



FUNDING

Help for Pelee Island

Environmental remediation study needed for Scudder Harbour Area



Suzanne Friemann
Pelee Island, Canada
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\$3,020 CAD raised by 4 backers

[https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/help-for-pelee-island-community#/
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Pelee Island is the southernmost remote community in Canada located in the western basin of Lake Erie, the smallest of the Great Lakes system. It's a place with a rich history. We have 226 permanent residents, increasing to approximately 900 from spring to fall. We are also a premier tourist destination with our island at number two for all of Canada for endangered species. Our gas station, grocery store, post office and hardware store, The Pelee Island Co-operative (Co-op), needs your help.

Summary

- We are a group of concerned citizens who love Pelee Island and are coming together to raise money for this important cause. We are Kevin Ryerse- the president of the Pelee Island Co-Operative and its Board of Directors; Rick Masse - the Mayor of Pelee Island acting as a concerned property owner; Dave Dawson, Pelee Island landowner; Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson, property owners and Suzanne Friemann, the Executive Director of The Pelee Island Bird Observatory. Our working group is assisting the Co-Op with the fundraising for the environmental study of the Scudder Harbour area.
- All funds raised through this initiative will be deposited in the Township of Pelee Island's bank account and used exclusively for the environmental study.
- Unfortunately, due to the nature of this project, CRA has ruled that tax receipts are not available.
- The Scudder Harbour Area, which is located at the north end of the island, is contaminated with hydrocarbons, fuel and oils, from the industrial use of the area for the past 100 years. It was used as a ferry dock, grain elevator, a freshwater fishery, a fuel dispensing facility and a marina. All this industrial use has contributed to making the Scudder Harbour area a **Brownfield**. The Co-op has the only documented spill in the contaminated area of 680 Litres of diesel fuel. Because of this fact, the Co-op is being held responsible by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, (MOECC) for the contamination and as a result, the Co-op is responsible for cleaning up their property and the surrounding properties.
- In 2006, the directors of the Co-op had accepted the responsibility for the clean-up, and they made the required capital investment to bring the fuel dispensing facility to its

current standards, as we see them today. The Co-op was successful in receiving a \$600,000 provincially guaranteed loan and \$140,000 from member loan debentures. The Co-op had spent approximately \$800,000 for the completed capital improvements and \$250,000 for the clean-up of contaminated lands. The MOECC approved the technology the contractor used, and this technique was proving effective in cleaning up the contamination, reaching a remediation level of 75%.

- Unfortunately, there was a fire at the Co-op in 2009 which damaged the remediation equipment. The Co-op, through their insurance policy, received enough money to rebuild the building and replace some of their inventory. The contractor came back three years later and installed the new treatment system. They found that the hydrocarbon contamination had returned to their original levels. After a couple of years of trying different technologies, the contractor determined that additional resources were required to identify from where the source of contamination was coming.

What We Need

- Because the Co-op used all of its resources and they were not making progress in the clean-up, MOECC ordered the Co-op to retain a new engineering firm to do a new study that would outline a plan of action to determine how the Co-op should proceed with cleaning up the site. The new study's estimated cost is approximately \$80,000.
- MOECC had ordered the Co-op to complete the study by November 28, 2017, after being informed that the Co-op did not have the resources to complete this review. The Co-op has asked the municipality for assistance in accessing a 50% grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipality's, (FCM) Brownfield Fund. The municipality had agreed to apply for this funding on behalf of the Co-op. This grant application was put on hold because one of the requirements of the grant is securing the Co-op's 50% of the funding at the time of application, which they were not able to do.
- Therefore, the Co-op is asking for assistance to raise their 50%.
- **We have commitments from individuals for the first \$10K which will be matched by other private donations. We hope to raise the remaining \$20K from this Indiegogo campaign.**
- *The Co-op has obtained a municipal resolution asking the municipality to facilitate donations on behalf of the Co-op, restricting these funds to be used solely for Scudder Harbour Area Remediation study. For every dollar received, they will be matched with the FCM Green Municipal Fund and be used to move forward with the MOECC ordered the survey of the Scudder area hopefully in the spring of 2018.*

The Impact

- **We feel this is a community problem because, with the loss of the Co-op's facility, our remote community risks losing our fuel dispensing facility, our grocery store, our post office and our hardware store. If the Co-Op is forced to close, this will damage Pelee Island's fragile economy. Without a fuel dispensing facility, the Island's drainage infrastructure will lose the fuel filling service and the ability to remove water from our marshes; this could cause the Island to flood and cause a state of emergency.**

- Margaret Atwood relays her experience with the Pelee Island Co-op: "Graeme Gibson and I have had a place on Pelee since 1987, and have spent as much as a third of each year there. It's a fine place to write. One year when we had flown over and spent March on the Island the ferry failed to start on April 1, and the winter plane service had ended. We and everyone else on-island were stranded, and we were running out of food. I took to foraging, and was digging up young dandelion greens on the lawn when the Vulture Migration came through. The vultures settled into the trees around me and watched in an interested manner: when was I going to keel over? In our food-scarce condition, we did luckily have the Co-Op. Things sold out quickly, but luckily they'd had a large shipment of bananas just before transportation failed. We ate a lot of bananas, but at least we ate. People rely on the Co-Op. It's a crucial part of Island life."



Risks & Challenges

- The risk is not being able to raise the matching funds and therefore not being able to complete the study. If we are unsuccessful in raising the full amount at this time, the funds will be held in trust until additional funds are raised and the study can be completed.

- The challenge is in trying to raise funds during the winter when there are no tourists on the island. However, we know that there are thousands of Pelee Island fans who will want to help out.

Other Ways You Can Help

If you are unable to donate, please share our story using the Indiegogo share tools. Or share on your social media outlets! The more people that read our story, the better!

Thank you Graeme Gibson, younger, Rick Masse and Kevin Ryersee for the photos.