

Newsletter: Spring 2014

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Growth and renewal

At the BVRC, we're welcoming spring and the renewal it brings.

Representing the growth the BVRC has been experiencing is our renewed relationship with Eclipse GIS's Johanna Pfalz, who has moved her office next door and is helping the centre to grow its GIS data management capacity.

We're also following up on important dialogues that have started in recent years, one being the discussion around information management and cumulative effects. Below, you'll learn about next week's *Adding On* forum, which continues a conversation that started with the 2012 *Adding It All Up* conference. Our relationships with First Nations are also growing, with Metlakatla, Kitsumkalum and the Wet'suwet'en all working with us on *Adding On*.

We also welcomed a new supporting member, Spectra Energy, which reflects the growing role of industry and sustainable development in our operations.

Our evolution is also reflected in the BVRC's new website, which we continue to put the final touches on. We think it looks pretty good—but we invite you to [see](#) for yourself.



Spring is blowing into the Bulkley Valley and, along with it, the winds of change. The BVRC is excited about where the coming season takes us.

- Rick Budhwa, Research Program Manager

Adding On: Knowledge Management and Cumulative Effects

The BVRC looks forward to hosting *Adding On: Knowledge Management and Cumulative Effects*, a forum that builds on the success of our 2012 *Adding It All Up* conference. If you haven't already signed up, visit our [website](#) for information. **Registration closes Friday**; the fee for BVRC members is \$125.

This forum, held April 16-17 at Hudson Bay Lodge, follows up on what we heard at the previous event: when managing for cumulative effects, it's important to focus on data management and the ways we collect, store and distribute knowledge so it can best contribute to informed decision-making. The forum showcases new and ongoing initiatives and case studies about ecosystem management and climate change adaptation.

Pat Moss receives Irving Fox Award

The BVRC welcomed nearly 50 people to its March 10 annual general meeting, where it awarded long-time community member Pat Moss with the Irving Fox Award for lifetime achievement. Pat has worked on regional environmental and cultural sustainability issues since moving here in the 1970s.

"If you dig around any of the major environmental campaigns affecting northwest B.C. over the past 40 years, you are bound to find evidence of Pat Moss, hard at work on the frontlines, seated at the table, or working quietly behind the scenes," the nomination letter reads.



Pat is founder and executive director for the Northwest Institute for Bioregional Research, which engages in education, research and advocacy around ecological and social sustainability issues. The BVRC supports NWI's role in advocating for science-based decision-

making.

“In this manner, fact-based advocacy for a sustainable environment and a just society emerge organically and logically, showing us a better way to benefit from the natural and cultural riches of this region,” the nomination letter says. “Her longtime friends Irving (now deceased) and Rosemary Fox would no doubt agree.”

Northwest Trade Expo

For the first time ever, the BVRC has a booth at the **Northwest Trade Expo**, May 2-3, 2014 in Smithers. We look forward to the opportunity to speak with the public about all the great work we do at the centre, and would like to extend the invitation to our members to take a shift at the BVRC booth and discuss your research with trade show attendees. If interested, please email amanda.follett@bvcentre.ca.

Member profile: Chrissy Melymick



Having spent many years as a fishing guide on Haida Gwaii, Chrissy Melymick felt at home in the North, but never thought she would grow roots inland. In 2012, she ended up in the Bulkley Valley after a short visit following her summer field season on Haida Gwaii.

She discovered the BVRC shortly after moving to the valley and within a couple months had connected with many amazing folks and was sold on the northern mountain town lifestyle.

Chrissy works with the BVRC on two projects, one involving assessing the cumulative effects of climate change and industrial development on salmon in northwest B.C. and another involving water monitoring and assessment in the Morice watershed. Chrissy’s background includes a diploma in Natural Resource Management and a bachelor’s degree in Ecological Restoration, both from BCIT.

She is also a trained yoga teacher, but is taking a break from teaching classes at Full Circle Yoga in Smithers while reconnecting with her own practice and starting new, exciting adventures with her partner Chris. She intends to return to the studio in the not-so-distant future.

Finding and sustaining balance in life and feeling joy, love and lightheartedness as often as possible are things that matter to Chrissy. She continues to pursue her passion for the outdoors through fishing, mountain biking, snow sports and almost anything that can keep a person outside in nature, including her work.

She is ecstatic to have found a community that shares those same values and is looking forward to growing old in the Bulkley Valley.

Morice Water Monitoring and Assessment Program

The BVRC is working with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en and B.C.'s Ministry of Environment to implement the Morice Water Monitoring and Assessment Program, which will manage impact assessments and water quality monitoring in the Morice watershed, as well as collaborate with stakeholders.



The Morice is a relatively pristine area with high fisheries and wildlife values. Historically, forestry has been the area's dominant industrial activity, but the area is currently faced with other development, such as the Silver Queen mine and three pipelines: Pacific Trail Pipeline and TransCanada Pipelines' Coastal GasLink, both of which would carry natural gas, along with Enbridge's diluted bitumen pipeline.

In response to these proposed projects, the MWMA is conducting baseline studies for the watershed and developing water quality objectives. Program training, monitoring, fish habitat assessments and fisheries mapping have already been initiated.

The education, monitoring and assessment components of the program support the vision of establishing a clear, science-based connection between field-based measurements, assessment and land-use decision-making.

Irving Fox Scholarship

The BVRC was pleased to present its Irving Fox Memorial Scholarship for Natural Resources Research and Management for 2013 to Arctica Cunningham, who was born and raised in the Bulkley Valley and is currently attending the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George.



Arctica recently graduated from Smithers Secondary School and started a double major in environmental studies and political science at UNBC last fall. After graduating, Arctica plans to study environmental law at the University of Victoria, using her education to fight for strong environmental policies.

“I feel very fortunate to have grown up in a place where I could be so connected to nature,” she says in her submission letter. “In return, I am going to continue to work hard to give back to this community by trying to find creative new solutions to make it more sustainable.”

Arctica organized an educational forum for Smithers’ high school students to learn about the proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline, helped start a Green Team at her high school and earned bronze and silver medals at Canada-Wide Science Fair for her last three science fair projects. In August 2010, she was the recipient of a Youth Science Canada Scholarship and travelled with Students On Ice around Baffin Island, learning firsthand about climate change, Arctic sovereignty disputes and Inuit culture.

Coles Lake Project





The Bulkley Valley Research Centre is pleased to be a part of Sina Abadzadesahraei's project near Fort Nelson, B.C. Sina is a PhD candidate at University of Northern British Columbia and is studying the impact oil and gas industries have on demand for surface freshwater in the region.

Sina reports that rapidly increasing oil and gas development has created a greater interest in developing a comprehensive water management plan for the Coles Lake watershed. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) and UNBC have initiated this study to provide a comprehensive water budget for Coles Lake to prevent detrimental impacts to the natural environment.

With limited data to support detailed hydrologic modelling or to assess potential risks, the project's overarching goal is to quantify the water balance of the Coles Lake watershed. This research will provide valuable knowledge concerning the boreal wetland dynamics within the region.

In late January, Sina's supervisory committee approved, with some comments and adjustments, the Coles Lake proposal for his thesis proposal defence. The BVRC welcomed Sina as a Seminar Series presenter on March 5. We look forward to future updates on this important project.

BBQs at the BVRC



A big selling feature of our new office: the huge backyard! As the snow melts, we're getting excited to host barbecues and apres-work bevies on Friday evenings. See you there!

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