

# Partnering for Sustainable Resource Management

Newsletter 8  
Summer 2008

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Greetings! Our CURA partnership is now in its final year, and this is our penultimate newsletter. We do hope to maintain our project website (<http://cura.unbc.ca>) after the formal completion of the project, and post notices as articles, reports and other products from our research become available. In this newsletter, four graduate students (Shane Hartman, Diana Kutzner, Leona Shaw, and Deanna Yim), who are working toward the completion of their research, report on their projects. A new CURA graduate student (Chris Gall), who recently was invited to contribute to a new community research initiative, also introduces his work. And a Tl'azt'en research assistant (Annie Anatole) reports on her attendance to the First Nations Summit in Vancouver this past June, an activity in line with CURA's on-going commitment to building community capacity.

With regret we note the departure of our one PhD student (Claudette Bois) from the project; she decided that she preferred to pursue a different research topic for her dissertation.

## A Tl'azt'en Research Assistant's Report on attending the First Nations Summit in Vancouver BC, June 11-13, 2008

*By Annie Anatole*

The First Nations Summit in Vancouver was a great learning experience for the 3 days that I attended. There were many important topics discussed there on First Nations issues. I always wanted to learn how our leaders in BC are taking action provincially and with the Canadian Government.

On the first day, I witnessed a very important day in native history. Prime Minister Steven Harper apologizes for Canada's role for the abuses experienced by First Nations in Indian Residential Schools. For the physical, emotional and sexual abuse and trying to take the native out of the child. This government finally realizes what it has done to the First Nations throughout Canada. There



Annie Anatole (right) and Chief Phil Fontaine (left) at the First Nations Summit

were many people from all over Canada that witnessed this event, they gathered in band offices or halls just to see the Prime Minister apologize to the First Nations. Some First Nations throughout Canada did not accept the apology because of their own reasons; others accepted it because they have been through enough and wanted closure to the Residential School experience. The Squamish Nation had some closure songs that they sang at the summit and for the survivors. The Chief Joe Mathias Centre was full and the apology was witnessed on two big screens of the Squamish Nation people. This was a great day for all First Nations throughout Canada who had been waiting for a long time for this and needed closure.



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For the second day of the Summit there were many important First Nation topics discussed. There were discussions about the fisheries in BC and how sockeye salmon have been declining over the years. For the Fraser River Sockeye once again this year there will be no fishing or setting nets during the first run of the salmon season because of the big decline in Fraser River Sockeye. But the second run of the Fraser River sockeye is also in big decline and going down every year. When I was younger we used to catch about 50 to 80 salmon in each setting but nowadays we only catch about 4 to 8 per setting on the second run. There are some days where we don't catch anything at all.

The Ministry of Child and Family Development was there on the second day for their report to the Summit. Of the children in care, 52% are Aboriginal children in care of the government and that is 27,000 First Nation children Canada-wide. There were many comments and concerns made by First Nation leaders from around the table because this is such a big issue with First Nations throughout Canada. Leaders were concerned about how our First Nation children are being treated and who they are being placed with. This was a long meeting topic but was interesting, given how much our people care for the children who are in the government's care.

Later in the day there was First Nations Community Information Sharing. Some information was shared on what communities did or are doing to improve their nation's health, well being and plans for the future. This day was full of important information on how First Nations throughout BC are managing and preparing for the issues that affect them.

Elections for the Summit Task Group members and Co-Chair were held during the first two days of the Summit. Elections took place on the second day and the successful candidates for the Task Group are

Grand Chief Edward John from Tl'azt'en Nation, Grand Chief Doug Kelly from the Sto:lo Nation and Dan Smith from the Laich-Kwil-Tach First Nation. Chief Leah George-Wilson of the Tseil-Waututh Nation and Ray Harris of the Chemainus First Nation were elected as Co-Chairs of the First Nations Summit.

On the third day of the Summit the BC Assembly of First Nations did their report. During the morning there was the Aboriginal Mother's Centre Society that spoke on the behalf of Aboriginal Woman who are missing or murdered on the Highway of Tears or from Vancouver's downtown east-side. Of the many women deemed missing or murdered in the last 10 years, 80% of them are Aboriginal.

They are organizing a "Walk 4 Justice" from Vancouver to Ottawa starting on June 21 to gather at Parliament Hill on September 15, 2008. A petition will be brought forth to get voices heard for the missing and murdered woman of Canada. After the woman finished their presentation, the men stood up to praise the hard work being done and honoured the women with a song to show their respect, and for those missing or murdered women in Canada. The men gathered in one corner while the women were in the corner across from the men. They gathered across from each other with their heads held high for the work that is being done to get these murdered and missing women's voices heard. The woman accepted the honouring and the men also sent around a drum to collect donations for the "Walk 4 Justice" for the women's 2 1/2 month walk. They collected just about \$2900 at the Summit. This was very interesting and great to experience this happening before the women set off on their walk. It will be heard by all and remembered by many that these strong women are standing up for the missing and murdered woman's voices that are not heard any more.

These three days at the First Nations Summit was a great experience for me since it was my first time attending a Summit meeting. I have always wanted to attend a Summit meeting and was always interested in what was happening with the First Nations issues throughout BC and how they are taking care of business in their own communities and dealing with the Government on issues that all First Nations face on a day-to-day basis. This was a very important meeting also because of the Prime Minister's apology to First Nation's people throughout Canada about the Government's role in the Residential Schools. National Chief Phil Fontaine attended the Summit on the third day to talk about his experience while in Ottawa on Parliament Hill with the Prime Minister to accept the apology on behalf of all Aboriginal People in Canada. I think the apology closed many doors for many people who suffered for too many years and who had no closure

from all the traumatic experiences they endured as a child.

Three days at the First Nations Summit was full of information sharing and knowledge from our leaders in BC and how they are sharing their information with all communities in BC. It was a great experience for me and thanks to CURA for sponsoring my travel, I greatly appreciate it. Musi Cho.



-Annie Anatole, Tl'azt'en Research Assistant

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### **CURA Researchers and Research Progress:**

Since sharing in our last newsletter, many of our CURA researchers have made great progress in their research and have been busy sharing their developments at conferences and symposiums across Canada and the United States.

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### **CURA Ecotourism Graduate Students attend the 2008 Canadian Association of Geographers Conference**

*By Diana Kutzner*

On May 20 - 24<sup>th</sup>, the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG) held their 2008 annual meeting in Quebec City, Quebec. This year's conference held a special session on Aboriginal tourism and was a great opportunity for Shane Hartman and Diana Kutzner to present their research on Aboriginal tourism. Shane and Diana are both working on projects under the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) between UNBC and Tl'azt'en Nation. Shane's presentation was titled: "*Information Discovery Tour as a method for determining how a First Nation community can control*

*the affects of tourism*" and focused on how current First Nation's tourism sites can serve as a model for developing new tourism sites. Diana's presentation, titled "*Identifying Tourists' Preferences for Aboriginal Tourism Product Features and the Implications for a Northern First Nation*", detailed her research and some of the major findings regarding the potential market for Aboriginal tourism in Northern BC. Both of the students' research projects captured the attention of a knowledgeable audience and attending CAG gave them the opportunity to learn about other cur-

-rent research in this field across Canada. During the conference Shane and Diana also attended a series of presentations on Aboriginal tourism development and made contact with other researchers who are collaboratively working with First Nation communities in other parts of the country. In

the end, both felt it would be of great advantage for the members of CURA to connect with those working on similar projects elsewhere to share their experiences and developments over time. Overall it was a great experience for both students, which was greatly appreciated!

## Identifying and Determining how a First Nation Community can engage in Tourism *By Shane Hartman*

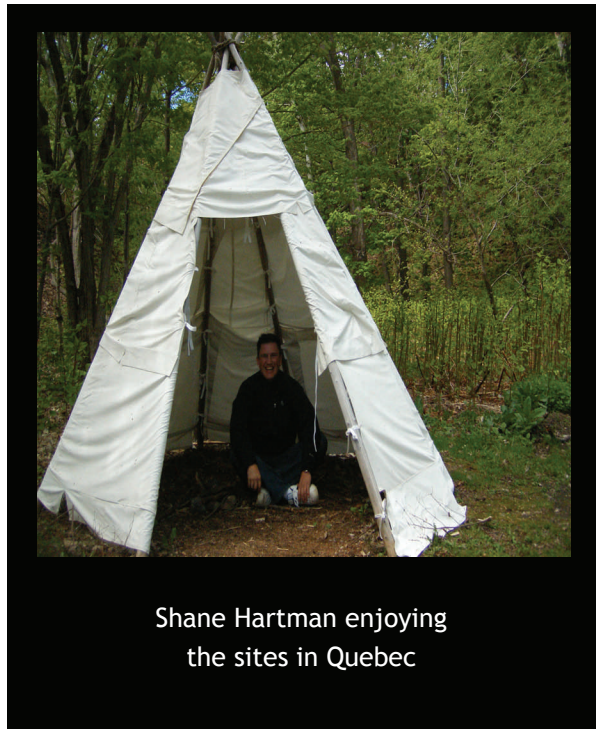
My project focuses on identifying Tl'azt'en Nation perspectives on tourism - in particular what kinds of benefits the Nation wants from tourism and the type of tourism that may fit best within their communities. This information will be combined with the research done by another graduate student to provide a picture of potential tourism options for Tl'azt'enne to consider. Last year I started the project by visiting a range of aboriginal tourism sites in BC to look for examples of different scales of operation and different types of tourism. Highlights of this research were presented to the community in an information session.

Following the community information session, community members were asked to participate in one-on-one interviews to talk about tourism development in Tl'azt'en territory. With the assistance of Tl'azt'en member Jackie Basil, I have interviewed 18 community members. Information stemming from the interviews has shown that Tl'azt'enne are optimistic and passionate about tourism development in Tl'azt'en territory. Common themes and thoughts are emerging from an ongoing analysis of the information shared, and a wide range of issues and points have come forth.

The next stage of the project is to begin tourism planning discussions. In early June, the Ecotourism team presented highlights of the interviews that I conducted and highlights from the tourism

market research (fellow graduate student Diana Kutzner's research).

Data gathered from the planning discussion day has been compiled and strong development ideas and potential have emerged from the community. The data from the interviews and community planning session is being analyzed with NVivo software. The thoughts and themes that will emanate from the analysis will be presented to Tl'azt'enne in late summer or early fall. Once the information is presented, the Tl'azt'en community will have a better idea of the overall feelings and thoughts regarding tourism development.



Shane Hartman enjoying the sites in Quebec

## CURA's Indigenous Tourism Market Research for Northern BC- A Project Update

By Diana Kutzner



Amelia Stark (left) and Diana Kutzner (right)- two members of CURA's Ecotourism stream

My thesis focuses on identifying indigenous tourism markets for Northern BC as well as product preferences of visitors to this region. In the last CURA newsletter I reported

how I collected about 330 questionnaires on Aboriginal tourism at the Visitor Information Centre in Prince George last summer in order to find out about visitor preferences regarding Aboriginal tourism experiences. A lot has happened since.

After analyzing my data, I wrote the first

of two articles on the findings of my research. This article was co-authored by Amelia Stark and my supervisor Pam Wright and was submitted to the Journal of Ecotourism. In May at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers in Quebec City I presented my research in a special session on Aboriginal tourism. Shortly after, in early June, I was able to share a few of my research results with Tl'azt'en community members when my colleague Shane Hartman and my supervisor Pam Wright and I held a Tourism Development Workshop in Tache. It was great to see so many community members at this workshop and to see the enthusiasm to explore tourism as a development option for Tl'azt'enne.

I am currently writing a second article about my research, which I am hoping to finish by the end of August. Until then I am also working on the thesis draft which will be completed by the beginning of fall. At that time I will also come to the community with a presentation of my research results.

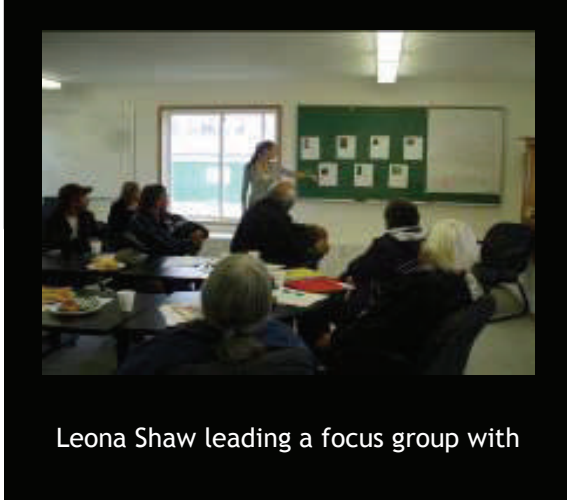
## A Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream Research Project: The Ecology of Food and Medicine Plant Gathering Sites as Defined by Tl'azt'en Nation

By Leona Shaw

In recent years, the important role that Indigenous people and their knowledge play in conservation and management of natural resources has been recognized. The desire to understand the connection between ecological and socioeconomic systems has resulted in an interest to combine the knowledge gained from Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and western science. A melding of the two sources of information



Focus group with Tl'azt'en Nation community members



Leona Shaw leading a focus group with

can lead to a broader understanding of a forest as a whole, a benefit that has been noted for other ecological and cultural systems. My thesis research pertains to the ecology of food and medicine plant gathering sites as defined by Tl'azt'en Nation.

In September and October of 2007, two meetings were held in Tache with members of Tl'azt'en Nation considered to be knowledgeable about food/medicine plants and their gathering sites. At these meetings, a list of 15 plants to study was determined. Over the next few months a detailed survey tool was developed which focused on the individual plant and site characteristics each participant would look for when gathering plants for food/medicine purposes. After the survey was completed, Bev John (CURA Community

Research Coordinator and Tl'azt'en TEK stream leader) and I sat down with each of the 10 participants and conducted one-on-one interviews using the survey tool. Recently a field information session was held to determine when to go out into the field and collect samples of each of the 15 plants.

Currently, the 10 interviews are being transcribed and translated and will then be given back to each participant for verification. Members of the research team, the participants, and other members of the community are going out into Tl'azt'en traditional territory and gathering samples of each of the 15 plants during the summer field season. These areas will be recorded and the plants will be dried and pressed in order to create herbarium specimens.

At the end of July, this project will be presented at the Botany 2008 conference in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Traditional medicine

## A Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream Research Project: Tl'azt'en Nation's Ancestral History of Yeko (Cunningham Lake)

*By Chris Gall*

I recently joined the CURA project to document Tl'azt'en Nation's ancestral history of Yeko (Cunningham Lake) and specifically, the settlement site of Yekoozdli. This will be accomplished by conducting semi-structured interviews with Elders in the community, and supplemented through archival research. The community

would also like to see group interviews conducted on the territory, and it is hoped we can accomplish this in the fall of 2008. The result of this work will be a documented history that can be used in the schools to teach the children where they come from, and how their ancestors lived.

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Recently, I had the privilege of traveling out to Yeko to look for evidence of dwelling sites and cache pits. It was an exciting trip and we were able to find plenty of physical evidence of past settlement. To date I have participated in community meetings to introduce and discuss this new project. Members have provided a list of key people to interview. These people have knowledge of Yekoozli, experiences growing up at Yeko, and stories

about the area; these stories were told to them by their parents and Elders, and describe this area as the origin of their ancestors.

I look forward to continuing this work over the next few months with the Elders. I am so thankful for the opportunity to learn from their wisdom and experiences; it has been truly rewarding.



Chris Gall working with community members out on the land.



Pictures from Chris Gall's fieldwork

## An Improved Partnership Stream Research Project: Evolving Co-Management Practice: Community-Based Environmental Monitoring with Tl'azt'en Nation on the John Prince Research Forest

By Deanna Yim

Objectives of this research project include the development, application, and evaluation of methods for identifying local Tl'azt'enne measures of co-management success, in the context of environmental sustainability. These measures were formulated from the work done in partnership with two teams of Tl'azt'en community members (the Elders Team and the Forest Team) over the course of several research events during 2007 and 2008. A qualitative analysis of transcripts transcribed from audio and video recordings at research events provided the material from which measures were developed. These measures will be presented to the Tl'azt'en Team members to be evaluated and verified before they are applied in a Tl'azt'en Nation community-based environmental monitoring method on the John Prince Research Forest.



(Left to Right): Deanna Yim, Bev John, Amelia Stark at the CBR Symposium

The progress of this project has been shared recently at two symposiums. On May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Deanna Yim (lead researcher), Bev John, and Amelia Stark (Tl'azt'en community researchers/CURA stream leaders) gave an oral presentation together at the *Community Based Research (CBR) Symposium* at Douglas College in Co-

quitlam, BC. This presentation focused on sharing the project's community-based methodology and provided a unique opportunity to present the perspectives of both the university and community researchers. Deanna also presented her research at a poster session during the 14<sup>th</sup> *International Symposium on Society and Resource Management* at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont USA. The theme of this year's symposium, held June 10-14, 2008, was 'People and Place: Linking Culture and Nature.' Many of the presentations and projects being shared at the symposium offered Deanna great insight into this field of study. She really appreciated the opportunity to share her research with an international audience and learn from the work being done by others.

In the upcoming months, it is anticipated that this project's main community products (a collaborative book and the production of a DVD highlighting some of the knowledge, stories, and events that have taken place throughout the project) will be completed and the project's focus will be concentrated on the writing of academic papers and thesis.



Giving our oral presentation at the CBR symposium





## Other Research on First Nation Sustainable Development at UNBC

*By Diana Kutzner*



There are many research projects at UNBC involving First Nation communities. One of these research projects, although not under the CURA umbrella, has recently been completed (Spring 2008) by Titi Kunkel from Quesnel, BC. Diana Kutzner, a CURA ecotourism graduate student, attended Kunkel's defense to represent CURA and learn from her research on First Nation Economic Development. Titi Kunkel defended her thesis titled "Creating Sustainable Economic Development within two B.C. First Nations Communities: A Rights-Based Approach". Over the last year, Titi worked with the Nazko First Nation in the Quesnel area and the Esketemc First Nation near Williams Lake, B.C. Both of these communities face challenging economic conditions due to their distance from larger economic centers and a declining forestry industry. In a collaborative effort, Titi worked with the Nazko and Esketemc communities on identifying options for sustainable economic development for them. Her research sought a rights-based approach to sustainable development, on the premise that every human

being has a right to development according to the 1948 United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights. The results of Titi's study have identified some of the key barriers to economic development in First Nation communities, including difference between the First Nations world view and the Economic World View, lack of access to development capital, and deficient social and economic development infrastructure within rural First Nation communities. However, she also identified strategies to overcome these challenges, including making economic development a priority for the Nazko and Esketemc First Nations, and joint or collaborative projects with the Bands and industries. Titi Kunkel's thesis will be available at the UNBC and National Library in a few months. For further questions and inquiries please feel free to contact her at [kunkel@unbc.ca](mailto:kunkel@unbc.ca).



## CURA Community Day 2008

The 2008 CURA community day was held in Tache at the Eugene Joseph Elementary School on May 15th. The CURA team would like to express their sincere thanks to the Tl'azt'en Nation community and to all those who came and enjoyed sharing with us and the project's developments. We hope you enjoyed hearing about our progress, having lunch, and participating in the afternoon workshops!



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