

# EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

## A looming deadline

In order to receive federal and provincial stimulus funding to help pay for the new Acton library, the building must be substantially finished and useable by March 31, 2011.

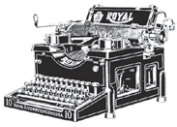
The tight deadline is one of the conditions for receiving some of the \$4-billion budgeted for the Canadian infrastructure program to help stimulate a sluggish economy—some of which won't be spent because projects were not "shovel ready" and able to be completed to meet the timeline.

As the steel skeleton of the River Street building takes shape, Acton officials are confident they will beat the deadline, and the library will be operational by December, or mid-January.

Some other projects are not moving as fast in other parts of the country—the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has asked Ottawa to be reasonable and show some flexibility with the deadline—but so far the deadline continues to loom.

If projects were worthy of the stimulus funding, then what's the harm is extending a deadline when a project is needed and possibly—like the Acton library—long overdue?

## Looking Back



### Ten Years Ago

- Prime Minister Jean Chrétien visited the Blue Springs Scout reserve to speak to thousands of Scouts of Polish descent from all over the world attending the annual Polish Scouting World Jamboree.

- Although Acton lost its Canadian Tire store—it gained a high profile executive with Canadian Tire when Acton resident Wayne Sales was named president and CEO.

- Due to a breakout of West Nile Virus in New York, Halton health officials caution local residents who travel to the north eastern U.S. to use personal protection measures, including wearing light coloured

clothing and using a bug repellent with DEET.

### Five Years Ago

- A record breaking crowd of over 10,000 people jammed Mill Street for the annual Leathertown Festival which featured new events including an Acton Idol contest and the crowning of the first Festival Ambassador.

- Acton High athlete Kaitlin Andrews, 17, continued her winning ways—earning two Gold medals at the Canadian Legion National Track and Field Championships in Alberta.

- Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary believes that the Town's new bylaw that prohibits idling your vehicle for more than three minutes is "unenforceable."



**LIBRARY TAKES SHAPE:** Beam by beam, girder by girder, a new multi-million dollar library is taking shape beside the existing Acton library—which remains open during construction—on River Street. To qualify for two-thirds government funding, the project must be complete by March. — Ken Baker photo

## Declining phytoplankton another sign

By David Suzuki  
with Faisal Moola

As we wrote recently, nothing would please us more than if climate change deniers were right. It isn't fun to delve daily into the ever-mounting evidence of the catastrophic consequences of climate change. And life would be easier if we didn't have to spend it trying to get stubborn governments to do something about the problem, and trying to get the public to care without driving them to depression.

Facing daily attacks from people who deny reality isn't much fun either.

But evidence that the world is warming, mainly because of our fossil fuel addiction, and that this is having increasingly disastrous effects on our health and on the health of the planet's ecosystems, keeps growing.

The latest blow to the deniers came when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency examined in detail 10 petitions challenging its 2009 finding that climate change is endangering the planet, that it is largely caused by burning fossil fuels, and that it threatens human health and the environment.

In every case, the EPA found that the petitions misinterpreted data, contained outright false claims, and

### Science Matters

By David Suzuki



included exaggerated charges.

Another recent report, published by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, looked at data from 10 climate indicators measured by 300 scientists from 160 research groups in 48 countries. It concluded that human-caused climate change is undeniable and is increasing.

And so ice in the Arctic and in glaciers continues to melt, ocean temperatures and sea levels continue to rise, ecosystems and wildlife habitats continue to shift or degrade, and extreme weather events continue to become more frequent.

On top of that, a recent study by Dalhousie University oceanographer Boris Worm and his team found that phytoplankton populations in the ocean are declining at an alarming rate because of human activity and climate change. Why should we care? Well, these microscopic plants are the base of the food chain and account for half the production of organic matter on Earth. They also remove carbon dioxide from the air and produce more than half the oxygen we breathe.

According to report co-author Marlon Lewis, "Climate-driven

phytoplankton declines are another important dimension of global change in the oceans, which are already stressed by the effects of fishing and pollution." The report, published in the July 29 edition of *Nature*, states that phytoplankton have declined by about 40 per cent since 1950.

We can't live without them.

We all have a responsibility to do everything we can to reduce our own emissions, to vote for governments that make climate change a priority, and to make sure those governments focus on real solutions. We know that conserving energy and shifting to cleaner energy will not just help solve the climate crisis but will also resolve many pollution-related health issues and may even give economies a boost.

The fossil fuel industry, which continues to reap multi-billion dollar profits, has spent millions to support a handful of deniers, right-wing think tanks, and websites that call climate change "junk science" and deny human activity is influencing global warming.

It's time we all started ignoring the insane blathering of the deniers. We've already wasted too much time on them—and we don't have time to waste.

Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org).



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