



NRESi WEEKLY NEWS

November 2 - November 13, 2015

A newsletter for faculty, staff, students and the community
who participate in the
Natural Resources & Environmental Studies Institute
and NRES Graduate Programs

NRESi NOTES

FROM THE DIRECTOR & RESEARCH MANAGER

Hello,
NRESi is pleased to welcome our new Research Manager Al Wiensczyk to UNBC. Al is a long-time resident of Prince George and brings with him a wealth of experience working on natural resource and environmental studies issues. Al is well known to many faculty at UNBC from past collaborations. We had an exceptionally talented pool of applicants for the Research Manager position and want to thank all those who applied. Leanne Elliot, our former Research Manager, has moved into a new position with the Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations, where I am sure we will continue to collaborate with her.

I was impressed this past month with the level of community involvement and commitment for the public hearings on the Ancient Forest Trail park proposal. The Prince George hearings, held at the Civic Centre, saw a packed room where many thoughtful comments and feedback were provided. Kudos to Kim Menounos and Gretchen Prystawik for their dedicated work (along with many others) in organizing the public hearings. No one can say that the citizens of B.C.'s central-interior do not care about the stewardship and conservation of our public lands.

We have an exciting seminar this Friday by Dr. Brian Menounos, on a topic that has been very much in the news this past summer. I look forward to seeing you at the Friday Colloquium.

Darwyn Coxson
Director, NRESi

Hello everyone

I am very excited to be joining the NRESi and UNBC team. I know that I have big shoes to fill and I hope that I am up to the task. A bit of background on me and the skills I bring to the group. I was the Ecosystems and Stand Management Extension Specialist for FORREX—Forum for Research and Extension in Natural Resources for 14 years and have spent the last 2 1/2 years self-employed as a natural resource management consultant. I have experience in event organization and facilitation, conducting information needs assessments, and writing (and peer reviewing) journal articles, research reports, extension notes and newsletter articles. I have lived and worked in northern British Columbia for the past 20 years and as such have developed a diverse network of contacts within government, industry, academia, and the consulting community and have effectively used that network to assist in the various projects and activities that I have been involved in throughout my career. I look forward to working with all of you on the myriad of interesting and exciting NRESi initiatives and future opportunities.

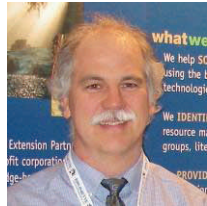


Photo credit: C. Lear

Al Wiensczyk, RPF
Research Manager, NRESi

REMINDER: Share your information about recent publications, grants, and/or other honours you may have received with others interested in future NRESi issues.
PLEASE EMAIL ALL INFORMATION AND MATERIAL TO: al.wiensczyk@unbc.ca

We're on the web at : www.unbc.ca/nres-institute/newsletter

TENTATIVE COLLOQUIUM SCHEDULE

The NRESi's 2015 fall colloquium series is soon coming to an end! Here's who we have slotted in for the remainder of the semester. Please note that presenters may change. Watch for announcements closer to the lectures confirming the presenter and topic. Lectures for the fall semester will be held in 8-166 and in the winter in 7-212 (to be confirmed in January).

Presentation Date	Tentative Presenter and/or Topic
Nov 6, 2015	Dr. Brian Menounos, UNBC—Will glaciers become extinct in western Canada by the end of this Century?
Nov 13, 2015	Joint Presentation as part of Inspiring Women Among Us Events (Nov 13-25, 2015) Dr. Leigh Torres, Oregon State University Dots on a map - Putting them to work for marine conservation in diverse industrial development and climate change contexts.
Nov 20, 2015	Joint Presentation as part of Inspiring Women Among Us Events (Nov 13-25, 2015) Patrick Earley, Community Advocate for the Wikimedia Foundation; Wikipedia Editor How do you solve a problem like Marie Curie? Wikipedia's efforts to ensure balanced representation in science content and contributors
Nov 27, 2015	Mark Groulx, Lecturer at UNBC, Environmental Planning

UPCOMING EVENTS

NRESi COLLOQUIUM

Dr. Brian Menounos

UNBC Professor of Earth Sciences and Canada Research Chair in Glacier Change

[Will glaciers become extinct in western Canada by the end of this Century?](#)

Exceptionally warm, dry conditions in the Pacific Northwest and southern latitudes of western Canada commenced in 2013 and continued largely unabated through this summer. The winter of 2014/2015, for example, saw freezing levels in the Cascade Mountains rise to elevations not seen in the instrumental record. Record thin snow packs have similarly occurred for many regions with some mountains lacking any measurable snow cover at the end of the accumulation season. These climatological conditions punished glaciers throughout the region. Were these conditions a window into what we might expect in the future? My presentation will discuss our preliminary results from this year and summarize those findings and work my collaborators and students have completed to better understand the response of alpine glaciers to climate change.

Friday, Nov 6th, 2015

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Room: 8-166

To participate remotely: <http://www.unbc.ca/nres-institute/colloquium-webcasts>

UPCOMING EVENTS

NRESi COLLOQUIUM

Dr. Leigh Torres

Oregon State University

[Dots on a Map - Putting them to work for Marine conservation, in diverse industrial development and climate change contexts](#)

Marine megafauna, such as marine mammals and seabirds, can move widely across oceans in search of resources. Their movements often intersect with anthropogenic impacts at various scales and intensities. In order to apply appropriate and effective conservation management, it is important to understand not only the behaviour patterns of these animals, but also their spatial distributions

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UPCOMING EVENTS (CON'T)

NRESi COLLOQUIUM

relative to threats. Spatial ecology is a vital tool for better understanding such interactions across space and time. In this talk, I will introduce the concept of spatial ecology, including a discussion of the term 'spatial ecology' as a misnomer. I will address the role of spatial ecology in marine conservation efforts and present three diverse case study applications of spatial ecology: (1) identifying fine-scale habitat use of the critically endangered Maui dolphin, (2) understanding impacts of climate change on foraging habitat of southern right whales, and (3) documenting a blue whale foraging ground within an oil and gas field. These case studies will demonstrate novel analysis techniques that led to intriguing results. I will also discuss resulting implications for management in each case, with an eye towards using spatial ecology for improved marine conservation.

Friday, Nov 13th, 2015

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Room: 8-166

To participate remotely: <http://www.unbc.ca/nres-institute/colloquium-webcasts>

NRESi AWARDS

On Friday, October 30, 2015, NRESi hosted their 2nd annual recognition awards ceremony. Award recipients were presented with engraved yellow-cedar plaques made by Mark Bell at Cassiar Cannery near Port Edward. The plaques were milled on-site from driftwood collected in the Skeena River and show, like our award recipients, a deep connection to the land and local communities.



Lifetime Achievement Award

This award recognizes a NRESi member who has made profound and cumulative contributions to the NRESi and its core mission to promote interdisciplinary research and service. This year's recipient of the **NRESi Lifetime Achievement Award** is **Dr. Joselito (Lito) Arocena**. Lito's accomplishments include being awarded UNBC's very first Canada Research Chair (CRC). In structuring the research program associated with that appointment, Lito did not take the view that this was an individual accomplishment, benefit, or accolade. Instead, and completely in line with his open and unselfish approach to research, he conceptualized that first CRC as creating a broad platform which should be used to support the interdisciplinary research programs of many other faculty within and beyond NRES. Established faculty members, and many new hires over the years, have benefited from the research foundations and supports that Lito created and made available. They also benefited greatly from the very clear vision of interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and inclusiveness that Lito brings to all of his research work.

As of December 2014, Lito had authored or co-authored 105 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, of which 47 were co-authored with NRESi members. There are a total of 56 NRESi co-authors in his publication list with 17 different NRESi colleagues—possibly the most collaborative with fellow faculty of anyone at UNBC. His collaborations are truly interdisciplinary, involving work not just with fellow soil scientists but also with biologists, ecologists, wildlife researchers, foresters, engineers, geographers, planners and tourism researchers.

Lito has also extended his collaborative interdisciplinary research program internationally, developing strong individual and institutional linkages with the Technical University of Cartagena in Spain, the Ecole Normale Supérieure in France, and at Wenzhou University in China, where he holds an adjunct appointment and was awarded status as a "high-end foreign expert" by the Chinese State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs.

Lito was unable to attend the award ceremony due to illness so his son, Pong, accepted the award on his behalf. We wish Lito a speedy recovery and hope to see him back on campus soon.



Pong Arocena (r.) accepting on behalf of his father the Lifetime Achievement Award from Dr. Peter Jackson.

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NRESi AWARDS (Con't).

Distinguished Scholar Award

This award recognizes an NRESi member who has made a significant contribution within the last 12 months on interdisciplinary and/or applied research or service relating to natural resources and/or environment in British Columbia. This year's co-recipients of the **NRESi Distinguished Scholar Award** are **Drs. Ellen Petticrew** and **Phil Owens**. On August 4, 2015, Likely, BC was the scene of one of the largest tailings pond breaches in Canadian history when the Mount Polley Mine tailings dam burst, sending in the order of 25 million cubic metres of water and mine waste into adjacent creeks and lakes. Disaster ensued as water rushed from the dam into Polley Lake, Hazeltine Creek, and Quesnel Lake which deposited tailing across the landscape. The local communities and the entire country witnessed the environmental and social damage via news reports and social media updates.

Drs Petticrew and Owens and the team at the Quesnel River Research Centre (QRRC) have conducted research in the area for many years and as a result were able to offer rapid, scientifically informed response to the media, nearby communities and First Nations. Not only did they bring their wealth of scientific knowledge of the regional aquatic systems to answer key questions in the midst of a disaster, but they also laid the foundations for research to study the long-term impacts and damages of this major breach.

In addition to numerous local, regional, and national media interviews throughout this past year, Ellen and Phil also presented their initial findings in a press conference broadcast live at the meetings of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) on April 27, 2015. Their commitment to engage substantially with the broader community via news interviews, site visits, open houses, educational workshops and knowledge translation events about this environmental disaster in their midst is commendable.



Drs. Ellen Petticrew, Darwyn Coxson, Phil Owens and Catherine Nolan. (Ltr).

Community Advancement Award

The recipient of this award will have demonstrated a broad influence on the development of natural resources and/or the conservation of our environment beyond their normal job-related duties, through interdisciplinary research or service to communities in the central-north of B.C. This year's co-recipients of **NRESi Community Advancement Award** are **Drs. Catherine Nolin, Roy Rea** and **Sarah Boyd**.

Dr. Catherine Nolin exemplifies the commitment of NRESi members to learn from and teach in local communities. She has taken UNBC students to seven field schools in Guatemala and co-facilitated an interdisciplinary field school to Peru. Her field schools have been an important part of her research on the geography of culture, rights and power. Catherine has long-standing interests in issues of the Maya refugee movement, Guatemalan migration and refugee experiences in Canada. We are proud to have the opportunity to highlight her accomplishments as a member of NRESi.

Dr. Roy Rea has surmounted logistical, ecological, meteorological and gastronomic challenges over the years since its inception in 2000, to create a highly regarded and truly exceptional intensive 2-week "Field Applications in Resource Management" course. Roy is a thoughtful, fun and energetic person who puts a lot of effort in everything he does. He is diligent and patient, organized and hopelessly optimistic. He has also assisted for the past 15 years in the Forest Plant Systems course collecting foliage, twig, and cone samples for students to get excited about and learn dendrology.



Erica Henderson, Drs Catherine Nolan, Roy Rea and Hugues Masicotte (ltr).

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NRESi AWARDS (Continued)

Community Advancement Award

Dr Sarah Boyd brought fresh life and energy to the PG-PIRG during her 5 year tenure as the coordinator. She managed the UNBC Compost Program and coordinated both paid and volunteer positions that not only kept the composting system running, but enhanced the collection of compost, and the maintenance of data collection and education regarding composting and food waste on campus. She was heavily involved in enhancing the gardens on campus where students could learn about sustainability and gardening, and in recent years, these gardens have provided produce for sale to the UNBC community. She helped PG-PIRG bring a weekly University Farmers' Market (UFM) to UNBC and also made sure that the UNBC community always had farm fresh eggs, vegetables, fruits, and fair trade coffee to select from. She has made substantive contributions to, the Green University Planning Committee, planning and participation in all Annual Green Days, campaigns to provide greater protection and awareness of missing aboriginal women in the north, the inland temperate rainforest and Ancient Forest Trail initiative, sustainable farming, and a variety of other issues related to natural resources and the environment. She also contributes to the broader community through her work with Prince George's women's organizations.



(ltr) Drs. Darwyn Coxson, Art Fredeen and Sarah Boyd.

IN THE NEWS

Stay up-to-date with the latest NRESi and member news by following us on Twitter: [@UNBC_NRESi](https://twitter.com/UNBC_NRESi)

TRAVEL & CONFERENCES

Ibukun Olasanmi - A Masters student in the NRES program presented a talk titled, "Bioremediation of drill cuttings using biosurfactants" at the 65th Canadian Chemical Engineering conference in Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, October 6th, 2015. Ron Thring was co-author on this presentation.

Ibukun also had a poster presentation titled, "Studies on bioactive compounds from the extract of *Bambusa vulgaris* on some bacterial isolates" at the same conference on Monday, October 5th, 2015. Ron Thring and David Akinpelu (OAU) were co-authors on this presentation.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



October saw a major change in the hallways at UNBC, with the retirement and now departure of **Dr. Staffan Lindgren**. We will miss his friendly presence in the hallways and his careful observations on the world around us. His door now proclaims that "Dr Lindgren has vacated the office".

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The Sturgeon Conservation Centre is looking for volunteers at the hatchery in Vanderhoof. They will be marking and tagging juvenile sturgeon on Wednesday to Friday (excluding holidays) for approximately 5 weeks, starting this week. Their marking and tagging day typically starts at 10:00 am and they wrap up for the day by 3:30 pm. They are looking for two to three volunteers each day.

If you would like to volunteer one or more days of your time to contribute to this very worthwhile initiative, please contact Wayne Salewski at Salewski@telus.net or Mike Manky at Mike.Manky@gofishbc.com.

Please feel free to share this announcement with anyone who you think might be interested.

For more information on the recovery initiative, visit <http://www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org/>



SUSAN STEVENSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

As its first project of this kind, the Natural Resources and Environmental Studies Institute (NRESi) has established the Susan Stevenson Scholarship Fund, in memory of wildlife ecologist and NRESi member Susan Stevenson. During a 35-year career built primarily in the BC central interior, Susan designed and implemented important research and inventory projects related to mountain caribou habitat, lichen biology, and silvicultural systems, collaborating with a diverse range of researchers, and gave generously of her expertise to the next generation of scientists. Susan exemplified the Institute's values of interdisciplinary curiosity and unselfish collaboration, and enriched the lives of all those who worked and studied with her.

Efforts have succeeded in reaching the goal of \$15,000 that will be matched by UNBC to allow for an annual award. Next steps will be to identify award criteria. The inaugural award is hoped to be presented in the 2016-2017 academic year. NRESi would like to thank everyone who contributed to the scholarship! More information will follow in the coming months, as well as award criteria for students interested in applying.

COLLOQUIUM ARCHIVE

Did you miss a colloquium or special lecture? Visit NRESi's webcast archive to catch up! They can be found [here](#).

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