



## ***Achievements and Learnings to date and our Vision and Plans moving forward***

*March 13, 2009*

This update is intended brief on you what Cool North Shore has accomplished and learned over the past year and tell you about our plans for the next 12 months

### **2008 Overview**

Cool North Shore (CNS) was launched by the Legacy North Shore Society in 2008 with the vision of :

“All North Shore residents, from Deep Cove to Lions Bay, taking action together, to create a low carbon community.”

Knowing that achieving this would take years and a deep, highly-strategic approach, we spent the first six-months of 2008 researching social change models and learning from other communities to ensure we got off on the right foot (contact us for a copy of the research report). This work was generously supported by the District of North Vancouver.

### **Climate Change cafes**

The pilot for Cool North Shore’s first engagement activities were two Climate Change Cafés in the fall 2008 with approximately 90 participants working in teams of 4-8 people to reduce their carbon emissions. Participants came from a wide range of sectors, communities and age groups. Feature-length articles in the North Shore News and Outlook helped create some buzz. Following the Cafes, the teams met 2-3 times over a two month period with in-person support and materials (a Low Carbon Diet Book, a Cool North Shore Guidebook, and a Cool North Shore ‘Action Prompt’) and on-line resources. We attended several of the teams’ action meetings. It was very powerful joining teams around dinner tables and in living rooms where they discussed reducing individual emissions, supporting one another to take action and working together to create a low carbon community.

Over the course of two months many participants made significant changes in their lives. Vegetarian dishes substituted meat meals, electrical powerbars were installed, cars were tuned up, old fridge’s were replaced with new energy efficient models, composts were started, and one participant spent days in his crawlspace insulating air ducts and sealing his furnace room. Now that’s commitment! We also found that some individuals took no further action beyond the Cafes – we are continuing to work to understand what supports and inhibits action and identify ways to increase participation.

We held a “Going Further’ event on December 2<sup>nd</sup> with half of the participants from the first two cafés to explore what worked with Cool North Shore, what didn’t work and how

could we collectively engage others. We received great feedback and ideas that will help us strengthen the program and sharpen our approach.

### Volunteer Leadership team

We realized that the sustainability of CNS depended on a committed, smart core group of volunteers. To this end, over the fall, a core volunteer leadership group of a dozen people solidified – drawn from the Cafes and other outreach we did. Over the course of three meetings volunteers committed to leading one or two functional areas they are most passionate about. For example, two professional trainers/teachers have stepped up to facilitate cafés; others are helping build a strategy for engaging schools and universities, and others are developing coaching support mechanisms for teams and team leaders. Two meetings were also held to connect with supporting partners—the three North Shore municipalities, the Provincial Climate Action Secretariat and BC Hydro—to see how we can share information and resources and work together towards mutual goals. This will continue to be an important activity – one we hope will have increasing focus in 2009 as our strategy firms up and specific initiatives with municipalities are determined.

Here are a few key pilot phase learnings of what worked and what needs more work.

#### **What Worked**

- The overall process (the café, team meetings, the Going Further event, a finite time commitment)
- Timing, venues and food work - people can come right from work!
- Asking participants to come in teams from existing social networks helps keep people on track
- Low Carbon Diet book and worksheet were valuable tools – giving people a place to start
- Easily accessible Cool North Shore staff and directorship
- Using Cool North Shore as a tangible leverage point to engage others to take action
- Accepting, safe environment for all levels of green (non-judgmental)
- Diversity of participants
- North Shore News and Outlook articles
- A Cool North Shore ‘buzz’ starting to form



#### **What Needs more Work**

Our first steps have identified some relatively easy to address challenges:

- In-depth direction at the café on how to immediately get started
- Materials and actions that speak to more 'advanced' individuals who are already doing a lot of the basics
- More time at the end of the café to give people a chance to more fully consider personal commitments they will make
- Modify support materials to be locally specific
- Strong emphasis on and support for team leaders

- More emphasis on participants following the meeting structure, measurement and team member accountability
- Clear communication and messaging (especially to inspire/interest 'beginners' with current materials)
- Constant reminders and prompts for participants
- Connections between teams throughout the process
- An effective website that does more than provide basic information
- Sustainable funding and volunteers

We also have more insight into the bigger challenges ahead;

- Vying with the economy's woes for people's attention
- Getting through to the large number of people who say they care about climate change but have little motivation to take action;
- Supporting people we have engaged to in turn reach out and involve others in their communities in Cool North Shore activities

To address these daunting challenges we will have to continue to experiment, team up with others, draw in additional expertise and resources, and figure out how to get the message out that while the North Shore may be one of the most livable places on earth, it is not sustainable.

### **Looking Forward: 2009 Preview**

Based on our learnings from 2008, what we know about social and behavioral change and challenged by our long-term vision of a NS-wide low carbon community, the leadership team at Cool North Shore and Legacy North Shore feel that success will require Cool North Shore to greatly increase its scope, activities and deep community engagement. We need nothing short of a social movement on the North Shore if we are to make any starting dent in CO2 emissions let alone achieve deeper cuts. 2009 will therefore be a year where we push out at a broader level of engagement, the next step in process that will no doubt take years. In 2009 we aim to (and in a number of cases have already made headway in):

- Develop a long term vision and strategy
- Role out Cafés approximately every 2 months—use cafés as a core launching point for any other CNS activities (our first 2009 one was February 18)
- Partner with the BCSEA's Climate Change Showdown to engage Grade 4-7 classrooms and parents in a month-long program to take action in their homes – launched with a students and parents Café in late April 2009, as a pilot to explore a broader NV District-wide launch in fall-winter 2009-10
- Hold one 'Cool North Shore Drinks' Dialogue event approximately each month to keep past café participants engaged, to attract new people and to act as a support network for taking action. Our first event on March 5 brought Dr. Stephen Sheppard and his team to Bella Candela to share their visual models of climate change impacts on the North Shore in order to spark dialogue with registered participants. Forty people attended. Our next CNS Dialogue will focus on efficiency and solar power through the amazing story of North Shore resident Doug Horn

- Partner with Ecotrusts' Climate Smart Program to engage at least four North Shore businesses in a pilot program to reduce CO2 emissions in local businesses, with the aim of a much larger program
- Launch a comprehensive, interactive website that we expect to be a hub for taking action on climate change on the North Shore
- Partner with Lighthouse Sustainable Building Centre to hold a series of workshops for consumers and contractors on green renovation (first workshop tentatively April 23)
- Create support mechanism for teams and individuals—have team leader coaches and meetings, develop a range of web—based resources
- Continue to work with the School Districts, teachers, administrators and students to develop a program for high school students
- Support Cap U students to host their own café in the new school year
- Develop a measurement and evaluation process
- Continue to build public presence through engaging the media and other forms of communication
- Refine our social change model so it informs what we do with more rigour, and allows us to share our approach with other interested communities and individuals
- Raise long term financial support

We anticipate additional opportunities will arise that we will engage.

Here are a few photos from past events

## 2008 Cafés



## Going Further Event



## Feb. 2009 Cafe



## Our Supporters

Thank you to LiveSmart BC and the Climate Action Secretariat, the District of North Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver and BC Hydro Powersmart for their very generous financial and other support for Cool North Shore in 2008-9.



Cool North Shore, a project of:



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