



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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U Toronto's Andrea Olive on why Saskatchewan needs species at risk law: The Saskatchewan government continues to baffle me in regards to species at risk protection in the province. On Jan. 24, the federal government announced that it's contributing \$2.1 million to protect the sage grouse over the next years. The government of Alberta will match that amount, but Saskatchewan remains silent. The province has not offered any money for conservation of this native bird, which is under serious threat of extinction in the next decade. Why not? In a mail survey I conducted of residents in Regina, Saskatoon, Swift Current and Moose Jaw, I learned that 95% of respondents felt that it is important for human beings to protect other species. More importantly, 70% of respondents thought it is not OK to let other species go extinct because of human activities. If Premier Brad Wall does not want to listen to experts or environmentalists, he should at least listen to the people of Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan can do both - exploit natural resources and conserve the environment. [The StarPhoenix](#)

Event co-organized by UNBC geographer Greg Halseth aimed to improve understanding of cumulative effects of northern BC resource development: Northern British Columbia is undergoing huge changes in terms of natural resource development. As Greg Halseth and Marleen Morris of the Community Development Institute at UNBC point out, the scale of the changes are comparable to the industrial transformation that happened after the Second World War in British Columbia where, like today, natural resource mega-projects and initiatives played a key role. Recently academics, health care professionals, community leaders and First Nations delegates attended a two-day forum to discuss the cumulative impacts of natural resource development in the North. The goal of the forum was to bring people with different specialties and experience together to discuss the impact of resource development in multiple sectors on the environment, public health and local communities. [250 News](#) | [UNBC News Release](#) | [Prince George Citizen](#)

McGill U's Renee Sieber named a keynote speaker of GIScience 2014: Renee Sieber, an internationally recognized expert in participatory GIS has been named as a keynote speaker at GIScience 2014, in Vienna. GIScience hosts the preeminent conference on advances in Geographic Information Science. GIScience 2014 continues a highly successful series of conferences started in 2000 that regularly brings together more than 200 international participants from academia, industry, and government organizations to discuss and advance the state-of-the-art in GIScience, for example from cognitive science, information science, philosophy, linguistics and geography. [Geoscience 2014](#)

U Lethbridge's Hester Jiskoot looks into rare foam formations near Pincher Creek: The Hammonds found a bubbling, gurgling substance coming up from the water along a riverbank in Pincher Creek. The Hammonds sent photos of the pillars to Global News, prompting the University of Lethbridge to try and find out what the formations could be. A heated debate between researchers erupted and six colleagues at the school began to brainstorm ideas. "To us it looks like a positive land form, so something that is building up rather than eroding away," says Hester Jiskoot, a glaciologist at the University of Lethbridge. "That, by itself is really exciting. My first reaction was 'this is quite unusual.'" According to Jiskoot, a combination of the perfect conditions needs to happen in order to create the frozen foam pillars. These pillars are caused by mild, thawing temperatures that are followed by a flash freeze like the drastic drop in temperature we have seen this week. Organic matter in the water causes the creation of the foam and a crack or hole in the ice allows the foam to push through. In this case the Hammond family walked their cattle through the area where the waterway is located and researchers believe it's their manure that contributed to creations. "They also need a waterfall or some sort of drop to be created, that caused the pressure, which forces the foam upward," adds Jiskoot.
[Global BC](#)

U Waterloo's Cristina Surdu and Claude Duguay show thinning of Arctic lake ice cuts winter ice season by 24 days compared to 1950: Arctic lakes have been freezing up later in the year and thawing earlier, creating a winter ice season about 24 days shorter than it was in 1950, a University of Waterloo study has found. "We've found that the thickness of the ice has decreased tremendously in response to climate warming in the region," said lead author Cristina Surdu, a PhD student of Professor Claude Duguay in Waterloo's Department of Geography and Environmental Management. "When we saw the actual numbers we were shocked at how dramatic the change has been. It's basically more than a foot of ice by the end of winter." The study of more than 400 lakes of the North Slope of Alaska, is the first time researchers have been able to document the magnitude of lake-ice changes in the region over such a long period of time. "At the end of the analysis, when looking at trend analysis results, we were stunned to observe such a dramatic ice decline during a period of only 20 years." The research team used satellite radar imagery from ESA to determine that 62 per cent of the lakes in the region froze to the bottom in 1992. By 2011, only 26 per cent of lakes froze down to the bed, or bottom of the lake. [ScienceDaily](#) | [UWaterloo Environment](#)

York U's Glen Norcliffe - a geographer and tricycle historian: Whereas the history of two-wheeled vehicles starts in 1817, when a German named Karl Drais devised a "running machine" that worked like a Flintstones car, inventors had long been much more forward-thinking when it came to trikes. A watchmaker, Stephan Farfler, built a three-wheeled, hand-powered vehicle in the 17th century, and lever-driven, three-wheeled "pilentums" or "accelerators" were around by 1820. "There were half a dozen kinds of tricycles in Germany and France and England," says Glen Norcliffe, a geographer and tricycle historian at York University, "but they never really took off. They were prototypes." By the 1860s, biking was a mainstream pastime. Huge front wheels made for fast machines, with riders perched unsteadily on top. As the hobby grew more popular, some sought a safer ride — for women and older men. "At first, Starley tried to do this with a sort of sidesaddle penny-farthing, a crablike machine that never worked," Norcliffe says. "Eventually he decided that he needed another wheel to balance it." So he produced something more like the old pilentums. Soon Starley had a three-wheeled vehicle that worked with pedals and a chain and rack-and-pinion steering. The boom that he created quickly ended, though. [The New York Times](#)

U Ottawa hosting International Arctic Science Committee Network on Arctic Glaciology: For 'Arctic Week', uOttawa is hosting the annual meeting of the International Arctic Science Committee Network on Arctic Glaciology from Feb 3-5, which speakers coming from countries such as Switzerland, Poland, Holland, Germany and USA – and the Department of Geography at University of Ottawa.
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Western U's Jason Gilliland addresses healthy communities forum: While concerns about rising oil costs, population fluctuation and global warming are constant topics of conversation, so too should be the positive initiatives taking place in our communities. Jason Gilliland of the Department of Geography at Western University was recently in Komoka, Ontario to present to an audience of local policy makers and other community stakeholders at the "Healthy Communities Forum" hosted by the Middlesex London Health Unit. His presentation focused on a report authored by HEAL researchers entitled "Linking Health and the Built Environment in Rural Settings: Evidence and Recommendations for Planning Healthy Communities in Middlesex County". [The Londoner](#)

Recent Theses and Dissertations

Joanna Paterson. 2014. Students who stay: Stories of Northern Medical program graduates and place integration." Unpublished MSc in Community Health Science. University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC. Supervisor: Dr. Neil Hanlon.

Ysler Giulliana Tamblyn. Is resource extraction a curse or a bonanza for local communities? Mining case study: Quiruvilca, Peru. Unpublished MA in International Studies (International Development stream), University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC. Supervisor: Dr. Catherine Nolin.

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Sarah Burch, Alison Shaw, Ann Dale and John Robinson. 2014. [Triggering transformative change: a development path approach to climate change response in communities](#). Climate Policy. DOI:10.1080/14693062.2014.876342

Hu-hua Cao, Sheng-Quan Ma and Fengmin Li. 2014. [Introduction: Ecosystem assessment and management](#). Ecosystem Assessment and Fuzzy Systems Management. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing 254:1-5.

Olivier Dehoorne, Kevin Depault, Sheng-Quan Ma and Hu-hua Cao. 2014. [International tourism: Geopolitical dimensions of a global phenomenon](#). Ecosystem Assessment and Fuzzy Systems Management. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing 254:389-396.

Charlotte E. Friel, Sarah A. Finkelstein and Anthony M. Davis. [Relative importance of hydrological and climatic controls on Holocene paleoenvironments inferred using diatom and pollen records from a lake in the central Hudson Bay Lowlands, Canada](#). The Holocene. doi:10.1177/0959683613518587

David Hugill and Owen Toews. 2014. [Born again urbanism: New missionary incursions, aboriginal resistance and barriers to rebuilding relationships in Winnipeg's North End](#). Human Geography 7:70-84.
Johannes Koch, John J. Clague and Andrée Blais-Stevens. 2014. [Debris flow chronology and potential hazard along the Alaska Highway in southwest Yukon Territory](#). Environmental Engineering and Geoscience 20:25-48.

Peter D. Morse and Christopher R. Burn. 2014. [Perennial frost blisters of the outer Mackenzie Delta, western Arctic coast, Canada](#). Earth Surface Processes and Landforms 39:200–213.

Li-qin Zhang, Hu-hua Cao, Jiang-hong Zhu, and Li-ping Qu. 2014. [Economic valuation of terrestrial ecosystem services: Present and future planning perspectives for Ledong County, Hainan Province, China](#). *Ecosystem Assessment and Fuzzy Systems Management. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing* 254:407-419.

Scott A. Lloyd, C. Tattersall Smith and Göran Berndes. 2014. [Potential opportunities to utilize mountain pine beetle-killed biomass as wood pellet feedstock in British Columbia](#). *The Forestry Chronicle* 90:80-88.

Other “Geographical” News

Environment Canada observational weather data collection coming to Western University:

Nationally-significant environmental data that has been stored, in paper form, by Environment Canada dating back nearly 175 years is coming on long-term loan to Western University to be preserved, digitized and shared for research and teaching. An initiative led by Western's [NiCHE: Network in Canadian History & Environment](#), Western Archives will soon receive an archival collection of Canadian daily observational weather records spanning the period from 1840 to 1960. The collection consists of approximately 1,000 boxes of observations from thousands of weather stations across Canada, along with 250 volumes of journals, observations, letterbooks and correspondence that make up the history of the Meteorological Service of Canada itself. The collection will arrive at Western over the next several weeks and will be available to researchers in Western Archives by the summer. [Western Media](#)

Research shows that reported oil sands emissions greatly underestimated: A new comprehensive modeling assessment of contamination in the Athabasca Oil Sands Region indicates that officially reported emissions of certain highly hazardous air pollutants have been greatly underestimated. The researchers modeled emissions of a group of atmospheric pollutants known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). PAHs are produced during the process of extracting petroleum from the oil sands. Previous models have assessed only the PAHs that are released directly into the atmosphere during extraction. The new model takes into account other indirect pathways for the release of PAHs that haven't been assessed before. For instance, he found that evaporation from tailing ponds – lakes of polluted water also created through oil extraction – may actually introduce more PAHs into the atmosphere than direct emissions. [U Toronto Media Room](#)

The ancient meandering rivers of Mars: With the help of the awesome High-Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera aboard NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, ancient meandering riverbeds that used to carve into the Martian terrain have been imaged with beautiful clarity. However, these riverbeds are now twisted ridges, created after eons of erosion processes. When rivers flow, their beds accumulate sediment that becomes compressed and resistant to erosion. When they run dry, an empty trough remains. After millions of years, the surrounding landscape becomes eroded by Mars' persistent winds, slowly wearing it away. However, the ancient riverbed erodes far more slowly (owed to it being “erosion-hardened” by the ancient flowing water), and the surrounding landscape erodes away deeper than the bottom of the ancient riverbed, creating an inverted ridge. Many of the features we find in terrestrial rivers can be seen in these Martian meanders. [DNews](#)

Google marks coldest temperature recorded in Canada: Google's home page marked the anniversary Monday of the coldest day ever recorded in Canada. The temperature in Snag, Yukon, a village south of Beaver Creek, reached -63C on Feb. 3, 1947. The weather station at Snag was maintained until 1966. [CBC News](#)

Some not so “Geographical” News



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