



Transition Cowichan Signs Up to Plant 120 Food Trees as Part of 350.org Global Work Party

Transition Cowichan is being joined by **Cowichan Green Community** and their Fruit Save Program, the **Cowichan Intercultural Society**, **OUR Ecovillage** and other community groups to organize the planting of **120 food trees** across **12 communities** (10 fruit or nut trees per community) in the Cowichan Region and a part of 350.org's **Global Work Party**. Expanding our regional food forest will add to our local forest's ability to sequester carbon and contribute to local food security. By working with Fruit Save we can ensure that the fruit and nuts from these trees are picked and shared between the pickers, land holders and the region's food banks. As we plant, we will also celebrate our community.

We plan to dig and do the preparations needed to plant the trees on the weekend of October 2nd -3rd, and do the actual tree planting on October 10th (10/10/10). We hope to plant trees on the Malahat, in Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Cobble Hill, Cowichan Bay, Duncan, Maple Bay, Crofton, Chemainus, Lake Cowichan/Youbou, Mesachie Lake/Honeymoon Bay and Ladysmith. We need volunteers in each community to make it happen.

If you live in the Cowichan Region and 1) know of a good site for food trees in your community, 2) have a source of healthy fruit or nut seedlings, 3) would like to make a donation to sponsor a tree, or 4) would like to be involved in planting and caring for trees in your community, please **contact** info@transitioncowichan.org or jane.kilthei@shaw.ca **Please join us on 10/10/10.**

Background

It's been a tough year: in North America oil has been gushing into the Gulf of Mexico while coal, oil and gas extraction and burning continue unabated; Asia is experiencing some of the highest temperatures ever recorded; in the Arctic we are seeing the fastest melt of sea ice ever; in Latin America, record rainfalls are washing away whole mountainsides.

Ordinary citizens have worked hard, calling, emailing, petitioning and protesting to get the world's politicians to take action on global warming, and they haven't moved fast enough. Now it's time to show them that we really do have the tools we need to get serious about the climate crisis. **350.org** is organizing a Global Work Party on October 10th, 2010. Wherever we live around the world, we can join together, community by community, to do something that will help stabilize the earth's climate.

On 10/10/10 we'll show the world's leaders that we can do this—AND that we need them to enact bold energy policies and act to stabilize global climate on a scale that truly matters. The goal of the day is not to solve the climate crisis one project at a time, but to send a pointed message to the world's leaders before the next climate summit in Mexico: "If we can get to work, you can get to work too--on the legislation and treaties needed to preserve a healthy and habitable world."

There are already more than 1000 groups in 109 countries doing work projects that day. In Auckland, NZ, they're having a giant bike fix-up day. In the Maldives, they're putting solar panels on the President's office. In Kampala, Uganda, they're planting thousands of trees. **Join us in planting a food forest in Cowichan. Contact** info@transitioncowichan.org or jane.kilthei@shaw.ca

Why Planting Trees is Important

Sometimes, it may seem like small efforts like planting a tree are insignificant. Here Landry Ninteretse, who works with school groups in Uganda and Burundi, writes about the importance of planting trees and forests.



While lecturing in secondary schools on climate change, we strongly encourage students not only to protect existing forests and woodlots but also to plant more trees in their school premises, homes and communities.

Once could argue: "Is tree planting so important?" Absolutely. Unfortunately, the whole value of trees and forest is till now not well understood by people, especially those relying on natural resources for their daily survival. Many people use trees to get firewood and charcoal for cooking, to obtain poles to fence their properties. Trees are also used as building materials and provide employment

opportunities in carpentry and furniture.

However, the value of trees goes beyond that. There are number of ecological services we get from trees without realizing it. Forests are home to different types of animals and plants. They protect water catchment areas by acting as filters for run off hence contributing to the sustenance of ground water system. Forests are source of basic ingredient for medicines used to treat diseases. They cover land to prevent soil erosion and landslides and acts as wind breakers.

Regarding climate change, forests are very critical as they act as carbon sinks by absorbing carbon dioxide. More trees mean more carbon dioxide absorbed and more oxygen produced through photosynthesis and hence moderates the greenhouse effect responsible of global warming.

When we fully understand this importance of forest to human kind and its well being, we must act. Protect existing forests becomes a duty for everybody. Better, we realize as ordinary citizens, we can play a role in mitigating global warming. If each citizen on this planet commits to plant a least one tree per year, the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed will be considerable. Encouraging such initiative and well as the use of clean energy worldwide is definitively the solution to overcome the current climate crisis.

Please join us in creating a Cowichan food forest on 10/10/10.

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