Welcome New Deputy Minister, Tim Sheldan

Tim Sheldan was appointed Deputy Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations commencing October 9, 2013.

Prior to this appointment, he spent 5 years as Director General in Edmonton, Alberta for Natural Resources Canada.

Tim spent the majority of his career working in the BC Public Service, for the former Ministry of Forests and Range—culminating in his appointment as Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations, from 2003-08. Previously, Tim spent 23 years in various field, operational and management positions at the regional and district level in many locations across British Columbia, both coast and interior.

Prior to his government experience, Tim worked for several years for the forest industry and consulting on the coast. He also spent time as a city councillor while in Merritt, B.C.

Tim graduated from Vancouver Island University (Malaspina College) in Nanaimo, B.C. and is a graduate of several management and Executive Development programs.

Tim, his children, and partner Marilyn will be relocating to Victoria as soon as possible.

Have a Story idea?
Send *The Dirt* Advisory Group your ideas!

Advisory Group Vision:
"True to our proud histories, informing ministry staff through balanced and timely communication"

 © British Columbia

The Dirt Facebook

To join "The Dirt" facebook page, simply go to the link below and ask to join the the group. https://www.facebook.com/groups/flnrnews/

Issues of "The Dirt" will be posted online quarterly. The newsletter and facebook group are for all employees and former employees of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

Sudoku - do you play?

7			6					8
8				3				
	9					3	1	
		6	7	4				5
		5	8		6	9		
4				9	2	1		
	8	7					2	
				6				9
6					8			1

Sudoku Solution

If you are still interested in BCFS memorabilia the ministry is still managing the BCFS 100 website as a legacy project http://www.bcfs100.ca/bscripts/materials.asp. You can download the centenary logos from the promotion and use them for apparel that can be arranged locally.

The Dirt Contents, September 2013

* Click on a # to jump to page/Review Facebook for all the pictures!

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Cape Scott Wind Farm

Submitted by Sandra Baan, Major Projects Specialist, Coast Region

While most folks working in the Natural Resource Sector have heard the excitement around the building of a wind farm on the north island; I hope to add some interesting tidbits to help you visualize and understand the extent of the Project. The landscape on the northern end of Vancouver Island has changed, for now, with a boost of renewable energy on its way.

Planning for a wind farm starts far before an application ever comes in the door to Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNR). Years of investigative work and studies must be undertaken to determine the feasibility of the Project by studying such things as wind speed and potential site location impacts. Some of the field studies go back over 10 years.

The wind farm site is located on a large plateau that is mostly marshy and is located approximately 40 km west of Port Hardy. Some interesting facts include:

- Power generated from the Project will be 99 mega watts, which is enough to power about 30,000 homes per year.
- Approximately 32 km of new roads were built and include more than 250 water crossings.
- Each turbine height is about 80 metres (which is about 2.5 times the height of the Legislative Building in Victoria). The wind turbine equipment arrived at Duke Point in Nanaimo, trucked to Port Hardy on Highway 19 and assembled on site.
- The nacelle, which is the box shaped component between the blades responsible for working gear mechanism, weighs more than 50 tons (the approximate weight of 6 or 7 elephants).
- The transmission line is approximately 40 km of 132 kv transmission line runs from the Project site to Port Hardy where it connects with the BC Hydro substation.

Expertise such as professional engineers, road building contractors, project managers, environmental monitors, and tree harvesters have been hired and involved in the development and construction of the Project.

Local hiring has benefitted communities of Port Hardy, Port McNeill as well as several other Vancouver Island communities. There have been approximately 70 hires on the north island during the construction phase, with a total of about 255 man years of work.

Benefits to First Nation communities include the Quatsino, Kwakiutl and Tlatlasikwala First Nations. The three First Nations support the wind farm Project and are also finding benefits from the development.

Annual rent to the province during construction phase is more than $400,000. This will be reduced as soon as the Project construction is completed and the footprint is reduced and will then be approximately $20,000/year.

Approximate expenditures to communities in British Columbia as a result of the Project are estimated to be more than 30 million dollars.

Mitigation measures to Project impacts include, but not limited to, such things as avoiding Project construction during bird breeding seasons, wildlife occurrence monitoring, reducing the amount of exposed soil to reduce erosion, cleaning and servicing of vehicles outside riparian areas and using crossing structures on all fish bearing streams.

Cape Scott Wind Farm continued...

The life span of the Project is estimated to be 25 years and a decommissioning plan along with requirements laid out in the tenure contract will assist in a transition from an operating wind farm to a more natural landscape again after the Project's completion.

A real willingness to review, assess and look for mitigation measures to potential concerns was achieved through working together by the Proponent, their consultants, provincial and federal agency experts, First Nations and local government. This has been an exciting Project to see come to fruition. All 55 wind turbines are now in place and ready to begin producing renewable energy.

India Forest Service Delegation Visit

Submitted by: Lesley Valour, Policy Analyst, Strategic Initiatives Branch

For the past three years, FLNR has been supporting a training program for top-level leaders of the India Forest Service (IFS) organized by UBC. This program has been renewed for another three years, which will bring a total of nine more delegations from the IFS to BC for training.

Benefits to BC include the opportunity to improve linkages between the forest sector industries, partnerships and export of BC forest products to India, and to improve knowledge, research and collaboration between both places.

On July 15, 2013, the IFS delegation heard FLNR forestry leaders give presentations on a variety of topics on BC's world leading forestry practices, including: Forest Tenures and Pricing Systems (Ron Greschner and Grant Loeb); Forests and Forest Management in BC (Ian Miller); Tree Improvement and Seed Management (Brian Barber); Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Management (Penny Lloyd); Water Management (Pieter Bekker); and First Nations Relations (Stefan Tack). Gary Townsend, ADM, Integrated Resource Operations, ended the day with an interactive presentation to the highly engaged IFS participants.

Following the day long presentations, the IFS delegates and a dozen local public servants and members of the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) attended a social at the Sticky Wicket Pub organized by Brian Barber, Director of the Tree Improvement Branch, and CIF section chair. Mr Mohit Gera provided an overview of the IFS and its career training program. Mr. Ramesh Kalaghatigi gave an overview of natural resource management in India and fielded a number of questions. The evening concluded with karaoke—Hindi ballads and love songs. With persistent enticement from IFS delegates, Brian (with back-up from Paul Knowles, Director of the Competitiveness and Innovation Branch), sang Old Black Water and Cait Nelson, Wildlife Technician, offered an Irish prayer.

Raising of Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole

Submitted by: Tyler Peet, Resource Manager, Haida Gwaii Natural Resource District

On August 15, 2013, Parks Canada staff, with the support of several agencies including the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, coordinated the raising of the 42-foot Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole at Hlk'yah GawGa (Windy Bay) on Lyell Island, a remote part of the archipelago in Gwaii Haanas Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site on Haida Gwaii. This logistical puzzle involved not only raising a huge monumental pole in a remote location, but also had to accommodate the travel of the nearly four hundred people that came to witness this historic event.

Among the attendees were our Acting Deputy Minister David Peterson, MARR Deputy Minister Steve Munro, FLNR Regional Executive Director Sharon Hadway, and MARR Regional Director Lindsay Jones. "Gwaii Haanas staff went well beyond the call of duty to get this done" said Terrie Dionne, External Relations Manager with Gwaii Haanas, "and we couldn't have done it as well if we didn't have the support and hands-on involvement from individuals and other agencies across the islands".

Gwaii Haanas staff greet Provincial representatives Leonard Munt, Lindsay Jones, Derek Thomson and Sharon Hadway upon the shared vessel Adelita at the August 15th pole raising in Windy Bay

Acting Deputy Minister Dave Peterson, shovel in hand, working to secure the Legacy Pole alongside Chief Sgaann 7iw7waans, Allan Wilson, and Allan Davidson of the Haida Gwaii management council.

Some of that help came from the FLNR staff of the Haida Gwaii Natural Resource District. District staff volunteered to pilot vessels, manage congested marine traffic and assist with launching boats. "There was no question we would help out" said Leonard Munt, District Manager. "It was just a natural extension of the cooperative relationship we have with the Parks Canada Gwaii Haanas field unit".

Leonard believes that this type of cooperation is essential to effective resource management in an isolated location such as Haida Gwaii. "Different agencies bring different things to the table. It's unreasonable to think that any one organization will be able to handle every situation. Sharing resources across resource management agencies makes the whole sector stronger than if we all acted independently."

On Haida Gwaii, sharing resources means equipment such as the Adelita, a 25-foot ministry vessel that recently needed a repowering. "Parks Canada was looking to purchase a new vessel for their enforcement team. Through the terms of a shared-use agreement, they provided a new 350 hp engine for the Adelita instead" says Leonard. "Both agencies just completed a very successful summer field season and generated substantial savings through this arrangement". Congratulations to Gwaii Haanas staff and all the agencies who contributed for their hard work on this incredible event.

COMING THROUGH FIRE

One of the only books to be produced by B.C. wildland firefighters, *Coming Through Fire* holds a special place in the hearts of the Southeast Fire Centre and the rest of the province. Ex Valhalla unit crew members David Greer and Noel Hendrickson documented one fire season by way of words and photographs to describe their unique experiences and the camaraderie that bonds twenty men and women together. The book was published in 2001.

I recently caught up with David to see how he was doing. Here's what he had to say. -By Karlie Shaughnessy

How long did it take you to the write the book? Where did the idea come from? What's the story behind it?

It took a couple of years to complete the project. The idea came through a collaboration between myself and fellow firefighter and photographer Noel Hendrickson. I was writing about experiences on the fire line and Noel was taking images; he approached me one day and said he was thinking about doing a book, and I said, "so am I." Subsequently we teamed up and worked our way through the complex world of publishing.

Tell me about your background working for the Wildfire Management Branch (Valhalla Unit Crew.) How did you land the gig? Your humble beginnings?

Well this is a good one. I was working as a landscaper on the BCFS compound at the time at Green Timbers in Surrey, where the Coastal Unit Crew (now the Fraser Unit Crew) was based. It was 1993 and an extremely rainy summer, and they did not have any fire days, so I saw them and got to know them. One morning they were setting up to do the fitness test and asked if I wanted to try it. I found out in the morning from my supervisor when I arrived at work and he told me, "you better grab a cup of coffee right now." I ended up doing pretty well. I had already been training for a few months with my goal to get on a crew the next year. Long story short, I was invited to boot camp the next year and ended up going to Valhalla in the "hockey" draft.

"Our goal was to lay the most hose, dig the most guard and do the most difficult and critical jobs on a fire."

Is there anything you miss about being a wildland firefighter?

Yes. Being outside all day and the physical aspect of the job. And pretty much being around the most motivated individuals I have ever been surrounded by at one time. We competed constantly… at everything.

Who were your mentors? Do you stay in touch with any fellow ex crew members?

I learned a lot from Mike Allan, one of my crew leaders. He ran the crew like a competitive sports team. When we arrived at a fire, our goal was to lay the most hose, dig the most guard and basically cover the most territory on a fire and do the most difficult and critical jobs on a fire.

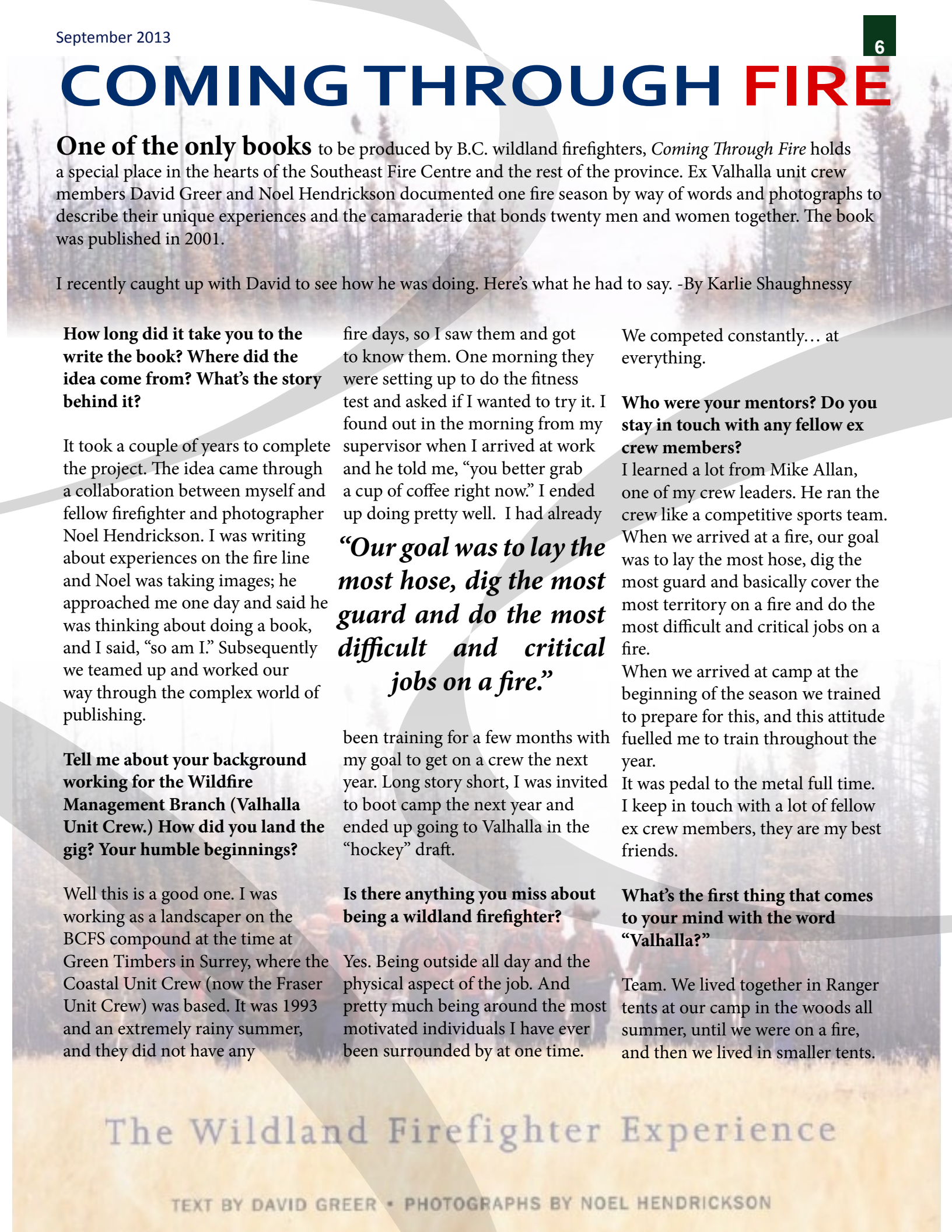
When we arrived at camp at the beginning of the season we trained to prepare for this, and this attitude fuelled me to train throughout the year.

It was pedal to the metal full time.

I keep in touch with a lot of fellow ex crew members, they are my best friends.

What's the first thing that comes to your mind with the word "Valhalla?"

Team. We lived together in Ranger tents at our camp in the woods all summer, until we were on a fire, and then we lived in smaller tents.



Left: David Greers first fire season landed him working on the 1994 Garnet Fire in Penticton. Right: Presently, David and his family reside in Victoria B.C. where he works as the Executive Director of Stakeholder Relations for the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services.

Hence, we were extremely close. And we played all summer in the Kootenays, we hiked the mountains and glaciers, cycled the roads and trails, and swam in all the rivers and lakes. Amazing.

Is there a particular fire or situation that you still think about?

I think about the fire in Salmon Arm a lot, as that was really intense, and the summer of 2003 when everything seemed to be going off at once. There is nothing like those feelings that are at once frightening and exhilarating. I am proud of all the good work done by everyone who served to protect the public.

Any advice for those rookies out there?

Train hard. It will make that first straight line hike of the year, up a steep mountain, carrying hose a lot easier. Take advantage of the learning opportunities the industry has to offer. It will do you well in all facets of your life.

Have you written any other books?

Since Coming Through Fire, I have written four biographies of authors for the Dictionary of Literary Biography (Stuart McLean, W.P. Kin sella, Paul Quarrington, and Caryl Brahms). See, I still write about amazing people.

I sense one of your literary inspirations is Gary Snyder. Can you tell me why you are drawn to his work?

Gary is a talented poet who writes about the outdoors and nature. I always tried to view my situations and surroundings through this lens when I was writing on the fire line. Basically, that my environment and everything in it, was art in some sense and should be viewed that way. When you're on the end of a hose all day on mop up, you have a lot of time to think!

At one point I contacted him to be his student. He said I would have to move in with his family and he couldn't do it at the time. So he told me to work with a true master of anything, like a master mechanic, and I would learn everything I needed to know to be a master of my craft. And I think he's right.

Where are you living these days and what are you up to? How has your past life as a wildfire firefighter influenced where you are today?

I live in Victoria with my wife and two daughters. I am the Executive Director of Stakeholder Relations and Communications in the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services. My job deals with high profile, high priority projects with many stakeholders. I know this is cheesy, but I still put out fires here, and I am relied upon to deal with difficult situations under pressure. My past as a wildland firefighter has equipped me extremely well to deal with anything that gets thrown at me, and the strong work ethic and competitive nature remains.

You can purchase a copy of Coming through Fire through Amazon.com: HERE

"My past as a wildland firefighter has equipped me extremely well to deal with anything that gets thrown at me."

First Nations Forest Technician Training Pilot Program

Submitted by: Laurie McCulligh, BC Timber Sales

A team of professionals from BC First Nations Forestry Council, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNR) and BC Timber Sales (BCTS), with the assistance of Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training centres, is providing opportunities for four enthusiastic First Nations students to be part of a two-year pilot program of formal training and related employment. Year two of the pilot is now underway in the Babine, Cariboo-Chilcotin and Kamloops BCTS Business Areas, including the 100 Mile House Natural Resource District.

Braeden Emile (student) and George Williamson, Stewardship Tech

Mentoring by BCTS staff and others is key to the success of the program by providing connections and support throughout the two-year pilot. Between-term employment is provided by BCTS Business Areas that are close to students' homes and families. Invaluable connections have been made not only between the mentor and student, but also between BCTS and the students' communities. Mentors, students and other staff gain valuable experiences. Those from many areas of natural resource management who have worked and shared their expertise with the students during their time in the field have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

The program helps First Nations students develop their skills and knowledge of the forest industry with the goal of building capacity for First Nations to be full partners in the sector. Exposure to a wide range of forestry experiences helps the students determine which aspect of forestry they are most passionate about. You can see some of the students in the booklet produced by First Nations Forestry Council.

A looming shortage of skilled forest technicians has been forecast and this program has the potential to assist BCTS in its recruitment efforts from First Nation communities.

For 2013/14, the program is expanding to include more students and other partners in the forest sector. This new program is funded through the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training.

The project team for the pilot program includes the following program champions:

- BC First Nations Forestry Council: Keith Atkinson, RPF; Maxime Lépine, FIT, Craig Noordmans;
- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (First Nations Relations Branch and district staff): Darrell Robb, RPF; Len Mannix; Adele Parnell; Barbara Perrey;
- BC Timber Sales: Mike Falkiner, RPF; Tavis McDonald, RPF; Steve Kozuki, RPF; Shasta Gillanders, RPF; Deb Janning-Stewart, RPF; Tony Buckley, RPF; Zorica Boskovic, RPF; Jason Stafford, RPF; Laurie McCulligh, RP; and
- Canim Lake Band: John Kalmokoff, RPF.

The team also includes many others in the Natural Resource Districts and BCTS Business Areas who provide support in numerous ways.

The Steering Committee for this initiative, which includes partners in industry and the federal government, is working toward obtaining longer term funding for the program.

If you see some of the students in your travels next summer, please make them feel welcome!

Retirees Receive *The Dirt*!

If you are a former employee and want to keep up with the latest Dirt, please contact Richard Dominy and he will add you to the retiree's email distribution list. Provide email, home phone and home mailing address. You can contact Richard directly at: Richard.Dominy@gov.bc.ca. Don't forget our Facebook page!

Pine Tree Tour!

Submitted By: Agathe Bernard, Stewardship Officer,

Back in April, North Area Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Kevin Kriese announced "I've invited all the other ADMs to a 2-day Pine Tree Tour in the Nadina District. The field trip is about known or emerging issues with pine and small stream management and what can be done about it". For Alex Woods, Erin Havard, Phil LePage, Ken White, Dave Coates, John Rex, Carolyn Stevens and I, thus began a few weeks of organizing and field location scouting to make sure we would be ready to lead the discussions.

Alex Woods Showing a Rust-Infested Plantation

And so, early in the morning of May 15, 2013, we all met at the Nadina River Bridge to begin our tour. Given the predominance of pine in plantations and studies showing a decrease in stem densities following free-growing declaration, the main topic of discussion on the first day was "forest health in pine stands". We discussed yield implications of pine mortality, the adequacy of forest stewardship plans (FSP) in addressing long-term forest health, the difficulties associated with recognizing and addressing forest health factors, and opportunities for increasing stand diversity.

On that day, we also spent time in a riparian area to talk about "small stream management". Research studies and monitoring results show that a significant proportion of on-the-ground practices along small streams are not consistent with sustainable management objectives. We talked about ways to improve small stream management through better communication, professional reliance and policy and legislative changes.

Discussions on the second day focused on "second-growth stands and mountain pine beetle management". Forest management will shortly transition from old natural stands to young managed stands. In areas affected by the mountain pine beetle (MPB), there will be significant pressure to harvest young stands as soon as they reach minimum merchantability criteria and this is expected to impact habitat supply. Therefore, how can habitat supply analyses quantify habitat functions at various levels? Could alternative silviculture systems provide habitat and timber supply opportunities? We also discussed the necessity to develop management strategies for unsalvaged stands affected by the MPB.

ADM's Rick Manwaring, Kevin Kriese and Tom Ethier and Planting Density

A number of action items arose from the tour. For example, a workshop was held on September 17, 2013, to discuss the importance of addressing forest health in stocking standards and linkages to timber supply. The workshop was attended by licensees operating in the Nadina District, the ABCFP, and FLNR staff from the Skeena and Omineca Regions and from Resource Practices Branch and Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch. As a result of both the tour and the workshop, work is underway to develop and deliver forest health training and to communicate science-based information to forest professionals and the forest industry.

The tour was also a rare and appreciated opportunity to get to know each other and discuss issues and potential solutions in a relaxed setting. It was incredibly stimulating to have these complex discussions with such a passionate and knowledgeable group of people. Let's do this more often!

ADM Kevin Kriese Summarizing Forest Health Dialogue

Preserving the Past! Submitted by: Andrew Davies Engineering Officer, Selkirk Natural Resource District

Whilst performing a freshet inspection of a wilderness Forest Service road I noticed something white in the adjacent forest. I stopped the truck and hiked in through the plantation and discovered a 1977 Plantation sign in a sad state due to the climate of the interior wet belt. The sign was "New Forest Planted 1977 ,39,000 Douglas Fir" and had survived 36 Revelstoke Winters—amazingly. I took the remnants home and luckily I was able to cut out the logo portion, which was the emblem of the Forest Service in the 1970's. With lots of wood filler and sanding I was able to repair the logo to its original state and have it in our front office museum display for all to see. Although it is a simple logo from a different time, well before computer graphics, it is visually attractive. The logo and its history can live on forever so future generations can reflect on the past and a much simpler time in our history.

Sign as found

Logo preservation and finally on display in our front office

FLNR Safety Audit! Submitted by: The 727 JOSH Committee

On July 22nd to 24th 2013 the 727 Fisgard street building in Victoria was audited on its safety procedures as part of the FLNR safety audit. The Joint Occupational Safety and Health (JOSH) committee chairman John Wakelin leapt into action, gathering all the materials, contacting the auditors to see what they would be questioning. During the audit he was present to organize them into meeting rooms, to ensure staff that was being audited were prepared, he was audited himself then finally met with the audit team afterward for the initial de-briefing.

Such is the dedication of John as he takes it personally the safety of the staff in the building.

Only... John was scheduled to start his summer vacation that week. He postponed his summer plans to ensure 727 had a positive safety audit result—which we did. Being the Chairperson of a JOSH committee is vastly rewarding, with extra pay and fabulous resort vacations (New Zealand) being offered. Those perks AND the opportunity to spend hours working on items for the committee to consider, researching them, following up on them, liaisoning with the Director's JOSH committee, and dealing with facilities to get action items done; not to mention herding the cats that make up the JOSH committee each month, along with doing his regular job make this the dream volunteer position.

John is extremely dedicated to safety. On September 19th John was awarded the gold helmet for his dedication, Thank you John!
(Yes that is a fish on the top of it.)

Find yourself in the ministry annual service plan report?

Submitted by: Suzanne Moreau, Corporate Initiatives Division

It might seem like playing "Where's Waldo?" at first—but did you know that in recent years the annual report has profiled a broad array of significant accomplishments? The report is mainly a public declaration of how well we are meeting our collective goals, but it also tells a story and showcases what staff have contributed to those achievements. Have a look to see what major milestones you or your colleagues have been part of in the 'Highlights of the Year' in the most recent report for 2012/13. Without staff working at all levels, these lofty service plan goals would not be met: efficient public service delivery; sustainable management and stewardship of natural resources; and, a thriving natural resource sector.

As well as highlighting major successes, the report tracks progress on a number of key metrics—also profiling as many program area examples of the broad ministry mandate as possible; from streamlining authorizations and assessing client satisfaction, to monitoring wildlife and ecosystems in recovery, and compliance with dam safety regulations and natural resource laws to name a few. The report also responds to issues of public concern and how the ministry steps-up in situations like the unprecedented flooding of 2012 to deliver on our mandate.

In short, while the report is meant for a public audience, it can be a source of great pride for those who have worked to make a positive difference in the landscape and lives of the people of BC.
Have a look and give yourselves and your co-workers a pat on the back.

Creek—What Creek?

Submitted by: Migs Lovlin, Water Technician

Currently, I am filling a temporary position in Water Stewardship, processing "Backlog" files. I had an opportunity this May to travel with a co-worker to Nelson, where we split up and I travelled with a local Water Stewardship Division Officer, John Bochard, who has worked in water forever and a day (he has since retired). John and I were enroute to Burton City precinct to physically check on some water licence amendments we were working on.

When my co-worker, Pierre Johnstone, and I crossed over Kootenay Pass (Salmo-Creston), enroute to Nelson from Cranbrook—we actually ran into some snow. As we came down in elevation the snow changed to rain. Needless to say, it continued to rain as John and I drove north from Nelson to Nakusp and south again to Burton City. We discussed the news I had heard on the way over; that a creek had blown out and closed the road between Nakusp and Needles ferry. One of the files John wanted to check on was down that way so he thought it would be best if we went there first, to see if we would be able to access the location of the lot pertaining to his file.

John was driving and we came to a Highways' person stopping traffic, advising no entry beyond that point as a creek was running over the road. John asked questions that this person did not have the answers to and just then a highways maintenance truck drove up and lucky for us, John knew the driver. Well, not only did we get the answers to the questions, we got an up close view of the incident. Sure enough, a creek had left the road in a terrible state since the blowout had occurred at 3 am that morning.

I was back up to the same area the end of July and was amazed at how well the road repair appeared. Where is that creek?

Lillooet Reunion!

Submitted by Bruce Walter, Forest Officer, First Nations Relations, Cascades District

Ten years ago the Lillooet Forest District office was closed and the Lillooet TSA became part of the Cascades Natural Resource District headquartered in Merritt, BC. The Lillooet Forest Service family had always been relatively close and as a group had participated in many events together. The unique bond was strengthened as we lost friends to cancer or other medical conditions over the years since closure and we recognized a need to come together. Therefore, on July 19 and 20th a group of about 80 happy campers attended a 10 year reunion of the Lillooet Forest District.

Lillooet's Cayoosh Campground located on the banks of the Fraser River at the "Bridge of the 23 Camels", was the location of our event.

We had a great time reminiscing, and participating in the Apricot/Tsaqwem Festival and Show and Shine in Lillooet.

It was a homecoming for the former staff and families who now live in Grand Forks, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, Victoria, Kamloops, Merritt, Alexis Creek, Cranbrook and points beyond.

Lillooet had been a Ranger Station until reorg (sound familiar?) in 1980 and was a full Forest Service office until closing in 2003. Looking around the reunion campground over the two days it was interesting to note that most of the timeline that represents an office in Lillooet was represented at our reunion.

For example, Dave Horne's father Joe had worked in the area as a Regional Stand Examiner during the Ranger Station era. Of course the post Ranger Station era was well represented. Retired staff such as Scaler, Nolan Stringer, Operations Manager, Keith Blom and District Manager, Ken Waite were present as well as those of us who have either remained in government or moved on to non-government jobs.

The evenings turned to reminiscing around the fire and talking until the early hours. More than a few laughs were had and a couple of tears shed for lost colleagues. All in all, the group agreed that 10 years was too long and that our next reunion should be much sooner.

We were well supported by the District of Lillooet, the Lillooet Chamber of Commerce, the Lillooet Elks Club, and Lauzon Welding, who provided the hamburgers to feed our large group on Saturday night.

Looking forward to our next reunion, the organizing committee:

Bruce Walter, Sue Omelchuk, Dwayne Eastman, Dave Horne and Christine Galliazzo

Life of Adventure!

Submitted by: Paul Knowles, Director, Competitiveness and Innovation Branch

Laura Richardson Bell worked for the FS from 1979 to 2004 as a technician and then a forester in many programs in Golden, then in Port Alberni as Operations Manager from 2004 to retirement in 2009, at which point she married Paul Bell and they began the next phase of their life of adventure.

They set off on their 36' sailboat "Chirpy" from Deep Bay, BC on March 31, 2010, sailed and hiked their way down the west coast of America, sailed down the coast of Mexico to Guatemala, trucked "Chirpy" across Guatemala, sailed up through Belize to the Florida Keys and then up the Atlantic and Intracoastal Waterway to North Carolina.

After an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Atlantic (Laura was too sick to even keep down water, all her self-hypnosis, trial passages, and dogged determination notwithstanding), they quickly moved on to Plan B, sailing up to New York City and into the Erie Canal and finally into Lake Ontario.

Since their original plan had involved being in Europe, they continued with their backpacking traverse of the Pyrenees from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, cycling from the north to the south of France, and visiting friends and relatives in the UK. They liked the hiking and cycling so much that they returned there this year for a cycle trip through Wales and a backpacking traverse of the Alps from the Mediterranean to Lake Geneva.

They are now back on "Chirpy", sailing through the Great Lakes, with plans to truck "Chirpy" back to the West Coast this fall for more West Coast adventures.

They strive in every way to live life to the fullest and for those that doubt their physical ability as they get older, both Laura and Paul feel as strong as they did in their 30's! In between their time in the mountains and on the sea, they operate a management and team training company, QANDA; anyone interested in creating a high-performance team using well-tried but unique development techniques can contact them through Laura@qanda.ca.

Read more about their adventures at www.mytripjournal.com/chirpyventures.

Honeymoon on Mt. Rainier

High on the Pacific Crest Trail

Rough passage ends at Golden Gate Bridge

3000m pass in the Alps

Texts from the Mountain –Climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro with a Cell Phone

Submitted by: Dave Spittlehouse, Competiveness and Innovation Branch

24 jan. Morning bustle of brkfst + packing at Karanga. Colourful line of porters + hikers weaving its way up the trail. High cirrus blocking suns heat. Walk slowly (poley poley). Breathe in on one step, out on next. Lose rhythm + gasping for O2. Alpine desert. Barafu camp (4673 m) is on a steep slope, tents jammed in amidst boulders. White necked ravens soar on thermals + inspect abandoned camp sites 4 food. Kili zombies returning frm the peak. We leave at midnight 4 our ascent to Uhuru peak at 5895 m. A slow 6h climb. This leg 4 the kids, Paul + our supporters. Fog rolls in on time, windy. sleep.

We were hiking/climbing Kilimanjaro to raise money for the Tumaini Orphanage at Usa River in eastern Tanzania. Kilimanjaro is a dormant stratovolcano; at 5895m it is the highest mountain on the African continent. Paul, Mike and Dave arrive a few days before our climb to help Dave Egles, owner of Home Energy Systems in Victoria, install a solar power system and perform other construction jobs. The orphanage is funded by donations and run by numerous volunteers from around the world and by local paid staff. Most of the orphans are there as a result of death due to AIDS. They are housed and provided with an education in English, something necessary to go beyond the junior level.

Mt. Kilimanjaro from Shira 1 camp

I bought a cheap cell phone and 20 minutes of time to keep family, sponsors and the web site up-to-date on our climb. Kilimanjaro looms over an extensive, heavily populated plain with lots of cell towers. Groups of porters and guides indicated the best locations for cell reception at the camps.

Gilbert and Jimmy were our guides and they showed a great deal of patience with us over the next eight days. We will take the Lemosho route, one of five routes up Kilimanjaro. Too rapid an ascent to high elevation is dangerous, and the Lemosho route is one of the longer routes allowing climbers to adjust to the reduction in oxygen with elevation. Porters carry all the gear. They are limited to a maximum load of 15 kg plus their personal items. Each climbing group has its own dining tent, cook tent, chairs and tables, and a biffy tent, along with the gear and tent for each climber.

A two-hour drive to the Londorrosi Gate takes us through corn, banana and coffee plantations, and then pine forests with potatoes, cabbage and carrots growing beneath. Thirty mini buses, trucks and SUVs were required to get everyone there! Our starting elevation is 2400m in hot and humid forest.

19 Jan. At the gate. A Zoo! Not a quiet walk in the woods. Lemosho route to forest camp at 2900m. Hot, Steep. Pine Forest + jungle. 70+ tents at camp. Crowded.

And it gets more crowded as the other routes meet near the final climb to the peak.

20 Jan. Up, up, dwn, up thru forest to heather trees at 3339m. Sunny, great scenery. Heather forest to the plains. All well. Busy route. After more up we r on flat going east. Ther is Kilimanjaro, glaciers shining in the sun. Cloud spilling down side to Shira plateau.

From now on Kilimanjaro dominates our view. We see its changing moods through the day from a clear view of the peak in the morning, clouds covering the peak and spilling down over the alpine desert by lunchtime, and then clearing by late evening.

21 Jan. A 6 km hike up to 4000m to Shira 2 camp. Moorland. Cloud off Kilimanjaro cover camp. Lava rock.

Porters in heather forest

Wet areas in the stark rocky landscape contain some of the strangest plants I have seen. Scenecio looks like a cross between a small tree and a cactus, while the lobelia is like a huge brush. Shrubs are draped with orange hair lichen.

22 Jan. Lv Shira 2 to climb to Lava tower 4637m thru alpine. Rock + sparse vegetation, a grnd sqrl, few brds. Kili appearng + disapp in fog. Trail dwn to Barranco cmp is steep + rocky. Arrv at 3976 m tired + sore. 8 hr hike. 1700m elv change, 12 km. Cmp site in bowl. 200m rk wall on 1 side, kilimanjaro behind. Arrow Glacier lit by rising moon. Stars. Fog drift thru cmp.

Slept well this night at Barranco Camp.

23 Jan. It was below zero again. Breakfast of gruel, eggs and pancakes. Paul has just left to go down with jimmy our assistant guide. He hasn't slept in 2 days and was coughing all night. Pulmonary edema. He had a lot of pain + stress yestrdy. Heard he is ok + at hotel in moshi. We 3 only hdache, labourd breath + soreness. Tdy strt + end at 4000 m. Steep up dn. Scramble up 100 m rock wall with 400+ hikers porters + guides. Easier on top. Fog at Karanga camp, cold, lunch. Busy place as all prepare 4 tomorrows hike to base camp of midnite climb to summit.

A short hike through barren rocky terrain took us from Karanga to the Barafu base camp. We were high enough that small cumulous clouds form below us and grow to our level. At Barafu we rest and view Kilimanjaro and the adjacent peak of Marwnezi. After dinner I lie fully dressed in my sleeping bag waiting for our climb to start at midnight.

Barafu camp

Numerous slowly moving lights indicate the parties climbing the steep scree of the cone of Kilimajaro. We have a full moon and a clear sky. This hike is one of the hardest physical activities I have ever done. I have to force myself to keep going, fantasizing that the lights ahead at Stella Point indicate a shelter and rest. My problem is that I did not have sufficient instant energy food during the climb. Fortunately, a drink of juice and a liquid power bar from Mike, plus realizing the last section is relatively flat revived me and I make it to the top.

Mike, Gilbert, Dave and Dave at Uhuru Peak

25 Jan. We made it to the top of kilimanjaro. Left at midnight on a 1200m climb up rock + scree by moonlight + headlamp. Extrmly tiring 6 hours. Scenery was spectacular. Glaciers. Took lots of photos. What goes up must go dn. Tiring also - scree skiing. Plus another 4h dn to Mweka camp this afternoon!

Sunrise on glaciers at Uhuru Peak

Sunrise at Uhuru Peak is spectacular. The sun is a red bubble bursting through the cloud layer below us. Glaciers are tinged pink. We descend past late-comers forcing their weary bodies up the steep slope. Twelve hours later after climbing and then descending 1200m, we are back at base camp having lunch. A brief rest and then we continue to test our knees and thighs hiking down 1500 m to our final camp. However, there was a beer waiting for us.

26 Jan. Mweka camp sites are under trees. Yesterdays walk from Barafa to Mweka was a steady descent (1500m) on a rough trail that strained our already tired legs. Passed thru alpine, moorland, + heather forest. After brkfst today we met with staff + porters for an end of trip celebration. These are the people who have made our trip possible.

Another 1500m descent and we join hundreds of other tired but excited hikers, porters and guides at the Meweka Gate. We buy souvenirs, have a beer and share tales of our trip with people from around the world. We drive to Moshi for a shower and lunch and then back to Tumaini. Mike and I continue our adventure with a two-day safari to Ngorongoro and Lake Manyara National Parks, both situated in collapsed volcanic craters. Here we have great close up views of the wildlife. The trip was a fantastic experience. We met some wonderful people—guides, porters, hikers, kids and orphanage staff—and we raised over $30,000 for the orphanage.

The Dirt Readers!

Time to get out and snap some photos! *The Dirt* Advisory Group increasingly requires good quality digital photos for the quarterly newsletter. We acknowledge that there are skilled photographers among ministry staff and would like to showcase your photos in each quarterly edition.

Categories

Photos can consist of:
- Workplace images – individuals or groups / teams in office and field settings; health, wellness and social activities;
- Community involvement;
- Wildlife; or
- Scenic.

Submission Details

- Deadline for submissions is changed with each edition and will be noted on the previous edition.
- Images can be submitted to: *FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca*
- The contest is open to all ministry employees and retirees.
- Interested staff can make submissions to as many editions (season/category) as they want, but there is a limit of five images per category.
- We are looking for recent photos, please limit your entries to shots taken within the past 2 years.

View and Select your Prize!!

(embroidery: *The Dirt* - Newsletter Advisory Group)

Tote Bag
Computer Bag
Fleece Blanket
FS Centenary Cooler Bag

Prizes and Judging

- There will be an overall 'Best' image in each category;
- Judging will be done by the Advisory Group;
- Images will be judged on composition, clarity, exposure, creativity, relevance to the ministry and category fit;
- The winner of the 'Best' image in each category will be sent a prize for their photo;
- Individuals can win only one prize; and
- All winners will be announced with their photo in the edition of the newsletter.

Technical Specifications/Requirements

The following specifications and requirements have been established to ensure that images can be used in a variety of applications.

1. All images must have relevance to the ministry and be submitted in digital format.
2. All images must be in full colour or black and white.
3. Photo dimensions (image size) should be at 300 dots per inch (DPI) and preferably in a jpg format and sent to *FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca*
4. Images can be digitally enhanced (i.e., colour / exposure adjusted composite photos are okay), but not digitally altered (i.e. NO "Photo-Shop" images must portray subjects and / or material in photo as they were captured).
5. When submitting images, some descriptive information should also be included – category of image and location.
6. All images submitted, whether or not selected as a winning image, may be published in future issues of the newsletter.

For further information, contact:

FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca

DEADLINE IS December 9, 2013

Don't forget to try your hand at writing a limerick or poem. Send *The Dirt* Advisory Group your ideas!

September Edition Photo Contest Winners!

Wildlife Category Spotted this little one while working in the Granisle/Babine Lake area.
Photographer - Brian Brinkhurst, Natural Resource Officer, Nadina (Burns Lake) Field Unit/ Skeena Region, Compliance & Enforcement Branch

Have a photo for the next "Photo Contest?"
Review the contest guidelines and send your photo's to the *FS News* Advisory Group!

Photographers, please contact the Advisory Group to claim your prize or contact Sonia Donison directly.

Workplace Category BC Tanker Group #1 at the Williams Lake Tanker Base

Photographer - Ross Noble, Air Attack Officer, Wildfire Management Branch - Southeast Fire Centre

Don't forget to try your hand at writing a limerick or poem. Send *The Dirt* Advisory Group your ideas!

Scenic Category North Barriere Lake on July 20th, at around 9 pm

Photographer - Becky Van Limbeek, Records Clerk / Customer Service Representative

Photographers, please contact the Advisory Group to claim your prize or contact Sonia Donison directly.

Raising of Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole

The Dirt is a quarterly newsletter for all employees and former employees.

Sonia Donison is providing management and coordination support for the newsletter. Questions or comments about the newsletter should be directed to Sonia at 250-356-9638 or via email

Call for Stories/Ideas

The success of the newsletter depends upon the active engagement of staff throughout the organization. One way for people to support the newsletter is to share your ideas, news, stories, successes, experiences with revitalization and learning, celebrations and photos for use in future editions of the newsletter. People are asked to check with Sonia at 250-356-9638 or via email about their idea or ideas before writing a story. Stories are to be submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to each quarterly edition—deadline for articles is December 9.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES