

## **BCLSS Newsletter**

### **Volume 2, Issue 1**

# "Furthering Lake Stewardship Through Communication & Education"

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#### 'Linking Local Lakes' Road Trip a Success

By BCLSS President, Michelle Boshard

Hi everyone, I hope your 1999's have started well. Well, our former E.Y.T. worker, Jill Savege, and I traveled relentlessly across the countryside of British Columbia seeking our like-minded (lake-minded?) groups and individuals to let them know that the BCLSS is available to them! Between September and December last year, we visited over 30 stewardship groups, and have heard since then from even more requesting visits.

Aside from terrorizing these wonderful people, we were able to offer water monitoring assistance to them by going over sampling techniques and leaving sampling bottles which, once filled, could be sent to government labs for analyses. Thanks to Rick Nordin and the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks for funding analyses, which often run up to \$500 per set of samples.

During the LLL Road Trip, we listened to the concerns of the groups we visited, and dropped off literature and contact names wherever possible. This was easy as it was usually shared over dinner and drinks! Thank you to all of you who shared their homes and stories with us, we had a great time!

The three most common concerns shared by lake stewards from Osoyoos to Chetwynd and Vancouver Island to the Kootenays were septic systems, weeds and drinking water, with jet-skies a very close fourth. Challenges to groups continue to be funding and volunteer burn out. Nevertheless, some amazing things have been accomplished, some of which are highlighted in the "Who's Doing What Where" section of this newsletter.

Steward groups visited varied in stages of development, from "should we start a lake-group?" to "we've coordinated volunteer sampling of our lake for years and are well through our 5-year Lake Management Plan" and, as we're sure you can relate, everything in between. It was of great benefit to meet with each of the groups individually, as it allowed them to share their

individual full story and experiences, which we will now make available on our website (and on hardcopy if you phone) in our "Linking Local Lakes 1988 Road Trip Report". This report is invaluable, even to well established groups, because every group's experience has been different, and the Report will share references on what to watch out for, and what worked best in different situations.

Plans are in the works for a 1999 LLL Road Trip, perhaps picking up on the theme of "Shoreline Restoration Month" being planned for year 2000 all over BC. Lake stewards have a key role to play in lake foreshore and riparian health, so the road trip may include "riparian planting" sessions on lakes around the province. For more information on the Road Trip Report, or if you would like to be involved in the Shoreline Restoration Month, contact the BCLSS, or visit our website at [www.scrn.org/bclss](http://www.scrn.org/bclss).

### **Non-Point Source Pollution Educational Display is now available Free to Steward Groups**

Science and Technology Week was celebrated all across BC in 1998 from October 16 to 25. As lake-stewards hardly ever miss an opportunity to celebrate, the BCLSS came up with something to contribute to the festivities.

An eight-by ten-foot collapsible, transportable display featuring information on non-point source pollution (NPS) and lake stewards who are dealing with NPS issues was developed for BCLSS members so they could use it in mall displays, educational sessions or other events.

The display information was gathered by BCLSS, then professionally put together to provide a high quality feel. The Information, Science and Technology Agency of the BC Government funded the \$4000 graphics development and display cost, with in-kind development hours put in by the BCLSS staff. The display was seen by over 250 people on the BCLSS Road Trip, and has already been used at a number of steward group locales. If you're a member and would like to use the NPS Display, please feel free to contact us.

### **Katimavik Student Take Smithers Lake Groups by Storm**

A common concern for volunteer lake groups is that they need more bodies to accomplish their goals. It can be discouraging when volunteers are already doing everything they can, and it seems like sometimes there are so many existing and upcoming goals that there are not enough people to go around! In the case of 5 lake groups near Smithers, the goal was to finish 5-year Lake Management plans (along with other odds and ends) that needed to be done to ensure the health of the lakes. Where on earth would they find energetic people willing to pick up development of the plans that the local Ministry of Environment Branch left-off due to staff and funding cut backs? Quebec, that's where.

BCLSS Road Trip visits to the Smithers Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks (MELP) office and a number of volunteer lake groups in the area (all of whom had been working collaboratively together for some time on the protection of Tchesinkut, Takysie, Tyhee, Francois, Ootsa and Kathlyn Lakes) revealed that there was interest and need on both the volunteer's and the Ministry's behalf to finish 5-year Management Plans for those lakes. Lisa Westenhoffer and Ian Sharpe of Smithers MELP pointed out that there was an organization

called Katimavik, based out of Quebec, that provided Canadian students with cultural and work opportunities by moving them to a series of communities around Canada doing work for non-profit societies.

Perhaps Katimavik students could come to Smithers and work on the plans for the lakes? But where would they work and who would apply for work on which lake? After discussing the idea with the volunteers and Smithers MELP, BCLSS agreed to apply on behalf of five volunteer groups for Katimavik students to work on the plans, under MELP supervision that they might come to the area. The Ministry of Environment provided workspace and covered insurance.

The first Katimavik student, Elouise Gadreau, arrived with her group on January 6, and started work on the Lake Plans at the MELP office on the 13th. While in Smithers, Elouise's fellow students will work on a number of non-profit projects besides the Lake Plans. As the student work experience is rotating, another student group will take the place of Elouise's group in 10 weeks to continue the work they are doing. All seems to be going well, and the goals for local lakes are being pursued to the benefit of all!

### **Internal Affairs**

Sorry, no Bill Clinton jokes here folks! But we do have some interesting issues to face. For the last two years, Cougar Watershed Consulting Inc. (Principle Michelle Boshard) has been contracted to MELP to spearhead the formation of BCLSS. The question of "once the contract money is finished in March '99 how will we proceed with the Society?" looms. After some discussion, the BCLSS Board has decided to review and pursue funding for a select number of many possible initiatives. Annual fundraisers will sustain the Society's operational costs, then successful funding proposal will allow incremental development of the BCLSS project repertoire. Continued applications for E.Y.T. staff members will also supplement BCLSS's operations.

### **Membership Expiry Date Shuffle**

The BCLSS has shift to a new membership regime where all memberships are due on January 1 of every year, as we will not have a full-time person to keep track of the expiry date of each membership. Memberships will now be given out yearly and prorated if they come in halfway through the year. Group membership from January to March will be \$40, from April to June \$35, from July to September \$30, and from October to December \$25. Individual memberships for each time period will be \$20, \$17.50, \$15 and \$10 respectively. Student Members will be \$10 for the first half of the year and \$5 after July 1.

Nomination of Board Members for Next AGM The Board has appointed a Nominating Committee to research candidates for election to the 16 board positions at the AGM March 27. Please forward your nominations to the BCLSS by February 15, 1999.

### **Who's Doing What Where**

*Jewel Lake Environmental Protection Society* has been busy working with government and local ranchers to preserve the sensitive foreshore of their lake during changes to Crown rangeland use.

*New Group at Christina Lake?* A group of concerned citizens has been working, with MELP staff assistance, to learn more about sampling and septic tank seepage effects on Christina Lake.

Federation of *BC Cottage Owners and Associations* is up, running and looking for members. As a lobby group they will focus on property taxes and other issues cottage owners face. Call John Leighton at 604 733 6606 for more information.

*The Country Living Show* The BCLSS will be hosting a booth at the County Living Homeshow at the Pacific Coliseum in Vancouver January 23 and 24. Stop and say hi!

*Sprout Lake Stewardship Society* recently completed a two-year water-sampling project and is now mapping foreshore vegetation.

*Washington Chapter Conference* BCLSS's NALMS counterpart to the south (Washington Lake Protection Society) is hosting a conference in Spokane April 8-10. Our President will be giving a talk. For more info call 1 800 607 5498.

*Moberly Lake Group* near Chetwynd wants to start baseline monitoring before a gas and oil company develops acres of land at the headwaters of the lake's watershed.

*The Living By Water Project* The project has been officially accepted by the Federal Government as a "Millenium Project" for the year 2000. Call Clive Callaway or Sarah Kipp at 250 832 7405 for more information.

Developments in the Cariboo Look for a new Quesnel lake group and a Williams Lake watershed group!

### **Frustrated Volunteer Samplers Take Heart**

VLMP Template Report Should Speed Things Up By Cougar Watershed Consulting Inc.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks has been facing difficulties with funding and staffing, resulting in (amongst other things from the lake stewards' perspective) slow turn-around on the information derived from lake sampling data collected by volunteers participating in the Ministry's Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP).

As it is encouraging for lake volunteers to see the fruits of their labour, and frustrating for MELP staff not to be able to consistently write detailed reports custom-tailored to each lake due to staffing restraints. Fortunately, a new automated system is being developed so they can quickly compile and return lake information in a useful way to ulunteers.

The VLMP "Template Report" will provide MELP staff with the capacity to develop customized lake-health reports with the yearly (perhaps even quarterly) sampling data collected by volunteers and return it within a week of the data processing. This is an improvement on the sometimes half-a-year lag time. The goal is to read document, which will be distributed by mail to volunteers and everyone living around the sampled lake. Each lake's Template Report will include a map of the lake in its watershed (where available), an interpretation of the data the volunteers collected, comments on the overall health and trends in the lake, information

on uses of the lake. Cooperation with Regional Districts for mail-outs will allow good distribution and awareness of the lake issues by all those around it.

Using linked computer software programs to generate the reports, Cougar Watershed Consulting Inc., who was contracted by MELP to design the template, will create easy to use application so that volunteers and MELP can successfully continue with their lake management efforts. Without the wait.

### **Come One, Come All! You're Invited to the BCLSS's 2nd Annual Conference!!**

Come to our Annual BCLSS Conference

The BC Lake Stewardship Society's first conference last year was a success, and we're planning on continuing the tradition in an expanded way this year. Due to popular demand from around the province, there will be two one-day conferences this year: one in Kelowna on March 27, and the other in Prince George April 17. These one-day conferences are packed full of information for lake and other water-stewards, and are presented by a cross section of expertise from grassroots to government.

Each conference's proceedings include twelve speakers (on such subjects as fish habitat protection, sewage disposal, aquatic plants, lakeshore development guidelines, example lake stewardship initiatives around BC and more) plus three discussion groups (on common lake issues, shoreline restoration month and volunteer sampling techniques) give stewards ample opportunity to ask questions, collect information and exchange solutions and lake stories with others working sharing similar problems. Informative displays and informational tables will also be available to facilitate information exchange. The full day (8:30 am to 6:00pm) registration fee is \$35 for non-members, \$25 for members and \$20 for students, and includes; all sessions, discussion groups and display viewing, morning muffins, coffee-break snacks, lunch and afternoon-break snacks. Seating is going quickly, so ensure you are registered for the Annual conference by March 25 or April 15. Contact us in any of the following ways: Phone: 1 877 BC LAKES, Fax: 250 868 1027 Email: [bclss@hotmail.com](mailto:bclss@hotmail.com) or Post: BCLSS, Science Bldg, 3333 College Way, Kelowna, BC V1V 1V7. Semi-final agendas will become available February 3, 1999.

### **Top 10 Endangered Rivers of British Columbia**

Raising awareness threatened BC's rivers has been a high priority for the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC since it was formed over 20 years ago. The council has been involved in a wide range of activities to that end, including holding international river symposiums, coordinating BC Rivers Day, and developing a BC river management strategy. An initiative that has proven to be quite successful and helpful with respect to raising "threatened-river" awareness has been the publication of an annual BC's Ten Most Endangered Rivers list. Last year's list received a lot of attention from the media, especially in towns and cities located on rivers that made the list. The ORC needs your input on the most endangered rivers list for 1999. If you know of any rivers that are endangered, suffering from pollution or over fishing, being impacted by logging or mining, have dams or diversions proposed for them, or if scenic values and access are being impacted by shoreline development, then please take a few moments to fill out the registration form on the web site <http://home.istar.ca/~orc/bc/> or get one from the

ORC by phoning (604) 737 3058. Please return forms to the Council's office by March 31, 1999. The Council's Endangered Rivers List Committee will compile replies, develop a Ten Most Endangered Rivers list, and release the list to media in late spring. BC's Ten Most Endangered Rivers of 1998 were Tsolum-Puntledge, Taku, Fraser, Skeena, Englishman, Iskut/Stikine, Nechako, Columbia, Owikeno and Urban Streams.