

Partnering for Sustainable Resource Management

Newsletter 6
Spring 2007



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Greetings! We are now into Year 4 of our CURA project. We are pleased to start this newsletter off with an account of a rabbit snaring course, which Beverly Leon, Tl'azt'en CURA Research Coordinator and Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream co-leader, conceptualized and organized (see Bev's article, below). It was a great honor to have the late Harry Pierre instruct this course, and the students had a wonderful experience, as you will read. This project will hopefully be the first of several land-based skills courses where holistic learning about skills, culture and ecology takes place.

The past year saw significant personnel changes (some reported in our last Newsletter). Deanna Yim, a graduate student on the Improved Partnership Stream, was hired to become the UNBC CURA Research Coordinator. Beverly Leon has been helping her 'learn the ropes', which she does very quickly! Beverly Bird, who was involved with projects which preceded, and in a way midwived, our CURA, has stepped down as the Tl'azt'en co-leader of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream (see p. 8). Beverly Leon has taken that position over, and Wayne Bulmer has accepted the position of co-leading the Education Stream (see p. 7). Amelia Stark and Pam Wright (Ecotourism Stream co-leaders) have been actively working with the Ecotourism graduate students, who are finishing up their course work in the next few weeks, and will be spending significantly more time in the field this summer (see p. 2-3).

Please visit our website for updates between newsletters, and enjoy the spring!

by Gail Fondahl -UNBC, CURA Principal Investigator

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Tribute to Harry Pierre~

And the Rabbit Snaring weekend course he instructed on January 20 & 21 that was sponsored by CURA.
See pg. 4-5



**Community Day
in Tache
ON
May 15th, 2007**

See pg. 8

Ecotourism Stream Update

By Amelia Stark, Tl'azt'en Ecotourism Stream Leader & Pamela Wright, UNBC Ecotourism Stream Leader



Who are Potential Visitors?

In early March, the CURA ecotourism team along with other staff from the John Prince Research Forest joined with members from the FSJ community at the Fort St. James National Historic Site (FSJ NHS) for a presentation and discussion of the results of the recent visitor study conducted for the Fort. The study found that about half of the visitors to the NHS are of international origin and the majority is of mature age and travels without children. Many international tourists learned about the site from travel guide books and travel agents, while Highway signage and Visitor Information Centers also were important sources of information. Visitors to FSJ NHS were typically on sightseeing trips (71%), followed by camping trips (18%) and nature seeking trips (11%). Overall, the survey indicates that visitors also demonstrate an interest in cultural tourism activities, which leaves room for the development of projects involving such activities.



Invitation to Join a Tl'azt'en Ecotourism Working Group

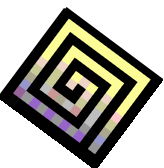
To facilitate the ecotourism initiatives we'd like to put together a Tl'azt'en Ecotourism working group of interested community members. We welcome the participation of everyone from those with current or previous experience in the tourism industry, to those interested in developing or encouraging new businesses, to those concerned about the changes that tourism might bring to the community. If you are interested in participating - please contact Amelia Stark (Tl'azt'en Ecotourism Stream Leader), at the JPRF office or phone at 996-0028.

Congratulations

To CURA Ecotourism graduate student, **Diana Kutzner**, for being awarded a SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarships Program Master's Scholarships award!

Indigenous Tourism Bibliography

In partnership with Aboriginal Business Canada, CURA graduate student Diana Kutzner along with faculty members Pam Wright and Pat Maher has been preparing the first of two bibliographies on Indigenous Tourism. The first bibliography due to be released in the next month compiles references for the indigenous tourism literature up until the end of 2006 into a single document sorted by key words and with annotations for a subset of select references. PDF copies will be available through Aboriginal Business Canada, the CURA website and the John Prince Research Forest office. The next bibliography will focus specifically on marketing and demand literature related to indigenous tourism.



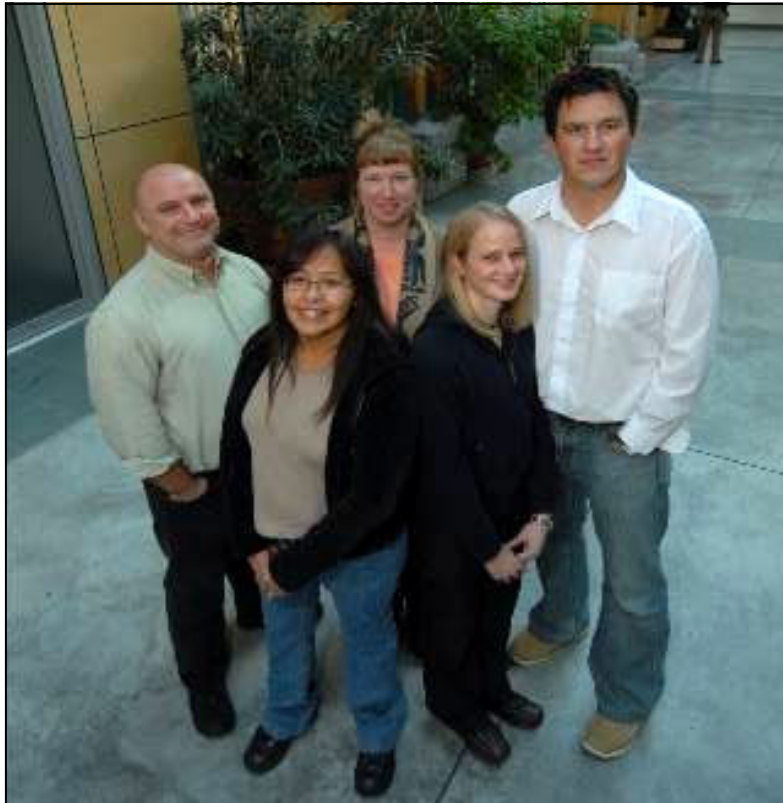


Ecotourism Stream Update Continued

Ecotourism Research Activities

The Tl'azt'en Nation has a rich tradition of sharing its culture and its resource with others. For the contemporary tourist - there is plenty to offer - the challenge is getting them to slow down, spend some time and look closely at the subtle beauty of the boreal north. In the last volume of the *Community Update*, three graduate students (Matteo Babini, Shane Hartman and Diana Kutzner) involved in the ecotourism project introduced themselves and their research interests. After a semester of digging through the literature and a number of discussions with key Tl'azt'en researchers, thesis topics and research plans have evolved.

Diana will pursue the tourist side of the equation through a market-demand study of tourism product attribute preferences that will help Tl'azt'enne shape their tourism offer. To complement this, Matteo will be working with the community to identify, map and verify key locations, stories, messages, and activities that form the basis of these tourism products. Shane will round this package out by working with community members to determine what level and type of interaction they want to have with tourism, what benefits to maximize and impacts to offset.



Ecotourism Stream: (from left to right) Matteo Babini, Amelia Stark, Pam Wright, Diana Kutzner, Shane Hartman.

Rabbit Snaring by Beverly Leon

Tribute to a great teacher, storyteller and friend—Harry Pierre



We had a great time on January 20 & 21. Although we didn't snare a rabbit, we had a fun time snowshoeing, learning to set rabbit snares and enjoying the beauty, peace and quiet of the bush. We are so fortunate to have such beautiful country !!

The CURA Project sponsored a Rabbit Snaring course, when I approached Harry to instruct, there was no hesitation. He was so grateful that this was being organized for the children and youth, he said 'It's important to get them out on the land to learn'.

Each day started with a hearty breakfast, and packing our snack bags for the trail ahead. January 20 was a beautiful day, the air was crisp and fresh. It was relatively warm at about -5. We drove to 13 km on the Leo Creek FSR, and prepared ourselves by putting on snowshoes and getting our gear together. Breaking trail wasn't easy, but nobody complained. We took our time as we slowly made our way into the bush, listening to the quiet, or the many different conversations that were going on around us. There were many 'This is so beautiful'

or 'Look at this' or 'Look at that'. There were rabbit tracks everywhere and almost all of them were too good to pass up, so we set many snares.



Coale 'the man' looking for the perfect spot.



Larry setting a snare



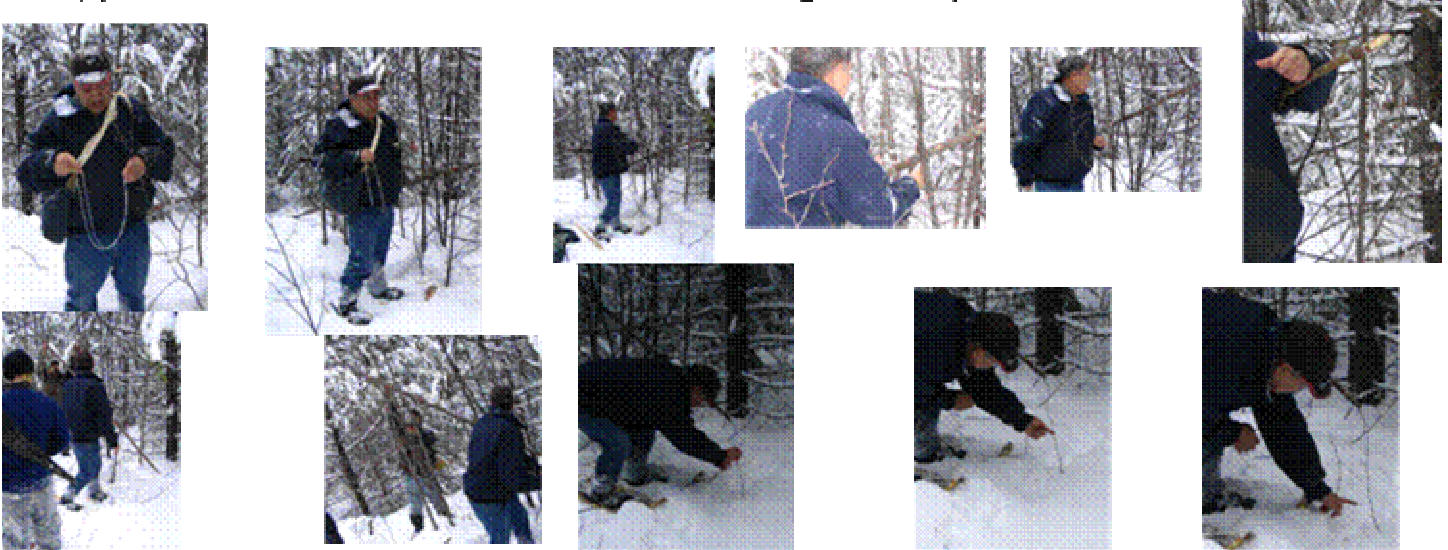
Troy standing beside one of the snares he set.



Bev thinking 'I hope I'm doing this right'

We also scared up a bull moose that was bedded down along our trail. The tracks were very fresh and you can tell that the moose was running. Harry said you can tell that it's a bull moose by the way it broke the willow branch. A cow would have eaten just the tip. Thanks for the tip Harry!

I told everyone to 'soo'ah' (hurry) and when we were all gathered, Harry started to explain that you could set a snare using string. If you are stuck in the bush and have no snare wire, you can still catch a rabbit. He took us through the steps.



You would fix the snare as you would a wire snare. He showed us how to set the snare using a pole so that when you catch something it will be lifted high enough of the ground so it doesn't get eaten by other animals.

January 21, it snowed last night, we are fortunate to find most of our snares. Unfortunately there were no rabbits. Back at the vehicles Harry told a story about a little red man (the devil), and how his grandmother warned him never to call on it.



We returned to the Education Centre, ate Macaroni Salad and Bannock, drank tea or hot chocolate and listen to Harry tell us more stories and a funny joke about Big John and Big 'Bad' John.

Harry's joke: In a small town word gets around that Big John is coming to town. Everyone either leaves, board up their homes or gets out of the way. Big John rides into town on a buffalo, with a rattle snake as a whip. He goes to the local watering hole and asks for his 'usual'. They pour anything and everything into a big mug and steaming they pass it to Big John. He quickly drinks it down. The bartender asks 'Another?'. Big John says 'Heck no, I'm getting out of town, I heard Big 'Bad' John is coming'.



Thank you Harry for sharing those 2 days with us, for your teachings, stories and the laughter. You will be missed. ~B

Reporting on CURA to northern Norway by Gail Fondahl

Early March found Gail Fondahl in northernmost Norway, at Finnmark University College, at a conference on “Building Capacity for Sustainable Places in the Circumpolar North” (www.hifm.no/borealis). The conference drew many Norwegians and Sami, as well as Swedes, Finns, Russians, and a few other Canadians. Gail was invited to provide a keynote speech, and also to contribute a talk to a panel on “Community Capacity and Higher Education in the North.” Her talks drew on our CURA partnership, focusing on what community-university research partnerships can contribute to building community capacity, and some of the key ‘ingredients’ for a successful community-university partnership ‘recipe’. The talks were based on articles under preparation by members of our CURA team - stay tuned for publication details in a future newsletter.

In the first talk, Gail identified how a community-university partnership can build community capacity through:

- helping community efforts to articulate their shared goals and objectives on community development and community sustainability (for, e.g. education, forest management) in a rigorous way that is defensible to external groups
- facilitating the flow of high-quality information to the community
- building human capital through skills training within the community
- building human capital through skills and cultural competency training among university students - the next generation who will be working with First Nations
- offering employment opportunities in the community
- building social capital in the community through community member participation in research projects

In the second talk, Gail talked about several key elements to setting up and maintaining a community-university research project:

- establishing & maintaining trust
- respecting cultural values
- creating a transparent and equitable governance system
- establishing ethics expectations
- ensuring participation by all members
- recognizing capabilities of the partners, and building capacity where needed in order to ensure participation can occur
- developing methods appropriate to the community for the research
- negotiating appropriate outcomes

Gail concluded that the Tl’azt’en Nation- UNBC partnership experience indicated that time and trust are critical to such relations, as is the continual evaluation of how and to what extent each partner’s goals and objectives are being met. Such partnerships, if successfully built and sustained, can lead to community capacity building that will contribute to sustainable development.



Finnmark
University College



Sami singer

Wayne Bulmer,

TI'azt'en Education Stream Leader

Hi everyone,

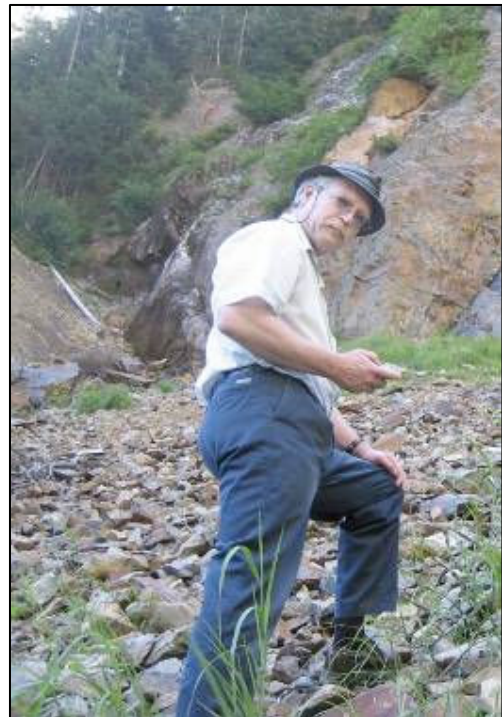
I am very excited to be asked to sit on the Education Stream, the work and research that is being done fits very well with my past involvement in experiential curriculum development and learning, and my current position as Director of Education for TI'azt'en Nation. The whole idea of a land-based, culture oriented program for learners, no matter what their age, is going to provide opportunities for our students, and other TI'azt'enne, to see themselves as valued members of a wider community that has a heritage they can be proud of, and from which we can all learn.

In addition, I hope to work with other CURA members in the development of an Adult Dogwood elective with Coast District Distance Education, one of the institutions with whom we are affiliated.

One of the large issues that is beginning to take shape is TI'azt'en Nation's role as a participating First Nation in the implementation of Bill C-34, the law that has given B.C. First Nation's jurisdiction over their education. This has never been done before in Canada, and will allow the First Nations of B.C. to be at the leading edge of taking charge of their education. CURA is, by virtue of its focus, in a position to contribute to this process. The possibilities on the horizon are very exciting indeed.

For the past fifteen years I worked primarily within B.C.'s First Nations communities as an educator at the primary to adult levels. Prior to that time I was engaged for nearly twenty years as a mineral exploration geologist, from Labrador to the Yukon Territory.

As an educator, I have developed curriculum and a model of curriculum delivery, assessment and reporting that divests the teacher of owning the student's learning, cultivates student academic resilience and encourages vision needed for the development of a community of learners. My background in the sciences enabled me to set up a school-wide science programme that engaged learners from Kindergarten to Grade 10. I have presented twice at the annual First Nations Conference on Aboriginal Education, and have published a paper related to best practices amongst at-risk aboriginal learners. I am a Member of the British Columbia College of Teachers, and a Fellow of the Geological Association of Canada. I hold degrees in Science (BSc, 1973), Education (MEd, 2006), and am expecting to begin Doctoral studies (EdD) in the fall of 2007, focusing on Aboriginal jurisdiction over education. I am married with three grown children and reside in Smithers and Tache, B.C.



THANK YOU TO BEVERLY BIRD

By Jane Young, UNBC TEK Stream Leader

Many thanks for several years of service to Beverly Bird who recently stepped down as the Tl'azt'en co-leader of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream of CURA. CURA has benefited much from Beverly's vision and direction in the project. Her contributions will form a major part of the TEK Stream's legacy. On a personal note, as UNBC co-leader of the TEK Stream, I would like to thank Beverly for her insights and forward thinking. We will miss her regular involvement, but also look forward to her continued advice and direction in future CURA work. Again, thank you, Beverly and best wishes to you in your future endeavors.



Beverly Bird

Community Day~ May 15th, 2007

At Eugene Joseph Elementary School Gym
11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**Activities for
everyone!**

Lunch!

Door Prizes!!