



RAISING AWARENESS FOR THE BEAVER LAKE CREE



With concerns over global warming and controversies over U.S. imports of Canada's tar sands oil escalating, **Jack Woodward** took to the road in March to raise awareness about one court action that stands a chance at making a difference in the expansion of the tar sands industries.

Starting in Venice, California at the G2 Gallery, Jack presented alongside Ron Lameman of Beaver Lake Cree Nation (BLCN) and photographer Garth Lenz. The March 19th event, titled **Truth, Trials and Tar Sands: Beaver Lake Cree Nation's Fight to Save the Boreal** took place in conjunction with a large exhibition of photographs by Lenz. The audience spent an afternoon hearing about the effects on First Nation's land and way of life, and how the legal action launched by BLCN in 2008 is proceeding.

...continued on page 2

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 7 – 8, Speaking Event: **Jay Nelson** will speak at the Aboriginal Law Update 2011 at the Renaissance Hotel Harbourside in Vancouver. Details on our website.

Taseko resubmits Prosperity

A mere three months after the Government of Canada's official rejection of the Taseko Mines Ltd. Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine proposal, Taseko has announced that it has submitted a revised application. In particular, Taseko states that its revised proposal will preserve Fish Lake (Teztan Biny). The original plans to destroy Fish Lake and much of the surrounding watershed – lands and waters of profound cultural and sacred significance to the Tsilhqot'in people – prompted universal opposition to the project from the Tsilhqot'in Nation and First Nations across Canada.

Taseko consistently presented the alternative it chose in its original application (Mine Development Plan Option 3, using Fish Lake as a waste storage area) as providing the "lowest environmental risk" and as being the "most environmentally responsible" of the three technically feasible options for waste and tailings storage. By Taseko's own criteria, it now appears to be putting forward a less environmentally responsible option, with greater environmental risks, than the proposal already rejected by an independent federal panel and by the federal cabinet.



Notably, the revised submission does not even purport to address the significant impacts on First Nations' rights found by the Panel and concedes that these impacts are unchanged from its previous proposal. ❖



Dr. Andrew Weaver, Raffi and Jack Woodward

Less than a week later, Jack took to Salt Spring Island's ArtSpring Theatre stage with climate scientist Dr. Andrew Weaver and children's singer and activist Raffi. The three islanders presented **Climate Change, Kids & Caribou: How living systems in our connected world are endangered – and what we need to do about it.** The March 25th discussion focused on the challenges of global warming, habitat destruction and our children's futures – with a view to how people can actively take part in solutions. In particular, Jack provided details on the legal efforts to save the woodland caribou and how preventing habitat destruction can stop the tar sands from wreaking any further havoc.

Both educational events were sponsored by RAVEN, the non-profit charitable organization that supports the Beaver Lake Cree Nation's legal action. www.ravenrust.com ❖

Skookum Racers join the TC10k!



If you look hard in the throng that will take to the road Sunday, May 1st for the Times-Colonist annual 10K run, you will see the W&Co team! Already in training are Micki Keenlside, Heather Mahoney, Jenny Biem, Drew Mildon, Alana DeGrave, Leah Mack, Kylaina Bellman and Carolyn Grieve. Al Grove is also on our team along with a few dedicated friends! ❖

CARIBOU JUDICIAL REVIEW UPDATE

MINISTER DECIDES NO EMERGENCY ORDER IS NEEDED

The federal government's written argument in response to the argument filed earlier this year was expected by March 16. However, the federal Environment Minister finally made a decision in response to the demand letter sent by four First Nations in July 2010. The Minister decided that the federal government does not need to provide any emergency protection for woodland caribou in northeastern Alberta. Apparently, the Minister is drafting a "formal response" to send to each of the First Nations involved in this court case.

In refusing to provide emergency protection for woodland caribou in northeastern Alberta, the Minister suggests that while there is an imminent threat to the survival and recovery of woodland caribou in northeastern Alberta, from a 'national perspective' the woodland caribou are not threatened. In the Minister's view it is still possible for the Canada-wide population of woodland caribou to survive and recover, even if all the herds in Alberta are allowed to go extinct – hence there's no need for an emergency order.

A Court judgment is anticipated about whether this is a reasonable interpretation of the Minister's duties under the *Species at Risk Act* and of his duties to First Nations under s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. ❖

FUNDING REMOTE COMMUNITIES TO GO GREEN

Communities in BC's most remote regions are invited to **apply for funding** to help reduce their reliance on diesel power generation in favour of cleaner, more efficient forms of energy production.

The Remote Community Implementation (RCI) Program is intended to support the implementation of projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce dependence on fossil fuel resources, reduce energy costs and help meet a remote community's economic, social and physical sustainability goals. Remote Communities are defined as either a civic or First Nation government with existing permanent residences, which is within a BC Hydro Non-Integrated Area or not connected to the major natural gas or electric grid.

Community applications for funding will be accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, and will be reviewed twice annually, in November and May. Applications received by **May 16, 2011** will be considered in the fourth round of reviews in June, 2011. Contact Tanya Hebron for an application (604) 488-5354 or thebron@fraserbasin.bc.ca.