

Partnering for Sustainable Resource Management

Newsletter 5
Fall 2006



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Welcome

This fall brings on a new host of CURA graduate students to UNBC. Claudette Bois is starting a PhD on a disturbance ecology project under the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Stream. Deanna Yim is pursuing a MSc on the Improved Partnership Stream to work on a local environmental monitoring project. Leona Shaw will be working on the TEK Stream, looking at resource management issues surrounding medicinal plant sites. Three students, Diana Kutzner, Shane Hartman, and Matteo Babini have joined the Ecotourism Stream, while Matteo will also be helping out with Education Stream research. Meanwhile, continuing graduate students Karen Heikkila and Sarah Parsons are putting the final touches on their theses drafts (the former on Tl'azt'en toponymy, the latter on local-level measures of sustainable forest management).

Since our last newsletter, we have published one scholarly article: Grainger, S., Sherry, E. and Fondahl, G. (2006) The John Prince Research Forest: Evolution of a co-management partnership, *The Forestry Chronicle*, 82(4):484-495. Our CURA project was also briefly discussed in a position-paper I was asked to write for the Northern Research Forum's Fall 2006 meeting, on increasing indigenous participation in resource management.

Our CURA project submitted its midterm report this past June for review by SSHRC. In preparing the report, we heard from several community members that they feel the project has contributed significantly to capacity building among Tl'azt'en members, in terms of research and related skills.

Gail Fondahl ~ UNBC, CURA Principal Investigator

Putting Traditional Ecological Knowledge into Practice

Beverly Bird - CURA Stream Leader—Tl'azt'en Ecological Knowledge
Kateri Haskel—Technical Design

Traditional Ecological Knowledge in the Tl'azt'enne perspective is based on the land uses, the Keyoh system of property rights, and traditional land management practices. For several years we have been concerned about the overuse of our lands and resources.

Over this time, many of the Tl'azt'enne researchers have been working on transcripts of old interviews, researching archives for materials relevant to our territory, and conducting interviews to gather additional information. The materials are being used to develop culturally based management plans using customary law and institutions. We are also developing management goals based on community values, needs, and objectives.

Since our communities are involved in the treaty process, research for the purpose of negotiations and resource management planning became necessary for future community developments.

**"If you look after the land,
the land looks after you"**

**A common view shared by
most Dakelhne.**

Accessing resources from various sources including universities and private agencies was a necessary step in reaching our goals.

We have been building capacity at the ground level in order that each of the sectors is protected for future use. Even though we do not need to prove aboriginal title and rights, the day-to-day research is being used to document our history and knowledge of the land. We compiled place names, traditional use sites

[research conducted in the mid-90s where we identified, for example, Dakelh names and medicine gathering areas], genealogy, and clan territories. As we continue to transcribe interviews, more information is found. Our work is important for the purpose of understanding, preserving, and restoring our language. Thus, our involvement with the CURA project: Curriculum Development.

Places, trails that indicate getting to places, and the language that describes our lands and resources are described eloquently in our language and peoples' stories are significant in location.

Other projects that have been useful to our staff include the AFPP (Aboriginal Forest Planning Process); Criteria and Indicators of Joint Forest Management; Adaptive Co-management; and Learning to be a Good Interviewer. We also had a session comparing TUS methodology to AFPP methodology.

These are only a few projects which benefit our community researchers.

In the last segment of the CURA TEK research stream, we hope to identify ecological impacts of forest activities on some of the Keyoh and to advance the environmental concerns on identified

medicine gathering sites for the purpose of protecting the areas or identifying areas that can be restored for the purpose of gathering.

We are looking forward to working with Claudette Bois, PhD Candidate, Forest Ecology, UNBC [Kathy Lewis] who will be examining the role of human factors [i.e. use of fire in altering the landscape as one option] in shaping landscape in the Tl'azt'en territory. We are also looking forward to having Leona Shaw, MNRES Candidate, Ethnobotany and Ecology, UNBC [Jane Young] working with us on examining areas of ecological concern for Keyoh members in Tl'azt'en territory, particularly medicine gathering sites.

A very special thanks to the Tl'azt'en Nation research staff for their dedication, hard work, and patience. We are helping our nation preserve our knowledge.



Beverly Bird, Isaac Felix, Ron Mattess and others.

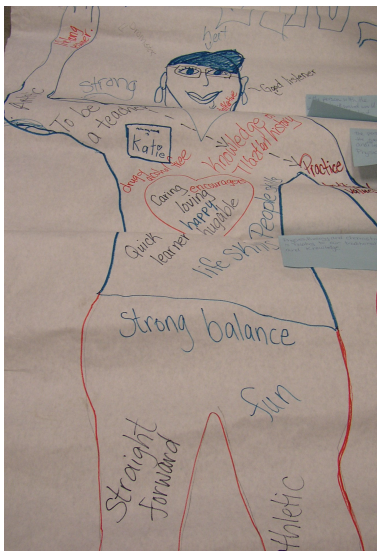
Strengthening Science Literacy through Traditional Ecological Knowledge:

Preliminary Results from the Education Stream Focus Group Workshops

By Chris Jackson—Education Stream Leader

A key product of the Education Stream's research is to develop community-based educational opportunities that enhance youth retention in science; incorporate Tl'azt'en culture and Dakelh language; build capacity for sustainable resource management, and are supported by Tl'azt'enne. To do this we need to understand Tl'azt'en educational philosophy, values, and goals. In 2005 we conducted five community focus group workshops hearing from educators, youth, children, parents and guardians, and Elders. In total, 87 community members, about 10 % of those living in the communities that comprise Tl'azt'en Nation, took part in our focus group workshops. We sincerely appreciate this community input - Mussi!

One of the youth focus group workshop posters, done in August 2005.



During each workshop, participants worked in small groups to respond to the following questions:

What is your vision of the ideal well educated Tl'azt'enne (i.e. indicate their characteristics or attributes)?

How does your ideal person change when he or she is fluent in science and traditional knowledge (TEK)?

What are the barriers to attaining this vision?

Identify solutions to overcoming these barriers, and community people and/or resources that could support your solutions.

To encourage participation, each small group recorded their responses to the first two questions on a life size tracing of one of their group members; brainstorming and annotating the figure with their impressions of the characteristics of an ideal, well-educated Tl'azt'enne, and then indicating how their ideal person is affected by science and TEK fluency. During the workshop

each poster was presented to the entire group of workshop participants for comment. The third and fourth questions were first answered in small group discussion and then shared with everyone attending that focus group for further comment.

These discussions provided us with a rich and amazing amount of information. A small team of UNBC and Tl'azt'en researchers have used a consensus approach to categorize all the participant information and determine the key themes and ideas that represent participant responses to each of these questions. Our analysis of this material is nearing completion.

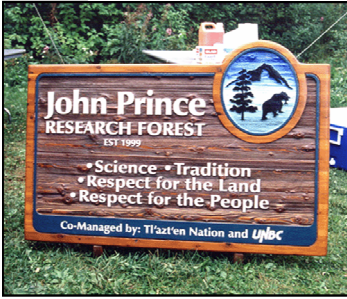
In response to the first questions, the following over-arching themes are emerging. The ideal, well-educated Tl'azt'enne has a strong relationship with the land and can understand and function in both their nation's culture and that of the contemporary non-aboriginal community with which they interact (i.e. "walk in both worlds"). Additionally they are:

- happy, healthy and active;
- friendly, resourceful and confident;
- caring and compassionate;
- family and community oriented;
- hard-working and independent; and
- a respected leader, teacher and life-long learner.

Preliminary results for the remaining questions have also been determined and are presently being discussed among the research team. Once complete, we will be presenting all this information back to the community to confirm that it adequately represents their views. Then this information can be used to develop curriculum grounded in community educational values.

Moving Towards Adaptive Co-management on the JPRF

By Erin Sherry, Sarah Parsons, Bev Leon, and Sue Grainger



As co-management partners seek to work together, they are faced with the challenges of identifying a common vision and then of judging the process and the achievement of shared goals. One of the requirements for proper implementation of co-management is effective monitoring and evaluation. Defining what to measure is the initial step. By talking to local experts from Tl'azt'en Nation, UNBC, and Fort St. James, the *Improving Partnerships Stream* identified 19 criteria and 86 indicators (C&I) to evaluate John Prince Research Forest (JPRF) outcomes. We are considering the use of monitoring and evaluation within an adaptive framework to support the development of effective co-management on the JPRF. C&I provide a valuable tool to reflect on progress, initiate learning, and promote action. JPRF C&I capture values of critical importance to partners and stakeholders who experience co-management first hand and who have their own definitions of sustainability and success. We identified several unique and noteworthy characteristics of JPRF C&I, which are described below.

Outcome Focused — JPRF C&I can be applied to assess three types of co-management outcomes: management performance, impacts, and institutional performance. The first type concerns results or what is happening on-the-ground. It includes C&I focused on how well management objectives are being achieved through programming. These relate to business administration and infrastructure development, recreation, education, outreach and extension, and research. The second type looks at the impacts of co-management activities on the land and partner communities; for example, the status and function of natural resources in the co-management area, and the social, cultural, and economic conditions the JPRF set out to influence. A third type of outcome concerns the overall institutional performance of co-management compared to other types of management arrangements. Comparisons

can be made based on factors such as equity, efficiency, sense of ownership, quality of resource information, and participation.

New Dimensions — JPRF C&I differ from others generated using top-down approaches and external experts. They reflect experience-based, site specific knowledge and embody the diverse needs, expectations, and values of co-management partners and stakeholders. Our research demonstrates the richness of detail obtainable through local research. JPRF C&I add dimension and detail to our understanding of important co-management outcomes.

New Philosophy — Not only is there a difference in the specific C&I generated when compared to larger scale initiatives, but also in the philosophy underlying them. The monitoring and evaluation focus was shifted in this project from external perspectives selected for convenience and comparability, to partner and stakeholder perspectives, which has an empowering and engaging effect. Results show this shift increased the likelihood that evaluation will be implemented by staff and supported by the co-management board and partner communities, and that the results will be addressed and integrated in the adaptive management regime.

Diversity — Results show that the C&I used to evaluate the outcomes of co-management differ according to an individual's type and degree of dependence on the co-management area. In some cases, these different actors are likely to have a different view on what constitutes positive or negative impacts. As a result, it is critical that local expert selection is inclusive and representative. Capturing a diversity of opinion in the present study relied on attention to customary roles, pre-existing rights, dependency on the forest, gender considerations, forest-culture integration, power deficits, knowledge, emotional and geographic proximity to the forest, as well as the declaration of expert selection criteria and procedural openness.

Holism and Integration — Prioritizing one value or issue over another, especially at the C&I development stage, was inconsistent with participants' view that everything is integrated and important across the entire JPRF landscape, particularly TI'azt'enne experts. During the initial monitoring and evaluation phase, creating a comprehensive local perspective is the necessary task. Most of the C&I identified in this study are complementary; although they may not represent mutually held values, they are not exclusive and partners can support each other's desired outcomes. To be practical, at the monitoring and reporting stage, JPRF staff must work to reconcile any conflicting C&I through negotiation and to develop and prioritize measures.

Qualitative, Quantitative, and Spatial Elements — A broad range of the JPRF C&I are quantitative or numeric. However, participants told us that focusing on these types of C&I can exclude important local information. JPRF C&I also include qualitative or opinion-based elements, which communicate local values, enhance cultural appropriateness, and integrate traditional and experiential knowledge. This research strongly suggests that people's perceptions are as important, or perhaps even more important to document, as objective data about co-management results and impacts. In this study, spatial C&I were also found to be important tools. Many values were associated with places or features on the land.

Immediate and Longer-Term Outlook — C&I included in this framework demonstrate progress towards both the short-term objectives of the JPRF partnership and the long term shared vision. They allow co-management partners to assess whether 5-year management plan objectives have been achieved as well as the repercussions of co-management for larger scale issues such as local well-being, livelihoods, and the condition and function of the land.

Community Orientation — C&I generated in this research are both co-management focused and partner community-focused. It is clear that participants felt JPRF success should be evaluated to some degree based on the impact co-management has on

conditions in their communities. Participants felt that JPRF should not be responsible for creating community well being; rather, that JPRF staff should be aware of the communities they serve to best structure programming and operations.

Cultural Foundations — Results demonstrate that JPRF C&I are based on cultural foundations such as holistic thinking, connection to place, strong sense of community, and ethics of respect and empowerment.

Positive Intention — JPRF C&I have a positive focus. They address positive expectations and outcomes, rather than emphasizing negative results or what could go wrong.

Clarity and Transparency — PRF C&I include both technical and lay-person terminology, making them more understandable and creating the opportunity to build capacity among users. JPRF C&I are easily defined, described, and interpreted by the people from TI'azt'en Nation, UNBC, and Ft. St. James who will use them; they are based on local understandings of the forest, community, and culture.

Participatory — Results demonstrate the necessity of participatory development of C&I with co-management partners and stakeholders; this can increase local involvement and equity in co-management decision-making. Results show that a 'bottom-up' approach promotes awareness, buy-in, and local relevance.



Utility Focused — JPRF C&I can contribute to the partnership at all stages of its development. At the outset of the process or during periodic planning exercises, JPRF C&I can assist partners in establishing a common vision and identifying shared and unique objectives. They are powerful monitoring and performance assessment tools that draw a locally relevant picture of the

current situation, identify strengths, and reveal areas needing attention and improvement. As reporting tools, JPRF C&I can be used to discuss progress; they allow people to observe and compare co-management results achieved with desired results. JPRF C&I also facilitate communication of values and increase transparency in the management process.

Lessons From The Land: Learning Environmental Consciousness From Dakelh Place-Names

By Karen Heikkila

The naming of places, be they landforms, villages or cities, is a cultural phenomenon from the earliest of times. Naming to identify and differentiate places seems to be as basic a need as assigning names to the persons and objects that make up our worlds. In the Dakelh culture, where the means of passing down knowledge was by oral transmission, people developed particular strategies for remembering and recalling that knowledge. Routes to hunting grounds or fishing holes, for example, were memorized and unravelled as needed with the help of place-names. People relied upon mental maps that contained detailed information about places on the land, gained from knowledge inherited from Elders, personal experience or the experiences of others. Place-names and the narratives behind them acted as “rosary beads”: they connected as well as commemorated places and events, relating information about the natural and social history of places.



My research on Dakelh place-names indicates that they carry immense value in instructing about Indigenous Knowledge, in making sense of the past, and in comprehending what the land means to Tl'azt'enne. Four themes emerged from analysis of the toponyms: 1) Place-Names as Indicators of Dakelh

Geographical and Historical Knowledge; 2) Place-Names Commemorative of the Ancestral Past; 3) The Role of Place-Names in Educating about Land and Language; and 4) The Role of Place-Names in Educating about Colonization and Cultural Endurance. The idea that land continues to be the basis of Tl'azt'en survival and identity is apparent from the way people talk about places and place-names— these discussions resonate with sentiment that can be thought of as “environmental consciousness”, a moral awareness to honour and engage with places on the land. In this article, two

examples from my research will be considered to arrive at an understanding of this ethic.

One instance of environmental consciousness is glimpsed in place-name narratives that involve mythic creatures. Explaining the origins of places and phenomena, being prescriptive and cautionary, or allowing a momentary view of mystical power, these stories carry a subtext that demonstrates the strong spiritual ties between people and places on the land. The place-names Chuzghun and Bin tizdli, for instance, are associated with accounts of giant animals that tell not only of medicine power but demonstrate the sacredness of the land. The presence of animals such as giant Dolly Varden trout and frogs in these places suggests an offsetting of human might and a creation of balance in the interactions between humans and animals. Giant animals serve as powerful reminders that not all things in nature can be controlled or known with surety. It is in this regard that places exude a kind of importance or sacredness, which creates awareness and respectfulness in people as they travel through the country.

With regard to place-name narratives involving giant animals, a cautionary message often underlies these stories. An episode of the story of the giant frog of Bin tizdli tells of a time when a man came to seek the frog with the intention of capturing and selling it to a zoo². What ensued was a catastrophe, where the man drowned during a sudden squall that blew in over the lake. The story warns of the consequences that can befall those who trespass or exceed the bounds of another's space and privileges. Place-name narratives dealing with giant animals seem to also relate a time in the past when animals were extraordinary and endowed with special powers that could either aid or thwart humans. For fear of suffering misfortune, people travelled with caution through places associated with such animals, always

respecting their existence and space. Such stories emphasize the importance of knowing where one was going, respect for all life, and respect for the land.

Giants as well as giant forms of animals are also featured in narratives relating to the origins of places. Ulhts'acho, an island upriver from the village of Nak'azdli on Stuart Lake is the namesake of an ogre whose tragic death caused its formation³. The story not only tells of the origin of the island as well as a nearby islet with which it is paired, but relays a moral about respect for life and nature. Gluttony made Ulhts'acho kill his dog— his only companion— to get at the lingcod livers in its stomach. On his binge, Ulhts'acho carelessly flung the carcass of his dog into the lake, and when he finally realized what a heartless deed he had committed, he waded out to retrieve the body of his dog. He never returned. His body, like his dog's, after being tossed by the waves and swept along by the current, finally settled and became an island. The story of Ulhts'acho exemplifies the interdependence between humans and animals, and cautions against impulsivity, greed and mistreatment. Above all, the story touches on the continuity between life and the earth— people and animals can be transformed after death into landscape features that endure through the seasons, and that stand sentinel at the coming and going of generations of Dakelhne.

Besides place-name narratives, environmental consciousness is also intimated in the workings of the *Keyoh* system. *Keyoh* territories are defined according to both physical and social bounds. On a material level, *Keyoh* limits are marked by “posts”, or “topographical partitions” by way of hills, mountains, watersheds, meadows, and trails⁴. Lakes and islands, which can also be claimed as part of a family's *Keyoh*, are also used as posts⁵. Although *Keyohs* are thus demarcated, there remains a degree of reciprocity in sharing land and resources. This is observed in the social ties between *Keyoh* holders and others. On a social level, *Keyoh* boundaries are maintained through respect and deference towards the family members who have disposition rights to the piece of

land.

In interviews conducted as part of this research, participants were reluctant to talk about places in somebody else's *Keyoh*. This reluctance was seemingly steeped in anxiety of trespassing on and misrepresenting another's authority over and knowledge of a specific area used for subsistence. The unwillingness to discuss another's *Keyoh* was explained cogently by Walter Joseph, who remarked that talking about places in someone else's *Keyoh* is an intrusion synonymous to crossing or cutting through the *Keyoh* without having first informed the owner⁶. While *Keyoh* boundaries are not absolute, there is an unspoken rule between *Keyoh* holders and others that obtaining permission to use or travel through the *Keyoh* is obligatory. This is a tacit acknowledgement of the *Keyoh* holder's tenure and authority over the *Keyoh*. Even conversing about the place-names in another's *Keyoh* is a breach of respect and trust because the place-names can be specific to the *Keyoh* in which they belong, forming not only a part of the owner's knowledge of the *Keyoh* but standing also as authoritative symbols of that knowledge. Through the *Keyoh* system, use of land is controlled, keeping harvesting and regeneration of resources in balance.

The examples shared in this article shed some light on how Dakelh place-names play a significant role in characterizing the bond between Tl'azt'enne and the land. The names stand as a reminder that the land is a fundamental part of being Tl'azt'enne, and that the continuance of places on the land means a continuance of Tl'azt'en lifeways.

1 Frances Harwood quoted in Cruikshank, J. 1990 'Getting the Words Right: Perspectives on Naming and Places in Athapaskan Oral History' *Arctic Anthropology* 27, 52-65.

2 Robert Hanson, CURA Place-Names Interview, 3 June

3 Catherine Coldwell, CURA Place-Names Interview, 25 June 2004.

4 Margaret Mattess, CURA Place-Names Information Session, 19 May 2004.

5 Stanley Tom and Alexander Tom, CURA Place-Names Interview, 21 December 2004.

6 CURA Place-Names Interview, 2 June 2004.

Amelia Stark

CURA Eco-tourism Stream Leader



Hadih (Hello), I've been recently appointed as the Tl'azt'en Eco-tourism Stream Leader on the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) Project - *Partnering for Sustainable Resource Management*.

Through my upbringing, and the teachings from my parents to respect the Land and all that it provides, are the strong traditional values rooted in my understanding of the natural world and its beauty. Through previous employment and training, specifically the Aboriginal Community Economic Development (ACED) Diploma program, I bring to this project a sense of the community needs and the potential for sustainable economic development initiatives such as tourism.

The Eco-tourism Stream will research to create a sustainable development initiative for Tl'azt'en Nation, the John Prince Research Forest and Cinnabar Resort & Research Station. The natural beauty that surrounds us can provide long term economic viability, and if we harness that beauty we can ensure growth based on incorporation of Tradition and Science.

As the Eco-tourism Stream begins its' work, I look forward to how it will unfold, and am optimistic and eager to define outcomes beneficial for all partners.

Moving to New Pastures: Erin Sherry and Sarah Parsons

Over the next month or so both Erin Sherry and Sarah Parsons – dedicated CURA research coordinators and stream leaders – will be moving on to new and exciting jobs as Regional Project Officers with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. While we will miss their involvement in the project and on a daily basis at UNBC they are both staying in the community. Their knowledge and experience won't be lost either as they work with the BC government to strengthen the regional capacity to effectively engage with First Nations. We asked them to provide us with their new job descriptions to share with you. Please wish them well when you see them.



Erin Sherry

Job Title: Regional Project Officer, Integrated Land Management Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

In this position we will support the initiatives of the Northern Interior Region Inter-Agency Management Committee (IAMC), which is the regional forum for communication and collaboration on issues and initiatives pertaining to sustainable use of Crown land and resources, coordination of First Nations initiatives, and resource information management and decision support. IAMC members are senior regional directors or managers from all resource agencies, including Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Ministry of Forests and Range, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and the Arts, and Ministry of Economic Development. Situated in Prince George, we will work to develop and implement multi-agency plans for effective engagement with First Nations. Based on *The New Relationship*, a government-to-government relationship based on respect, recognition and accommodation of aboriginal title and rights, we will work with First Nations to identify issues and solutions concerning current approaches to consultation and accommodation as they relate to the management and use of land and natural resources. Ultimately, the intent will be to come up with a more effective, streamlined, and corporate approach to consultation with First Nations which should lessen the burden on First Nations with limited capacity to respond to multiple referrals. In co-operation with all resource agencies represented at IAMC and with First Nations across northern BC, we will identify projects and develop funding requests to support cross-agency initiatives that will foster new partnerships with First Nations.



Sarah Parsons