



KOH-LEARNING IN OUR WATERSHEDS



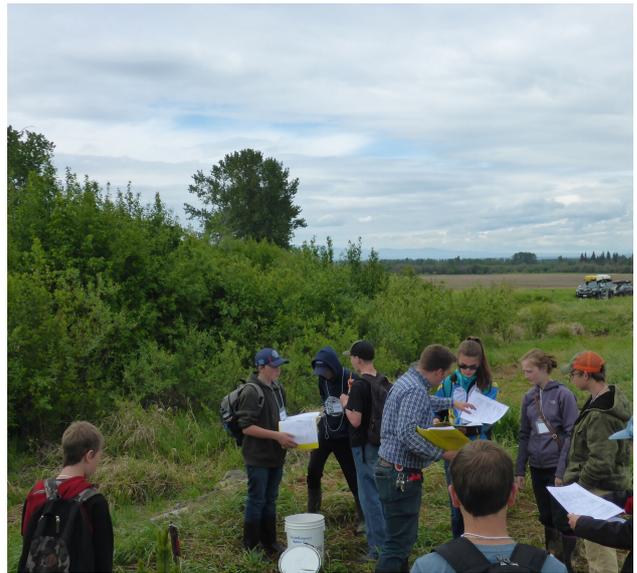
Transforming education by connecting students, communities and waterways

DEAR KOH-LEARNING COMMUNITY,

The 'Koh-Learning in our Watersheds' project is a UNBC-SD91 education initiative that aims to foster Aboriginal Education as well as hands-on waterways learning. The Koh-Learning project officially launched just over a year ago on February 25th, 2019. Since then, we have come together in a number of ways to advance the Koh-Learning project and fulfill the vision of connecting students, communities and waterways in School District 91. Though the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented us from conducting group or field activities this spring, this has not stopped us from continuing to plan various activities for the fall!

We would like to take this opportunity to share a few highlights of what we have accomplished over the past year, provide some updates, and share our excitement about next year. You can find this information in the following three sections of this update, respectively:

- (a) see the '2019/20 Summary' section for a list of all that has happened over the past year;
- (b) read the 'Updates' section to learn about new initiatives and projects that are related to Koh-Learning; and finally;
- (c) join us in 'Looking ahead' to upcoming activities in this section.



WHAT'S INSIDE:

- (a) 2019/20 Summary
- (b) Updates
- (c) Looking ahead

(A) 2019/20 SUMMARY

Some of the key Koh-Learning activities & events that have happened over the past year include:

Teacher and Principal Gathering (Aug. 2019): Our first Koh-Learning community event took place as an all-day Koh-learning orientation for SD91 administrators, teachers and students, First Nation representatives and UNBC staff at the Nadleh Whut'enne Yah Cultural Centre in Nautley.

Waterway Monitoring (Sep./Oct. 2019): Last fall, students and teachers from all four high schools took part in water monitoring activities of some kind on their local waterbodies!

Cross-School Youth Engagement (Oct. 2019): Teachers from Fort St James Secondary co-designed a multi-school, youth-focused event the day prior to the Nechako Watershed Roundtable meeting. Students learned from a local First Nations resource manager, took part in a mapping exercise, and generated questions to be asked of the Nechako Watershed Roundtable Annual Meeting the following day. Questions asked by students are available in the [meeting report](#).

Student winter gathering (Feb. 2020): This February the first-ever student winter gathering was hosted in Vanderhoof by the Nechako Valley Secondary School. We were lucky to work with Saik'uz First Nation and the teachers at the Nechako Valley Secondary School to plan this event. Please check-out the summary report (attached) and [summary video](#) to learn more about this event!



(B) UPDATES

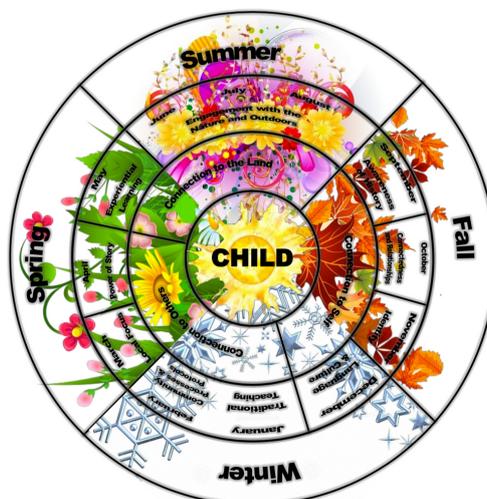
Koh-Learning Logo (coming soon!): At the February 2020 gathering, students worked together to identify key themes that they thought should be represented in a logo for the Koh-Learning project. Based on these ideas, a logo design workshop is being planned to allow students to work with an artist from the Two Rivers Gallery to build a logo. Look out for the release of the Koh-Learning logo soon!

Research Project – Koh-Learning and Decision-Making: Ella Parker, a graduate student at UNBC will be using the case study of the Koh-Learning project to focus her thesis research on understanding how school-based water monitoring can inform decision-making. She will be involving members of the Koh-Learning community in the research by engaging students, teachers and watershed partners in group interviews that will serve to identify pathways to inform decision-making. This will guide the design of stream monitoring trials to be conducted with Koh-Learning classes. Her initial focus will be on working with students and teachers at the Nechako Valley Secondary School. Look out for more updates on this research later on! For more information about this research please contact Ella Parker at parkere@unbc.ca.

New Position- Nechako Watershed Youth Engagement: We are pleased to announce that Jordan Cranmer (SD91/NVSS Alumni) will be working to support the Nechako Watershed Roundtable Youth Engagement working group starting this summer. In this role, Jordan will help to organize engagement opportunities for youth across the watershed as well as make connections between Koh-Learning and the Nechako Watershed Roundtable.

Geopaparazzi Workshops: We have taken advantage of the COVID-19 isolation to develop a process for using the Android App called “Geo-paparazzi” for collecting Koh-Learning data. In May we trialed this workshop with teacher-candidates in the UNBC Education program. If you are interested in learning more about geo-paparazzi, or are interested in being part of a workshop over the summer please get in touch!

Environmental DNA (eDNA) research: With funds secured from the Pacific Salmon Foundation and UNBC / BC Real Estate Foundation Partnering fund, we are undertaking a pilot project using eDNA to explore the distribution of juvenile salmon in selected creeks in the Nechako watershed. This pilot study is headed by Dr. Brent Murray and his lab, with support from Barry Booth at UNBC. It will involve both NVSS students and staff in the collection and analysis of creek samples for salmonid DNA.



The seasonal rounds diagram for education will be used to help guide Koh-Learning activities. Developed by Leona Prince, District Principal of Aboriginal Education.

(C) LOOKING AHEAD

Now that we have been through our first year of the Koh-Learning project, we have established a seasonal rhythm to gather SD91 teachers, students and community partners for four key events throughout the year. Similar to this past year, you can look forward to a set of seasonal events which include:

Summer (August) - Teacher and Administrator Gathering

A chance to gather teachers and administrators to get prepared and inspired for fall activities. Stay tuned as we are actively planning for the 2020 version of this gathering!

Fall (October) - Youth Engagement Day with the Nechako Watershed Roundtable

A chance for youth to connect with each other and with the Nechako Watershed decision-makers.

Winter (February) - Student Winter Gathering

A chance for students to showcase their Koh-Learning projects and activities from the fall.

Spring (May) - Student Spring Gathering

A chance to gather SD91 students for a field day somewhere in the watershed (unfortunately cancelled this year due to COVID-19).



This update was put together by the Koh-Learning team at UNBC,
thank you so much for your interest.

To learn more about the Koh-Learning project check out our
website:

<https://www.unbc.ca/integrated-watershed-research-group/koh-learning-our-watersheds>

If you have any further questions about the Koh-Learning project,
feel free to contact us:

koh-learning@unbc.ca

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