

## ALANA CLASON

Awarded the 2010

### Bulkley Valley Research Centre's Irving Fox Memorial Scholarship for Natural Resources Research and Management



Alana Clason, no stranger to Bulkley Valley Research Centre members and many others in the Bulkley Valley, is this year's recipient of the Irving Fox Memorial Scholarship.

Originally from Ontario, Alana first came to BC on a high school trip to Vancouver Island, which persuaded her to return one day. In 2002 she fulfilled this wish by enrolling in UBC's Forest Sciences program where she studied for her B.Sc. During this time, she spent two summers in the Bulkley Valley as a field research technician for a UBC PhD candidate, studying the breeding ecology of songbirds on Hudson Bay Mountain. She lived in one of the ski cabins on the mountain, and determined to return to the Bulkley Valley.

Alana's interest is in pursuing a career in natural resources research, with a focus on northwest BC. As a native of Ontario, BC's diversity of landscapes has always amazed her. After graduating from UBC in 2007, and spending most of a year gaining experience as a field assistant in both the Yukon and Panama, she enrolled in the University of Alberta's Department of Renewable Resources to study for a master's degree in forest ecology. The focus of her master's studies was ecosystem change in northwest BC, specifically on changes over time in whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) – lichen ecosystems. To pursue her chosen field of study, Alana contacted the Bulkley Valley Research Centre and made contact with Bulkley Valley researchers, who helped her apply for, and secure an NSERC scholarship. This enabled her to return to the Bulkley Valley (one of her ambitions), where whitebark pine, a blue-listed species in BC, occurs at the northern edge of its range. The Centre made space for her, and she was able to work out of the Bulkley Valley Research Centre office as an Adjunct Researcher.

Alana received her M.Sc. this year, and has now enrolled in a PhD program at UNBC with the aim of extending her master's work on whitebark pine ecosystems.

Alana has particularly impressed her professional colleagues with not only her intellect and exceptional organizational and analytical skills, but also her determination and ability to get to where she wants to go. To quote a colleague, "Alana is a very determined self-motivated person and my observation is that she almost always succeeds in what she sets out to do but when faced with a setback she digs in and figures out a solution."

Alana's connection with the Centre is an excellent example of how the Centre can work to assist researchers in the field of natural resources, at the same time adding to the understanding of ecosystem function in northwest BC, which in turn informs management agencies, the scientific community and the public on the wise use and conservation of ecosystems found in this region.

In addition to her academic work, Alana is active in the Bulkley Valley community. Amongst other things she's a knitter and spinner, and enjoys hiking and canoeing, and gardening. She and her husband, Mark Wong, live in a log home at Evelyn, just outside Smithers.