



RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

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RECYCLING MEANS JOBS!!!

When recycling began going mainstream about a decade ago there was concern over the negative economic impact it could have.

With the amount of waste entering landfills decrease, there would be less work for garbage collecting and hauling companies.

This scenario didn't happen.

With so many recyclable commodities being hauled around the place, a lot of former garbage hauling companies are now in the business of trucking recyclables.

It is quite telling that in Whitehorse the two main private waste haulers now work quite closely with two of the Whitehorse recycling centres.

A lot of trucks that come up to the Yukon used to go back empty. Not anymore. Quite a few of them are hauling recyclables to Southern processors.

There used to be jobs and opportunities in hauling waste, now there are jobs and opportunities in hauling recyclables.

Another scenario involved so many commodities being recycled that workers in the raw resource extraction industry would lose jobs.

Given the unprecedented global growth of the past decade this has not been an issue.

The future looks especially bright for resource sales (be they raw or recycled) with the Chinese economy starting to heat up.

We'll ignore, at least for this column, the rather abysmal Chinese environmental record in processing and manufacturing the resources that North America ships over there.

If anyone requires video proof of their dismal record, contact the Raven Recycling Society for a copy of the video "Exporting Harm: The High-Tech Trashing of Asia".

It highlights the computer recycling industry in China that processes a lot of used computers and related components from North America.

It is a veritable cyber-age nightmare as far as environmental standards go.



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This does not mean computers or any other commodity should not be recycled or that it can't be done in an environmentally friendly manner.

Recycling creates employment and it creates wealth just as much as raw resource extraction does.

It just takes political will to ensure correct environmental, safety and human rights standards are in place.

For all those politicians out there keen on job creation, current waste reduction initiatives create a lot of Yukon job opportunities.

Raven Recycling alone employs fifteen to twenty people over the course of a year. And Raven is just one of many recycling centres in the Yukon.

Further efforts could be done to encourage greater recycling efforts. This would in turn create more jobs.

If a Zero Waste approach was taken to the commodities entering Yukon landfills greater recycling initiatives could be undertaken.

Zero Waste is a term used to imply there is no such thing as waste, only misplaced resources that happen to be entering a landfill. It would be much better to recycle those resources instead of landfilling them.

A cardboard ban could be a start to a Yukon Zero Waste initiative.

This would mean Yukon landfills would not accept cardboard, but recycling centres would.

Why chop trees down to turn into cardboard and at the same time spend money to dig a whole in the ground to bury the same piece of cardboard after it has been used once?

Environmentally it makes better sense to just recycle the cardboard.

Job wise, it will create long-term sustainable employment.

All it would take would Territorial regulation banning cardboard from community landfills.

Some seed money would be required to equip recycling centres to process the cardboard.

However, the amount of money saved by either reducing the scope or even closing landfills would compensate for this.

And it would be a lot less money that subsidizing traditional logging operations through government funded "roads-to-resources" or through ridiculously low stumpage fees.



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Recycling creates jobs and the Yukon is fortunate to have a well-established network of community based recycling centres.

It's time to create the right regulatory climate for them to grow.

Tomorrow, Saturday October 30th, is the last day to earn Recycling Club points. Lewis Rifkind is an employee of the Raven Recycling Society.