

CEC Presentation
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I speak to you today firstly as a citizen of the Earth and most importantly on behalf of my grandchildren and indeed all children including those yet to be born who will inherit the kind of earth we leave them. Thus far, it's not looking great for them but I still remain hopeful because world scientists tell us we have a small window of opportunity at this critical point to, at the very least, mitigate the damage.

At this critical time-sensitive point in our timeline on Earth, in our evolution as a species, we each are required to make drastic changes, choices and decisions, complete u-turns to how we live on this Earth. It's not easy. I certainly don't have all the answers and I fail daily at my attempts. But it is necessary. Our ability to do so was demonstrated globally during the height of the Covid pandemic when the whole world stopped non essential travel and positive environmental changes began to occur. We can do it. Each one of us must make serious and yes uncomfortable changes to our lifestyles. We must learn to live in a new way in relationship with this Earth.

I have heard people say we should keep emotion out of this discussion. Having had a 30 yr career as a medical professional I am in favour of objective and accurate peer reviewed scientific research as well as keeping communication peaceful and respectful. I am also a fellow human being who LOVES this Earth, as in REALLY loves this Earth: the soil, the trees, the animals, the plants... and, I recognize the Earth as a LIVING BEING, who like any human relation of mine must be treated as such and with love and respect. And at the risk of being dismissed as 'emotional' and with the strength of the lineage of women I now stand at the head of, I say we must also include our love for our Earth in these discussions and decisions.

I am fully aware and deeply afraid of the impacts of generations upon generations of human development causing destruction of the very environment we require to sustain all life on this planet. Climate Change is no longer an idea, it is our reality. We are in a Climate Crisis. The entire human race is being called upon, by Earth herself, to listen up and take heed, make change NOW.

It is a serious error to think we can maintain our existing lifestyles (most especially in the so-called "developed western nations") and save life on Earth by merely adopting 'green energy'- as an example, to replace all our fossil fuel cars with EVs is shortsighted and dangerous (think: cobalt mining in the Congo, lithium mining in NW Ont; flooding northern MB indigenous homelands) and so Sio Silica's proclamations that their silica sand will be used for green energy, computer chips and batteries etc. doesn't cut it for me. EVEN IF their process and facility were deemed 100% safe (and I have to say "meeting industry standards" does not give

me confidence) and beyond the mechanics and details of this particular project, THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT FOR ME:

Everything is interconnected.

The very fact of removing this amount of sand (yes I've heard Sio Silica saying there's sooo much sand there and they're only going to remove a small amount - though to me 1.3 million tonnes of sand/yr for 24 yrs is no 'small amount' however large the entire deposit is) well to me that's like being told by my physician " well, you have a lot of lymph nodes so we'll just take some ... but what impact does this cut and enter practice have on me as a whole being? This is the same question we must ask about the proposed extraction of this amazing phenomenon of silica sand deposit. What impact does removing any amount of this sand and leaving these large holes in the Earth REALLY have? On both the people and the Earth herself?

I'm not a geologist nor hydrologist but I do know that there exists a complex water cycle underground and I do understand the way water moves. And with my medical background and because I recognize the Earth as a living being I can confidently ask "who is to say these silica sand deposits are not unlike lymph nodes of the Earth, adding some level of protection to the waters that flow toward the lakes? How can we **unequivocally** know that these sand deposits are not providing some yet unknown function/service that when disturbed will create a cascade effect of disturbances and damage yet unknown to us?" Our human track record is not great on this front and often shows that we act and then say "oops, sorry, we didn't know about that..."

I live 13 kms south of the proposed Sio Silica Vivian Site on the border of Tache and Springfield Municipalities. I moved to this particular spot 3 years ago because of its forests, little to no industrial agriculture and the undeveloped quiet of the area. We are indeed a quiet neighbourhood who enjoy the beauty and bounty of the natural world around us. To the east of us lies a large area of marsh land, important wetlands that provide filtration for the waters flowing toward and into our large provincial lakes, and both the Sandilands and Agassiz Provincial forests,

I am a gardener with a Permaculture Design Certificate, currently studying Soil Science and creating a homestead on 40 acres providing my family with a resilient healthy food secure future based on regenerative agriculture principles while safeguarding the forest as a conservation area. My hope is that it remains intact for my grandchildren to take over stewardship once I leave this fine earth. I stand opposed to the Sio Silica Vivian Sands Project.

To have a mining extraction and processing facility that will be running 24/7 (for 24 years) is unacceptable to me. I don't want Sio Silica as my neighbour. Sound travels here with the wind (we often hear the trains that run along #15). Light travels as well and on low ceiling/cloudy nights the glow of Winnipeg city obscures the darkness of the night. And just the knowing of this mining operation up the road is enough to disturb the peace and beauty of this area.

On Sio Silica's website and in numerous reports they state this area is 'not home to fish habitat, rare vegetation, or uncommon wildlife habitat'. But what about the flora and fauna that do live there, migrate through? What about those 17 acres of trees that are part of the Earth's lungs providing us with both oxygenated air and carbon sequestration? Sure it's such a small amount of forest but any amount now in our Climate Crisis, more than ever, is crucial to preserve and conserve.

Sio Silica states that the land area to be deforested is much smaller than lands that have been cleared for industrial agriculture. But this only points out to me how industrial agriculture too must be changed and large scale clear cutting of forests stopped. It also behooves the question of why do we only take into account the rare and not the common? The large and not the seemingly small and insignificant? This attitude of not caring because it's common or "not as large as" is one we need to change and demand industry to change.

Here I quote Charles Eisenstein who in his book *Climate A New Story* states that our "Focus needs to be to 'restore ecosystems' (not reduce carbon emissions)" and that we do this by (in order of importance)

1. protect + preserve wild places
2. regenerate the land + water
3. stop dumping chemicals/polluting and by doing these first 3 we will inevitably
4. reduce CO2 emissions

I don't trust Sio Silica because they say they want to be my 'good neighbour' and yet the way in which they conducted the online public forum I attended was obviously self biased. They took questions (written submissions and some live participants) and answered them without any pursuant discussion or further questioning based on their answers. At the end of each person's question the participant was muted and cut off from any further discussion or questioning. This isn't the action of a good neighbour.

I don't trust Sio Silica in the way I don't trust any large profit driven industry that by its very nature does not have the Earth's interest at heart, rather growth and profit. Their insistent paid advertising promoting their greener than green motives to me so obviously full of greenwash and their discrediting of those who speak against them only convince me that they are driven by economic greed and profit. They have never clearly answered my questions to them about the sand being used in the fracking industry. It's clear they want this sand and like any other

industrial corporation, it appears will go to great lengths to get it in the name of doing green and good with the sand they extract. And yes I am well aware I am complicit in the extraction of silica sand for all my consumed products that require it. I didn't say making the change was easy. But we have to start. Each of us individually as well as government and industries alike need to start putting money and action into preservation of our natural world. Large and small. Period.

Though we ALL need to be guardians of our environment, You as CEC commissioners for this environmental assessment are entrusted to act as the guardians of this particular environment.

It is a much bigger picture than these 15' and hearings allow. Yes take the data, the charts, the science from all 'sides' BUT I IMPLORE YOU PLEASE think so much bigger than even "outside the box". Include your love for this Earth and for the children who are inheriting it. You must. Stopping these kinds of extraction practices full of risk and unknown implications along with each human's individual effort and changing habits are required for us to change the trajectory our species is currently on. We need courageous leadership that is willing to act against the big wave of the status quo and lead the change required at this time.

Thank you for your time and kind attention.