intervene and stop the new and expanded peat mine operations.

Best,
Andreas Huber.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Andy Sinats [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 10:10 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

To: Minister for Conservation and Water Stewardship

Re: Peat Mining Proposals and Licenses #4254.1, #5548, #2964, #2969, #2941

Dear Minister:

Please do not approve further mining of peat in Manitoba. The time scale, many centuries, of peat formation and the "environmental services" peat provides in carbon sequestration and water purification are totally beyond the scale of any tenures, or licenses, political careers, or indeed any of our lifetimes.

You can't put it back, and we can't allow long term damage this would cause.

Does it make any sense economically to on the one hand explore carbon capture and carbon sequestration by industrial means while at the same time liquidating natural processes for doing the same?

Expanding peat mining in Manitoba, or for that matter anywhere in Canada, does not stand the test of cost benefit, nor our national, nor our natural security.

Yours, truly
Andy Sinats

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Annette Gargol
Sent: July-23-12 11:22 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Minister Gord Mackintosh
Conservation and Water Stewardship

Dear Sir

I am very concerned about the ongoing consideration of peat mining near Lake Winnipeg. There is much evidence that such mining will cause permanent damage and negative environmental impact to this area which can never be reversed.

Please give the environment and Lake Winnipeg the protection it needs and ensure that the following proposals are not permitted and that the already permitted licenses are reconsidered:

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1
Sun Gro's proposal #5548
Sun Gro's already issued license #2964
Berger's already issued license #2969
Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

Thank you, A. Gargol

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Ann La Touche
[redacted]
Sent: July-20-12 2:54 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

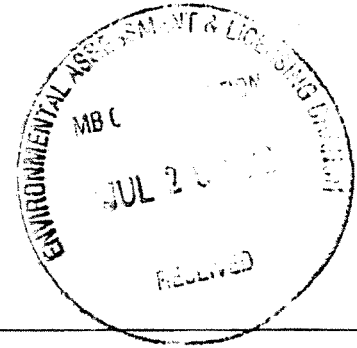
Hi Gord- I was at a public panel discussion recently about the withdrawal of federal funds to scientists and NGOs. The person who forwarded this to me seemed like a very thoughtful and erudite guy and should be taken seriously.

The feds are doing enough to piss around with the environment so we need to make sure we are part of the solution not the problem, right? (I'm assuming the info from the Wilderness Committe has been forwarded with this so I won't be adding anything redundant).

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

July 12, 2012

Anna and Allen Sutherland
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1A5

Attention: Mr. Darrell Ouimet

RE: Sunterra Horticulture Inc.
File: 4254.10

Dear Sir:

We are full time and permanent residents at Block 1, Lot 2 within Beaver Creek Provincial Park. We were appalled to read of Sunterra's plans to expand their operation at Beaver Point (Mill Creek). We are members of the Beaver Creek Cottagers' Association (BCCA) and are aware of the two appeals submitted against SunGro at Ramsay point (Beaver Creek) and that of Berger at Deer Lake (Little Deer Cottage Development). Now, Sunterra has filed application to double up on SunGro's operation at Ramsay Point and Berger's at Deer Lake. They also want to extend their operation right up past Pine Dock within the Bullhead Bog.

It is a known and proven fact that undisturbed peat will store thousands of tonnes of carbon, thus it acts as the lungs for the air we all breathe. The peat also acts as the kidneys for our already fragile Lake Winnipeg.

The Province of Manitoba passed the Save Lake Winnipeg Act in June of 2011. The spirit and intent of that law was to protect our Lake from further degradation. Now, these peat companies are going out of their way to find loopholes in a well-intentioned but, apparently, flawed piece of legislation.

The Ramsay Point Bog is less than 100 yards from our front door. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week from April to November we have to put up with dozens of semi-trailer trucks either going to or coming from Sunterra's existing operation at Mill Creek. Provincial Road #234 is under assault by these trucks during this time. The Department of Infrastructure and Transportation has graders working on the road nearly every day, barring rain. The road is in atrocious shape and that is not the fault of the grader operators. It must be a thankless job for them as each day brings them back to repair the road. The road is extremely dangerous and no matter how the proponents try to sugar coat it, the fact remains their operation is causing hundreds of thousands of tax dollars to be

thrown to the wind because of all the repeated maintenance. The Province lays down a dust control solution that would be sufficient on any other road for the entire season. Not here! The solution is only good until the next grading.

We retired to Beaver Creek and have built our dream home. We enjoy watching the forest right across PR 234 from our front door and seeing the wildlife. We enjoy watching the various species of songbirds and waterfowl that gather around our home as well as at Ranger Lake. When one observes the operation of Sunterra at Mill Creek one will immediately see that the forest has been strip-mined. These massive peat-harvesting machines vacuum everything in their wake. Should the Province grant this application all of our wilderness will be gone, the air will become more polluted and Lake Winnipeg will suffer more than it does now.

Based on the foregoing we wish to register our strong opposition to this application. Please add our opposition to those already received.

Yours truly,



Allen Sutherland



Anna Sutherland

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Anna Olson [REDACTED]
Sent: July-20-12 2:47 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Re: Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

I would like to add my voice to the protest that we should not be mining peat at this time. It's time to put ecological stewardship first. Peat sequesters carbon; peat is an essential water-absorbing part of our wetlands; and harvested peat releases carbon dioxide into the air, which adds to global warming and climate change. Anna Olson

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Arleen Kristofferson [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 7:04 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat mining

I hope that the NDP government of Manitoba will NOT allow further mining of peat moss.

I find it incredulous that a government that has campaigned on having the east side of Lake Winnipeg designated a Heritage site for it's boreal forests, would then turn around and allow the west side to be stripped for mining purposes.

What happens to the bird and animal habitats? What are the long term consequences to the health of Lake Winnipeg which is already in a precarious state.

Bad enough that the federal Conservative government has stripped so many environmental groups and projects (ELA) so the oil and gas companies can make even more money at the expense of the natural resources of Canada . The buck MUST STOP HERE!

If the government of Manitoba wants to show that it has the environmental future of Manitoba as part of it's mandate than they must say NO to future peat mining on Lake Winnipeg.

Sometimes the need for more business and more money does not override the need to protect our natural resources for our generation and generations to come.

JUST SAY NO...

Arleen Kristofferson
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Arthur Quanbury [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 8:50 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

To the: Minister for Conservation and Water Stewardship

I am against the mining of peat in the lake winnipeg area for hte following reasons:

Lake Winnipeg is the most endangered great lake in Canada, struggling with disconcerting water quality issues. Peat bogs are a natural water filtration solution that improves the health of the lake. The recently enacted "Save Lake Winnipeg Act" banned further peat quarry permits. We should not allow these projects—located only a few hundred metres from the shores of Lake Winnipeg—to proceed.

Undisturbed boreal peat bogs store a vast amount of carbon, and the preservation of boreal peatlands is recognized as a globally important mechanism to mitigate climate change. It is not in the public interest to remove this essential planet protection tool.

Peatlands take centuries to form, and as such, are not considered a renewable resource. It is currently not possible to restore peat bogs to their original state after mining ends. Allowing these mines will permanently alter the ecology of the area.

The lowland areas where peatbogs are found are important habitat for many rare and unique species, and are especially important for moose. Moose populations are declining and suffering due to a variety of causes, so additional moose habitat should not be disturbed.

Peat is mined for horticultural and garden use. In a vast majority of applications, peat can be substituted with another soil additive instead.

Peat is not an essential product, like most metals that are mined.

The peat industry only employs a small number of people in Manitoba, with very modest royalties and taxes collected for the peat by the Manitoba government. The long-term damage to our environment will be more costly than the short-term economic gain.

I am against the following proposals for peat mining.

Sunterra's proposal #4254.1

Sun Gro's proposal #5548

Sun Gro's already issued license #2964

Berger's already issued license #2969

Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: barbara mulock [REDACTED]
Sent: July-21-12 6:39 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat-bogs WFP July21/12

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

Re: "Peat-mining loophole..." Winnipeg Free Press July21, 2012

I live in south-east MB where there is also substantial mining in peat bogs, I urge you to consider the sustainable management of this resource, whereby we can all benefit as opposed to a few.

Barbara Mulock

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Guy Powell [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 7:55 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: peat mining

Dear Sir,

I am writing to support the position of the Wilderness Committee concerning peat mining. I am concerned about Lake Winnipeg and its environs in terms of the balance of nutrients and the wildlife habitats. The jobs created need not be at the long or short term expense of our beautiful Manitoba wilderness. Provincial Parks should be off limits to any mining or logging or operations detrimental to the environment.

Please ensure that any proposals pertaining to non-Park areas undergo rigorous environmental impact studies, approved by the Wilderness Committee, before considering mining the peat.

Yours Sincerely,
Barbara Powell

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: webmaster@wildernesscommittee.org on behalf of Bas Stevens [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 7:28 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Stop the Manitoba "Peat Rush"

Re: Sunterra's proposal #4254.1; Sun Gro's proposal #5548; Sun Gro's already issued license #2964; Berger's already issued license #2969; Jiffy Canada's already issued license #2941.

I am not in favor of any mining of peat and urge you to discontinue issuing permits as well as to recall the permits already issued.

Thank you.

This letter was created with the use of an online letter writing tool at wildernesscommittee.org

Mr. Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1A5

RE: Opposition to Sunterra Horticulture, Peat Mine Development
File: 4254.10

Dear Sir:

The undersigned wish to register their opposition to the application made by Sunterra.

Please add these names to all of the other citizens who oppose this application.

Printed Name	Address	Signature
Sheriff Mowat	[REDACTED]	<i>Sheriff Mowat</i>
DENIS MORRIS	[REDACTED]	<i>Denis Morris</i>
Mary Morris	[REDACTED]	<i>Mary Morris</i>
Garrett Heuchert	[REDACTED]	<i>Garrett Heuchert</i>

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Mr. Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1A5

RE: Opposition to Sunterra Horticulture, Peat Mine Development
File: 4254.10

Dear Sir:

The undersigned wish to register their opposition to the application made by Sunterra.

Please add these names to all of the other citizens who oppose this application.

Printed Name	Address	Signature
Tyler McLennan	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Christine McLennan	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Lori Doucette	[REDACTED]	L Doucette
Duane Doucette	[REDACTED]	D Doucette
Melody Seaton	[REDACTED]	M Seaton
Brian Seaton	[REDACTED]	B Seaton

Mr. Darrell Ouimet
Environmental Approvals Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1A5

RE: Opposition to Sunterra Horticulture, Peat Mine Development
File: 4254.10

Dear Sir:

The undersigned wish to register their opposition to the application made by Sunterra.

Please add these names to all of the other citizens who oppose this application:

Printed Name	Address	Signature
M. Henry	[REDACTED]	Marglene Henry
Lena Rourke	[REDACTED]	Lena Rourke
A-DANIELSON	[REDACTED]	A. Danielson
Nelson Danielson	[REDACTED]	Nelson Danielson
RAIPH Neumann	[REDACTED]	Ralph Neumann
Douglas Rourke	[REDACTED]	D. Rourke
LINDA Rourke	[REDACTED]	L. Rourke
Melanie LeBreton	[REDACTED]	M. LeBreton
Denny LeBreton	[REDACTED]	Denny LeBreton

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Bill Vollink [bvollink@fivestatesoils.com]
Sent: July-24-12 10:25 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Comment on New Peat Bog Leases in Manitoba

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

I am Bill Vollink with Five State Soils located in Inver Grove Heights, MN. Our company distributes peat throughout the US (I have customers from California to New Jersey) produced by Sunterra Horticulture in Manitoba. We sell roughly 500 loads of Manitoba peat worth about \$3 million annually. The greenhouse industry in the US values Manitoba peat due to its high quality, fibrous characteristics. If this quality peat is no longer available from Manitoba, the greenhouse industry will be forced to source its product from other provinces or from Europe.

I ask that you please approve the new peat lease applications in Manitoba. Manitoba peat has been a core part of our horticultural soil product business and we hope it continues to be a key part of our business for many years to come.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Bill Vollink
Five State Soils
5500 Blaine Ave S
Inver Grove Heights, MN
651-408-3564

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Dave Tindall [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 7:24 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: FW: Peat Moss Lease applications

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the issues revolving around the lease applications for peat moss harvesters.

As an accountant in Manitoba, I can directly see the positive impact that this industry has in the northern Interlake region. The industry creates many jobs during the operating season, in an area that suffers from high unemployment and has few options for workers. The industry also contributes to the spin-off business such the trucking industry, mechanics, hardware stores, petroleum supplies, heavy equipment producers, etc.

The businesses are very profitable and pay large amounts of provincial corporate taxes, in addition to payroll taxes and provincial sales tax, as well as the personal income tax that some of these people would not be paying otherwise.

The land that is being considered for peat moss farming is not suitable for many other uses, so it would make sense to utilize it for the short period that it is able to be used. The land is restored once it has been depleted of it's peat resource, having a minimal effect on the environment.

If the lease application uncertainty continues, these businesses may have to look outside Manitoba to continue operating. The Manitoba economy has been praised for it's diversity in the past few years. Losing an industry as profitable as the peat moss industry would only create a black eye for the province as it moves forward.

I would encourage the government to seriously consider what the long term effects of losing this industry would have on the economy of the region, before making a final decision.

Yours truly,
David Tindall C.A.

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: DF Call [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 1:45 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Sunterra lease application

I support Sunterra's lease application. They are a small family operation that cares about the health of the bog, and as owners work on the bog. I know that some of the large peat companies have owners and upper management that have little knowledge or involvement directly with the bogs. For the larger peat companies it's simply a business.

DF Call

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: John Spaulding [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 10:17 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Manitoba Peat Letter of Support

Mr. Ouimet,

I would like to voice my support for Sunterra and other Peat Companies operating in Manitoba.

Please allow them to keep operating.

I speak from the perspective of a transportation supplier. My company moves containers of finished product from Sunterra to various destinations in the states. The process is that Sunterra tenders a load to Mode Transportation, we then reserve a container from the CP railway in Winnipeg, then dispatch a local driver for pickup, then prepare the customs and billing for furtherance. There are many "stakeholders" involved. The truck drivers in Winnipeg, the railway workers on the CP in Winnipeg and along the way to the border, customs workers who process the required paperwork.

Also effected by the health of the Winnipeg economy are other shippers and receivers in Manitoba who transport their products via railroad container. The peat producers keep a balance to the Winnipeg operation by providing demand for the containers which are made empty from deliveries. This balance helps the CP keep their rates down for the inbound products. Without the few shippers in Winnipeg to use the empties, the empty containers would need to move without loads to other CP yards, requiring the CP to include the extra cost for their remaining customers in Winnipeg and surrounding areas.

Last, although I'm not an environmentalist and am not educationally qualified to address that issue, I can state that from what I've read, the peat harvesting method used by Sunterra is sustainable and friendly to the long term health of the Manitoba environment.

John Spaulding | [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Larry Skwarek [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 10:41 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: FW: Peat Moss Production in Manitoba

My name is Larry Skwarek and I work for Toromont Cat in Winnipeg ,Manitoba.

Sunterra Horticulture specifically and many other Peat Moss producers are customers of ours in Manitoba.

Sunterra has been a customer of ours for about 10 years when they started into business.

We have sold them Wheel Loaders and have repaired/serviced the same products for them.

They have been very environmentally conscious,even having our lube truck travel from Winnipeg to service the units and bring the waste oil back to Winnipeg for proper disposal(which we burn to heat our shop) which is a service we provide.

We have approximately 175 Employees in Manitoba that have benefitted from working with the Peat Moss producers here.

When Sunterra started I remember the mayor of Riverton being thrilled because of the amount of employment the plant was going to produce in an otherwise employment challenged part of the Province.

The freight component of producing/selling Peat Moss has been of hugh benefit to Low- Bed,Freighting entities.

Is it not the object of government to take ones natural resources and develop them in sustainable ways while being environmentally responsible for the good of all Manitobans?nderstand the moss in the Riverton area is of very high quality and sote after in the US and Canada

If we do not develop our resources,business' will simply move to other provinces without moratorium on production and the economic benefits will be lost to us.

The industry has been in business in Manitoba for over 40 years, do we have any proof that production has caused an environmental problems in its existence?Not to my knowledge other then the occasional fire,which also occurs naturally by spontaneous combustion.

We feel that the benefits from Peat Moss production far out weigh any minor negatives.

Yours truly

Larry Skwarek/Mangement And Staff Of Toromont Cat,Toromont Lift,Toromont Ag,Battlefield Rentals,Sitech Technology Products.

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Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Mike Bowman ([REDACTED])
Sent: July-23-12 11:54 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Support of Sunterra Horticulture

Darrell,

My name is Mike Bowman with Gerten Greenhouses in Inver Grove Heights, MN (USA). I am writing to show my support of Sunterra Horticulture.

Gertens distributed approx. 500 truck loads of peat moss last year into the USA. Revenue for those loads is about \$3 million US dollars. I, as well as my customers, use Sunterra based on the quality of the material. If Sunterra doesn't operate in MB the peat moss will come from other provinces or, possibly, from the European market.

I am hopeful I will be able to use and distribute Sunterra's peat moss for the next 20 plus years. Please approve lease applications in MB.

Best Regards,
Mike

--
Mike Bowman
Gerten Greenhouses

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Rick's Electric [REDACTED]
Sent: July-24-12 4:55 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: sunterra leases

-just a short note to say that we fully support Sunterra Horticulture in their lease application to expand their current operation
-lets not let the "tree huggers" who know nothing about the area (economics and enviroment) force decisions that make no sense

Rick Eyolfson CET

On behalf of the Riverton & District Chamber of Commerce, I wish to express our support for Sunterra's application to obtain an environmental license in the Interlake.

Over the past 10 years, Sunterra has become a very vital part of the communities of Riverton, Arborg and Pine Dock. Their contributions to wages, retail purchases and sub-trades in the area are very significant.

Sunterra's business practices are commendable. They shop local, hire local and are very conscious of the environment.

The negative reactions coming from the cottage developments are due to lack of information. We suggest an informational meeting with the cottage associations to clarify the environmental impact of this industry. There is little to no impact on Lake Winnipeg. When the industry is finished mining the area, it is put back to a natural state which may be in the form of a small lake or swamp. In our view this would further enhance the local eco system and help sustain the wildlife and fishery in the area.

The only visual physical impact to the local area would be due to higher road traffic. We believe it would be responsible to look at road improvements to satisfy this concern and improve road safety for all traffic.

Sincerely

Susan Eyolfson

Chair, Riverton & District Chamber of Commerce

c/o Box 538

Riverton, MB

ROC OAO



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF BIFROST

329 River Rd.
P.O. Box 70
Arborg, MB R0C 0A0

Phone: (204) 376-2391

Fax: (204) 376-2742

Email: bifrost@mts.net

July 24, 2012

Darrell Ouimet
Environment Officer
Manitoba Conservation & Water Stewardship

Via Email: Darrell.Ouimet@gov.mb.ca

Dear Mr. Ouimet,

Please accept this letter as notice of our support for Sunterra Horticulture (Canada) Inc. with respect to the development and expansion of their lease.

It is expected that this development will increase employment opportunities and will provide new opportunities for existing businesses. The huge economic boost that will result is invaluable to all Interlake communities.

Sunterra has been operating in our area for ten years. During this time they have been systematically monitored and there have been no problems. They have proven themselves to be good corporate citizens; a pattern I would expect will continue in the future.

The continued operation of Sunterra Horticulture (Canada) Inc. will be positive for not only the Rural Municipality of Bifrost but for the entire area.

Respectfully yours,

Harold Foster
Reeve

HF/cj

Cc Honourable Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Conservation & Water Stewardship
Honourable Peter Bjornson, Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training & Trade
MLA Tom Nevakshonoff, Interlake
Town Of Arborg
Village of Riverton



July 23, 2012

Via Email

MAYOR
Lynn Greenberg
Chair of Community Services

DEPUTY MAYOR
Peter Peiluck
Chair of Public Safety

COUNCILLOR
Danny Luprypa
Chair of Public Works

COUNCILLOR
Richard Ferrowski
Chair of Economic Development
& Planning

COUNCILLOR
Luke Zaborosky
Chair of Finance & Administration

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER
Joann King

MANAGER OF FINANCE
Susie Erickson-Jakobson

MANAGER OF PUBLIC WORKS &
UTILITY OPERATIONS
Darcy Hjelmeland

MANAGER OF RECREATION
& LEISURE SERVICES
Phyllis Zaborosky

Province of Manitoba
Attn: Darrell Ouimet
darrell.ouimet@gov.mb.ca

RE: Sunterra's Application for Environmental License

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Municipality of Gimli for Sunterra's application for an environmental license for its leases in the Interlake.

Sunterra has been operating a peat moss harvesting company near Pine Dock on PR 234 for almost a decade. In that time, Sunterra has a spotless environmental and business record.

Sunterra's Interlake/Gimli vendors are numerous and have all been critical to their past and hopefully future success. Sunterra is vital to sustainable development in the Interlake/Gimli. Sunterra's employees and the employees of their vendors that live in the Interlake deserve viable economic opportunities. Sunterra should be able to continue to operate in a sustainable manner, as it has done for nearly 10 years in the Interlake.

Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick and PEI have managed to balance the need for development with environmental issues, and we believe Manitoba is capable of doing the same.

Yours Truly,

Joann King
Chief Administrative Officer
Rural Municipality of Gimli

JK/jl

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF GIMLI

Box 1246, 62-Second Ave, Gimli, MB R0C 1B0
Phone: (204) 642-6650 Fax: (204) 642-6660 Email: gimli@rmgimli.com Web: www.gimli.ca

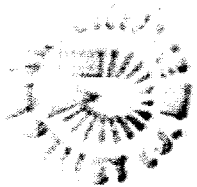
Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Rob Anderson ([REDACTED])
Sent: July-24-12 2:27 PM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Sunterra lease application

Hi Darrell, I was made aware of the recent lease renewal process that Sunterra has been asked to apply for. Our company supplies many of the Peatmoss operations with wooden shipping pallets and it would be a substantial loss of business if this segment of our local economy was forced to move out of province.

Sunterra in particular has been a good customer of ours and helps ensure we can continue to offer employment to our staff. I hope that in considering their lease renewal that amply consideration is given to the suppliers of this company as we employ a multitude of people in various industries.

Sincerely,



[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Rob Anderson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

From: Rob Broesky [REDACTED]
Sent: July-23-12 10:45 AM
To: Ouimet, Darrell (CON)
Subject: Peat companies in Manitoba

Mr. Ouimet;

I am emailing to express a great concern for some of the regulations the Manitoba government is pursuing in regards to our peat companies in Manitoba. The uncertainty surrounding the peat companies as to allow them to operate would have tremendous economic impact on our province. Why should we be the province handing this type of positive business over to other provinces to profit? From our stand-point, we need this business to survive in our harsh economic climate. Peat is one of the most consistent forms of export over the highway throughout the year. I would ask that you would try and find ways to keep these businesses operational instead of finding ways to shut them down. Our business depends on it.

I thank you for your consideration with this matter.

Best Regards,

Rob Broesky
General Freight Division-Manager

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



July 24, 2012

Darrel Ouimet
Provincial Environmental Officer
darrel.ouimet@gov.mb.ca

Dear Sir:

The Council of the Town of Arborg would like to provide this letter of support with respect to an application by **Sunterra Horticulture (Canada) Incorporated** for an *Environment Act Licence* to expand its operation to the Bullhead, Little Deer Lake and Ramsay Point bogs.

Sunterra has proven to be a valuable asset to the north Interlake by creating employment and opportunities for local businesses.

This company has successfully operated in the Interlake Region for approximately 10 years, and Council is confident Sunterra will comply with all environmental requirements associated with expansion of its operations.

Sincerely,

J. Randolph Sigurdson, Mayor
Town of Arborg

RS/lb

cc. Honourable Gord Mackintosh
Tom Nevakshonoff, MLA for Interlake
Honourable Peter Bjornson

miconws@leg.gov.mb.ca
Tom.Nevakshonoff@leg.gov.mb.ca
minett@leg.gov.mb.ca

Mayor:
Randy Sigurdson

Chief Administrative Officer:
Lorraine Bardarson

Councillors:
Vivian Leduchowski
Susan Medwid
Erica Olafson
Rob Thorsteinson

Office: 204-376-2647 Fax: 204-376-5379

Town of Arborg
Box 159, Arborg, Manitoba R0C 0A0
Email: townofarborg@mymis.net
www.townofarborg.com

July 23, 2012

Darrell Ouimet
Provincial Environmental Officer
Darrell.ouimet@gov.mb.ca

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Council of the Village of Riverton, I strongly support a recent application by Sunterra Horticulture (Canada) Incorporated for an Environment Act licence to expand its operation to the Bullhead, Little Deer Lake and Ramsay Point bogs. Without the proposed development Sunterra will have to drastically reduce its work force and investment within Manitoba and seek out resources in other Provinces.

Sunterra has operated a "spotless environmental" and business record in our Interlake Region for around 10 years now and we are proud to support them as they continue to make our Region a better place to live.

The Riverton and Interlake vendors are numerous and have been critical to the operation in the past and we hope to see this continue in the future, along with the other Peat companies like Sun Gro Horticulture which our Region needs to provide jobs that will benefit the growth of our Communities.

The Peat companies we have dealings with all value the Interlake and are committed to its sustainable development. Our Community understands that even if all pending leases to harvest Peat are granted, something which is not being considered, they would still only comprise less than 0.1% of the Interlake. Our people and businesses in the Interlake Region deserve real economic opportunities.

There has to be a balance. The industry should continue to operate in a sustainable manner as it has done for over 40 years in Manitoba. The Government should ensure that legitimate environmental issues are adequately addressed. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick and P.E.I. have managed to balance the need for development with the environmental issues, and we believe Manitoba is capable of doing the same.

Yours truly,

Colin Bjarnason, Mayor
Village of Riverton

Cc Honourable Gord Mackintosh minconws@leg.gov.mb.ca
Cc Honourable Peter Bjornson minett@leg.gov.mb.ca

Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation
Box 159, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0
204.376.5742; abcdc@mymts.net

August 27, 2012

The Honourable Gord Mackintosh
Minister of Conservation & Water Stewardship
Room 330 – 450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

E-mail to: minconws@leg.gov.mb.ca

Dear Mr. Mackintosh:

This letter is in support of the application of Sunterra Horticulture (Canada) Inc. in their request to develop and expand their peat moss operation in the Hecla area.

Members of the Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation have carefully reviewed Sunterra's application and are impressed and pleased with their attention to and concern for environmental factors, the aesthetics of the operation (shielding it from view) and their history of operating in a conscientious manner.

We are surprised that considering their well-thought out plan, their positive track record and the significant economic impacts and spin-offs for Manitoba and the Bifrost area, they have not yet received the approvals they require.

We strongly urge that Sunterra be allowed to proceed with their proposed development as soon as possible.

Your sincerely,

James Johnson, President
Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation

cc. Tom Nevakshonoff, MLA Interlake
Honourable Peter Bjornson, Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training & Trade
Darrell Ouimet, Manitoba Conservation & Water Stewardship
Town of Arborg
R.M. of Bifrost



Arborg and District Chamber of Commerce

Box 415
Arborg, MB
R0C 0A0

Website: www.townofarborg.com

July 23, 2012

Garreil Ouimet

On behalf of the Arborg & District Chamber of Commerce, I am writing in support of the application put forward by Sunterra Horticulture to harvest the peat moss from the bogs, north of Riverton, that they have held for many years.

This company has demonstrated that they are a valuable asset to the North Interlake region. Much of the operating expenses this company incurs is spent in the Arborg area including fuel, leases on the equipment, repairs, and building supplies. This is in addition to the 25 plus jobs this company employs each year. Sunterra Horticulture has worked closely with Bison Transport, Steve's Trucking and Big Freight to truck the peat to markets throughout Canada and the United States.

We have met with Sunterra to discuss the process from mulching and draining the bog to building the retention pond, harvesting the peat, monitoring the ph. levels before releasing the water from the pond and restoration of the site back to the land to restore the bog. We are comfortable that Sunterra and the Provincial Government are working closely together to protect the environment for years to come. The track record that Sunterra Horticulture has with Manitoba Conservation speaks loudly as a model for the many other companies that also want to start up in this region.

We understand that several special interest groups have expressed concern about the environment and are trying to spread fear about peat mining having an influence on the health of Lake Winnipeg. They seldom take the time to research the whole story and get the facts on all the contributing factors affecting the lake. It is easier to start a petition and ask everyone to get on board.

In closing, we support Sunterra and the many other peat companies that hold leases on this land north of Riverton and ask the province to approve Sunterra's application.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Johnston".

Don Johnston Chairman

Arborg & District Chamber of Commerce