



NRES WEEKLY NEWS

October 5 - 9, 2009

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

COMING EVENTS

NRESI RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM SERIES

This Friday

Dr. Andrew Derocher

Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta

The ecology and politics of polar bears and climate warming



Polar bears evolved to become an obligate predator of ice breeding seals. While the global distribution of the species has changed little over recorded history, the rapid change in their sea ice habitat over the past few decades has caused increased concern for their conservation. The symptoms of climate warming on polar bears are manifest in many ways but most importantly, the energetics of polar bears is affected by reduced energy intake, and possibly greater energy use, which results in lower fat stores. Pregnant females with lower fat stores produced fewer cubs with lower recruitment which can result in population declines. Following extensive analyses, polar bears were recently classified as a threatened species in the USA. Canada, however, due to a flawed assessment report, proposed the lower level of risk of special concern. Polarized views on the status of this iconic species augmented by opportunistic pseudo-science have confused the public. In its simplest form, polar bears are facing nothing more than the most common threat to wildlife. Habitat loss is the appropriate metric of change.

Light Refreshments will be Served

Oct. 2, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre **7-212**

Don't forget the **NRES Graduate Student Poster Session / Fall Social** in the Wintergarden from 4:30—5:30!

Unable to make it in person? Watch the colloquium at your desk!

For Elluminate information and link to the webcast: http://www.unbc.ca/nres/nresi_webcast.html

Log in as "Guest"

J. R. Doyle

Ph.D. Candidate, Ottawa-Carleton Chemical & Environmental
Toxicology Program, University of Ottawa

**Improvements to Mass Balance Estimating Methods:
Assessing Soil Ingestion in People Following Traditional Lifestyles**

Next Friday

Assessing the risks of adverse health effects posed by contaminated land in Canada is essential for decisions regarding site access, and prioritization for remediation. Routine human health risk assessment (HhRA) methods require knowledge about both hazard and exposure. Unintentional dietary ingestion is a significant source of potential exposure to contaminated soil particles. However, ingestion rates used in HHRAs are the subject of considerable controversy. The majority of studies that have quantified soil ingestion rates in adults and children have used subjects living in urban and suburban environments. However, many of the contaminated sites in Canada where HHRAs may be used to direct soil cleanup criteria are allocated in rural and wilderness areas. Published soil ingestion studies do not provide sufficient information to derive soil ingestion rates for traditional land use scenarios that would be more typical of populations in rural and wilderness areas. This presentation identifies areas where methods for estimation of soil ingestion rate could be improved or modified to facilitate studies of populations following traditional land use practices. The presentation will also propose changes to methods for estimating soil ingestion that may address uncertainties inherent in previous studies. The proposed methods employ naturally occurring radionuclides as readily detectable tracers.

Light Refreshments will be Served

Oct. 9, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre **7-152**

View upcoming seminars at: <http://www.unbc.ca/nres/seminar/index.html>

OTHER COMING EVENTS

Global Fridays
Senate Chambers
12:00—1:30 pm

October 9, 2009

Dr. Paul Summerville, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria

The Global Context of Canada's Future

3rd Annual Dr. Max Blouw QRRC Open House — Saturday, October 3rd starting at 10:00. Research talks by UNBC faculty and students will be followed by a BBQ and site tour.

UPCOMING THESIS DEFENCE

Mr. Robin Urquhart is a candidate for the degree:

Master of Arts in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Environmental Studies)

Mr. Urquhart will be defending his thesis entitled:

“Building Consultation From the Bottom Up: A Case Study of the North Yukon”

Supervisor: **Dr. Annie Booth**

Date: October 6, 2009

Time: 9:00 am

Room: Senate Chambers Room 1079
UNBC Prince George campus

WELCOME

The ORTM Program is delighted to announce the arrival of Phil Mullins, new ORTM faculty member. Phil pursued undergraduate studies at Lakehead University, doing a joint degree in Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Tourism and a BA in Geography and Philosophy and went on to Master's and Doctoral Studies at the University of Alberta. Phil has spent a number of years facilitating international field research and study programs focused on community-based environmental problem solving. Through his work with the Maasai, in southern Kenya, and the Huu-ay-aht First Nation on the west coast of Vancouver Island, he grew particularly interested in tourism as a way to promote and support conservation and sustainability. He tries to understand how travel activities mediate cross-cultural and environmental learning, and influence socio-environmental sustainability and self-determination of communities. Phil started with ORTM in July but just moved here with his wife Tara at the beginning of September. If you haven't yet met Phil, please stop by his office on the first floor and introduce yourself.

ORTM also welcomes research fellow May Kristin Vespestad from Harstad University College in Norway. Her research examines nature-based tourism experiences, and the understanding and marketing of these in the Northern Areas. She is particularly interested in how cultural differences may influence how nature-based experiences are promoted and perceived. May Kristin will be with us for the semester (office 10-2078).

PUBLICATIONS

Petticrew, E.L. (2009) “Thirty years of Sediment-Water Science: history, trends and future directions.” *Marine and Freshwater Research* 60: 611-618

Williams, N.D., **Petticrew, E.L.** (2009) “Aggregate stability in organically and conventionally farmed soils.” *Soil Use and Management* 25: 284-292

For those interested but missed **Don Gosnell's talk** Wednesday, September 23rd, please find the link to the powerpoint version below, on UNBC's NRES Institute's website:

http://www.unbc.ca/assets/nres/seminar/unbc_sept_2009_gosnell_presentation.pdf

REMINDER: Share your information about recent publications, grants, and/or other honours you may have received with others interested in NRES issues.

PLEASE EMAIL ALL INFORMATION AND MATERIAL TO MICHELLE KEEN: keenm@unbc.ca

TRAVEL / RESEARCH / CONFERENCES

Titi Kunkel (PhD NRES candidate; supervisor R. Ellis) travelled to Vancouver on September 21-22 to present at the Economic Development Canada and Economic Development Association of BC's joint conference. This conference brought together community leaders, economic development professionals and entrepreneurs from all across Canada to hear about innovative solutions to local challenges. This conference was one of the largest Economic Development Conferences ever to be held in Canada with over 750 delegates. Titi's presentation, "Humanizing First Nations Economic Development: A Report on Vibroseis Survey Acquisition in the Central Nechako Basin" was selected as one of the four best practices in rural and northern economic development.

NRES participation in the 2nd Annual BC Rural and Remote Health Research Network Conference, Prince George, 28-29 September 2009:

- **Neil Hanlon**, Scott Emmons, and Brooke Eschuk hosted a pre-conference workshop, *Participatory GIS: A tool for bridging community, provider, and research perspectives*.

Paper presentations:

- **Hanlon, N., Halseth, G.**, Ostry, A., LeBourdais, J. *Providing support for people with ongoing health challenges in small towns: What have we learned from the NETHRN-BC initiative?*

Poster presentations:

- Crooks, V., Castleden, H., Schuurman, N., **Hanlon, N.** *Using place as an analytic concept to elucidate geographic issues central to rural palliative care.*
- Hesse, G., **Rea, R.** *Evaluating the potential of the Otto Wildlife GPS Device to collect roadside wildlife sighting data for use in road safety planning.*
- **Rea, R.** *Road safety implications of moose inhabiting an urban-rural interface.*

Loraine Lavallee attended the 8th Biennial Conference on Environmental Psychology in Zurich, Switzerland (September 7-9). Her presentation was entitled: *Environmental attitudes and cooperative norms as predictors of conservation in commons dilemmas*. The study was a simulation study of factors that influence people's use of a shared fishery resource. This study was a collaboration with a group of researchers in the Environmental Psychology Program at the University of Victoria (Reuven Sussman, Dr. Fabio Iglesias, and Dr. Robert Gifford).

PhD NRES (Geography) candidate Matt Beedle (co-supervisors: **B. Menounos** and **R. Wheate**) has completed four field expeditions from May to September on Castle Creek and Kwadacha glaciers. See his spring/summer fieldwork update at: http://www.unbc.ca/geography/whats_new/2009_updatebeedle.html .

MA NRS student JP Laplante (supervisor: **C. Nolin**) traveled this week to Rapid City, South Dakota for the annual conference of the Western Mining Action Network (WMAN—<http://www.wman-info.org/>) which gathers mining activists, Indigenous leaders and NGOs from across North America. WMAN, along with the Indigenous Environmental Network, helped to fund the documentary film — "Amazay" — that JP was involved with this past spring. JP is screening the film and assisting in a Workshop entitled "Success Stories".

Kathy Parker, Mike Gillingham, Robin Steenweg (NRES grad student), and Jennifer Sheppard (NRM Wildlife and Fish major) recently travelled to the Wildlife Society's Annual Conference in Monterey, California (20-23 September). Kathy co-chaired a symposium entitled "Trophic Matches and Mismatches for Wildlife in Changing Environments". She presented the paper *Nutrition matters: potential consequences of climate change for caribou* by Parker, Gillingham, and collaborator P. Barboza of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Robin, Mike, and **Doug Heard** (NRES Adjunct faculty) presented the poster *Primary-prey management as a mountain caribou recovery strategy in the central Rockies, BC*. Robin and Jennifer represented the UNBC Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

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

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