



NRES WEEKLY NEWS

November 2 - 6, 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. Jerry Osborn

Professor, Dept. of Geoscience, University of Calgary



**The Global Warming Debate:
the messy and bitter intersection of science and politics.**

The great majority of climate scientists are convinced that recent warming is largely due to anthropogenic effects, and many think that serious, perhaps catastrophic, climatically-induced problems await humanity in the next several decades. But a small minority of actively publishing climate scientists, a considerable number of scientists in other fields, many conservative politicians, as well as some significant proportion of the general public, remain skeptical. Even though the train is already preparing to leave the station, in the form of proposed cap-and-trade legislation in the U.S., debate continues in a variety of venues that include scientific journals, the web, pop print media and television, think tanks, houses of government, courtrooms, schools, and churches. The debate is complicated by fusion of several questions which are not always separated by debaters, and by mixing of scientific and social issues to the degree that interpretations of science are influenced by social/political philosophy.

The result is wildly varying views on scientific issues, defensiveness and entrenchment of scientists, cherry-picking of evidence to support points of view, diversions over hockey sticks and oil-company funding, and immense public confusion, as each side belittles the other in an attempt to sway public opinion.

This talk will offer a brief overview of the state of debate over CO₂-generated warming, from a point of view that is disinterested politically and without vested interests scientifically. Some examples of influences on, and excesses of, the debate will be followed by a very brief look at current arguments made by both believers and deniers. It is concluded that there will be no end to controversy in the near future, because cooling influences provided by internal ocean-atmosphere variability and a quiet sun may for the next few or several years mitigate whatever anthropogenic warming is in the system, leaving room for some ongoing ambiguity.

Oct. 30, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre 7-212



Rob Higgins

Asst. Prof., Thompson Rivers University
PhD Candidate, UNBC

The Ants of British Columbia

**Next
Friday**

Ants are a common element in our urban landscapes but are usually overlooked, literally, or considered only in the context of a household nuisance. Their presence in our urban lives, however, does not properly reflect their broader ecological significance. In British Columbia, ants are an important food source for vertebrates ranging from birds to bears. Their social organization has given rise to behavioural systems that include the ranching of aphids, a form of agriculture that can have complex effects upon the trees they consider to be their rangeland. It has also given rise to remarkable forms of slavery and parasitism within the taxon. To thrive, however, ants require heat, and the climate of BC can be challenging. Here I will consider some of my work on the ants of British Columbia over the past several years, their ecological roles, and their adaptations to surviving in our cool climate.



Nov. 6, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre 7-212

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"

OTHER COMING EVENTS

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

October 30, 2009

Dr. Jamie Peck, CRC, Urban and Regional Political Economy, Geography Dept., UBC

Neoliberalism: Dead or Alive?

THESIS DEFENCES

Ms. Xiaoxi Zhang is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Environmental Science)

Ms. Zhang will be defending her thesis entitled:

“Surfactant Enhanced Biodegradation of Petroleum Hydrocarbons in Oily Sludge”

Supervisor: **Dr. Jianbing Li**

Date: November 9, 2009

Time: 3:00 pm

Room: 6-205, Conference Centre
UNBC Prince George campus

Ms. Prudence-Elise Breton is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies

Ms. Breton will be defending her thesis entitled:

“Organizing for Sustainability at a Small Scale: A Case Study of an Ecovillage Experiment”

Supervisor: **Dr. David Connell**

Date: November 27, 2009

Time: 2:00 pm

Room: 1079, Senate Chambers
UNBC Prince George campus

Ms. Alyssa Shaw is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Biology)

Ms. Shaw will be defending her thesis entitled:

“The Use of Platelet Monoamine Oxidase-B as a Biomarker for Mercury Neurotoxic Effects Among Inuit in Arctic Canada”

Supervisor: **Dr. Laurie Chan**

Date: November 27, 2009

Time: 3:00 pm

Room: 6-205, Conference Centre
UNBC Prince George campus

PUBLICATIONS

Winder, R., **Burton, P.** (2009) “More than trees: How silviculture intersects with mushrooms, berries and other botanical products”. *Silviculture Magazine*, Fall 2009: 4-8

Wood, L.J., **Hartley, I.D.**, Watson, P. (2009) “Determining Hybridization in Jack Pine and Lodgepole Pine from British Columbia.” *Wood and Fiber Science* 41: 386-395

Beedle M. J., **Menounos, B.**, Luckman, H., **Wheate, R.** (2009) “Annual push moraines as climate proxy”. *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 36, L20501, doi:10.1029/2009GL039533

Bolch, T., **Menounos, B.**, **Wheate, R.** (2010) “Landsat-based inventory of glaciers in western Canada, 1985-2005”. *Remote Sensing of Environment* 114 (2010) 127–137

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

CONFERENCES / TRAVEL / FIELDWORK

Members of the Canadian Forest Service research cluster (Sandy Allen, **Brian Aukema**, **Bryan Bogdanski**, **Phil Burton** and Honey-Marie de la Giroday) will be in Victoria Nov. 2-4 for staff meetings, consultations, and to present an update on their work as part of the Pacific Forestry Centre seminar series.

Phil Burton will be in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Nov. 5 & 6, to serve as an external examiner for a thesis defense at Lakehead University, and to give a seminar on "Disturbance Ecology of the Mountain Pine Beetle in British Columbia."

NRES snow and ice people travelled to Lake Louise for the joint workshop of the Western Canadian Cryospheric Network (WC2N, centred at UNBC) and the / Improved Processes and Parameterisation for Prediction in Cold Regions (IP3, centred at U. Sask), October 14-17. The group included **Stephen Déry**, **Brian Menounos**, **Roger Wheate**, Denny Straussfogel, joint network outreach coordinator Nadine Kapphahn, postdoc Joe Shea, graduate students Raju Aryal, Teresa Carlson, Christina Tennant, Robert Sidjak and research assistant Marco Hernandez. A trio surveyed the Athabasca Glacier snout location on the return route.



MA graduate student Cristian Silva (supervisor: **C. Nolin**) is in Buenos Aires, Argentina this week at the 5th Forensic Anthropology Congress of the Latin American Forensic Anthropology Association (ALAF) to present his paper:

Silva, C. and **C. Nolin** (2009), "*La exhumación de Margarita Telón Cún: analizando los efectos del conflicto armado interno en Guatemala rural / The exhumation of Margarita Telón Cún: Analysing the effects of the internal armed conflict in rural Guatemala*"

NRES MA grad student Courtney LeBourdais (supervisor: **C. Nolin**) traveled to UBC-O in Kelowna on 24 October 2009 for the 4th Annual Cascadia Critical Geographies Conference & received one of the awards in the Paper Competition for her presentation:

LeBourdais, C. and **C. Nolin** (2009), "*Marriage migration in Northern BC: The negotiation of place and identity among foreign brides*"

Paul Sanborn will attend the Soil Science Society of America annual conference in Pittsburgh, PA, November 1-5. He will present a poster based on field work conducted in June on Haida Gwaii with ESM colleague, **Hugues Massicotte**: "*A Holocene coastal soil chronosequence, Graham Island, British Columbia: initial reconnaissance.*" The other co-authors are Ian Walker (University of Victoria) and Stephen Wolfe (Geological Survey of Canada).

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

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