



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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UBC PhD student Jake Wall using Google Earth to help save threatened animals in Africa: Thanks in part to a tech-savvy student at the University of British Columbia, rangers in northern Kenya and South Africa are tapping into technology to combat poaching. Jake Wall, a PhD student in UBC's geography department, works for the conservation group Save the Elephants, where he has helped outfit almost 100 of the mammals with GPS satellite-tracking collars. "It gives us real insight into their day-to-day behaviour. At any given point they fire up Google Earth and check on the latest locations of the elephants and what they're doing," he said. Researchers have used satellites to track the elephants' movements for decades but Wall then designed several software algorithms to crunch the live data and reveal patterns and, more importantly, any departure from patterns in their behaviour. "We can look for behaviour such as an elephant that starts slowing down because it becomes injured or sick," Wall said. "We're also very concerned with elephant poaching for ivory, so one of the algorithms I designed looks at whether an animal has stopped moving for a given period of time, which would signal that the animal has been killed." [CTV News](#)

U Saskatchewan's Bob Patrick on scrapping bike lane trial debacle: Saskatoon city council's recent reversal of its January 2014 decision to install separated bike lanes on a trial basis at two downtown streets represents poor judgment, lack of vision and weak leadership. Saskatoon citizens, whether cyclists or noncyclists, should be alarmed that city councillors can be so out of touch with proven trends in good urbanism. Evidence across North America supports enhanced mobility options in urban areas as a means to achieve everything from increased social interaction and economic exchange to healthier citizens and reduced road congestion. So why would Saskatoon council flip-flop on something that's proven workable in other cities? What could have happened between January and May to cause council to return to the dark ages of urban mobility, thus holding Saskatoon in urban design purgatory in the 21st century? It's evident that the business elite caught the ear of councillors and, using antiquated car-culture rationale combined with bad data, successfully swayed them. [The StarPhoenix](#)

UAlberta's Alberto Reyes looks to past climate change to understand future impact: A former University of Alberta PhD student has come back to campus as an assistant professor, to explore and teach about the mysteries of natural climate warming and ice age history, on the heels of a newly published paper in Nature. Alberto Reyes, an assistant professor in the Faculty of Science who received his PhD from the U of A in 2010, led a study which provides the first scientific evidence that the southern portion of Greenland's ice sheet nearly disappeared in the geologically recent past, during a long period of warm climate about 400,000 years ago. The findings also indicate that the collapse of the ice sheet, which would have contributed 4.5 to six metres of global sea level rise, likely occurred under conditions that may have been only a few degrees warmer than the present day. Reyes will continue his research into long-term landscape and environmental change, through his appointment with the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. Focused on the Arctic and subarctic regions, Yukon in particular, Reyes' work will help address "what we might expect from a future warming climate in terms of how things like ice sheets and permafrost will respond. [U Alberta News](#)

UBC's Simon Donner says an El Niño this year could be warmer than usual: Climatologists are predicting an El Niño pattern will develop at some point this summer, bringing with it the potential for major weather events. Caused by periodic warming of part of the Pacific Ocean, El Niños occur every two to seven years and are associated with changes in weather around the world. Simon Donner, a climate scientist in UBC's Department of Geography, explains the impact El Niño could have on global weather patterns. Climate change affects everything that happens in the atmosphere and the ocean. The jury is still out on exactly how climate change affects the development of El Niño events. One thing is certain: as the planet has warmed, El Niño events have also warmed. Our research shows that, all else being equal, an El Niño event today is warmer around the world than an identical event 100 years ago. [UBC News](#)

Western U's Jason Gilliland and the SmartAPPetite Project: An interview with Dr Jason Gilliland of Western's Geography Department about the SmartAPPetite project was recently featured on the front page of the Londoner newspaper. SmartAPPetite is a smartphone app which aims to help users eat healthier while also helping to strengthen Ontario's local food economy. Seed funding for the SmartAPPetite project was provided by Research Western and the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. The interdisciplinary team, which includes faculty and students from Western, Wilfrid Laurier University, and Brescia University College were recently referred to as "the faces of the new local food economy" in the London Community News. [Londoner](#)

Memorial U's Josh Lepawsky visualizing transboundary shipments of e-waste: Memorial University Department of Geography's Dr. Josh Lepawsky, who leads the Reassembling Rubbish project, has just released interactive visualizations of global e-waste flows. The visualizations draw on data available from the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development. The dataset assembled by Dr. Lepawsky and a team of graduate students is part of a larger investigation into the trade and traffic of discarded electronics (often referred to as 'e-waste'). The visualizations require java and work best in Firefox or Safari and can be found at the following link: [Reassembling Rubbish](#). Interested readers can also access free peer-reviewed papers associated with the dataset. These papers situate the data underlying the interactive visualizations in analytic detail. [Memorial Geography News](#)

UBC MA student Caroline Grego wins CSN-RÉC Prize: UBC Geography MA student Caroline Grego won the MA-level Major Research Paper Prize from CSN-RÉC (Réseau d'études canadiennes). The winning paper is titled, "Imagining a Community-Oriented 'National Park Nature: Conflict, Management, and Conservation in the Proposed South Okanagan-Lower Similkameen National Park Reserve." According to the congratulatory message from the CSN-RÉC, "The adjudicating committee members agreed that Grego's thesis represents a significant contribution to the field of Canadian Studies. Starting from a personal narrative reflecting on her relationship with the environment of the Okanagan Valley and her native South Carolina and moving into a nuanced discussion of the politics surrounding the proposed South Okanagan-Lower Similkameen National Park Reserve, Grego's thesis combines an impressive theoretical grounding in concepts of nature and wilderness, a thorough exploration of the history of the region, and a balanced acknowledgement of the plurality of voices in this debate. We enjoyed reading this thesis a great deal and wish to congratulate Caroline on a fine piece of work." [UBC Geography News](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Simon Dalby. 2014. [Anthropocene geopolitics](#). Geopolitics: An Introductory Reader. Edited by Jason Dittmer and Jo Sharp.

Nick Eyles, Joe. I. Boyce and Niko Putkinen. 2014. [Neoglacial \(<3000 years\) till and flutes at Saskatchewan Glacier, Canadian Rocky Mountains, formed by subglacial deformation of a soft bed](#). Sedimentology. DOI: 10.1111/sed.12145

Kemal Gökkaya, Valerie Thomas, Thomas Noland, Harry McCaughey, Ian Morrison and Paul Treitz. 2014. [Mapping continuous forest type variation by means of correlating remotely sensed metrics to canopy N:P ratio in a boreal mixedwood forest](#). Applied Vegetation Science. DOI:10.1111/avsc.12122

Samantha Hajna, Kaberi Dasgupta, Lawrence Joseph and Nancy A. Ross. 2014. [A call for caution and transparency in the calculation of land use mix: Measurement bias in the estimation of associations between land use mix and physical activity](#). Health & Place 29:79–83.

Don Lafreniere and Jason Gilliland. 2014. ["All the World's a Stage": A GIS framework for recreating personal time-space from qualitative and quantitative sources](#). Transactions in GIS. DOI:10.1111/tgis.12089

Christopher J. Lemieux, Paul A. Gray, Allan G. Douglas, Gary Nielsen and David Pearson. 2014. [From science to policy: The making of a watershed-scale climate change adaptation strategy](#). Environmental Science & Policy 42:123–137.

Felipe L. Lobo, Maycira P.F. Costa and Evelyn M.L.M. Novo. 2014. [Time-series analysis of Landsat-MSS/TM/OLI images over Amazonian waters impacted by gold mining activities](#). Remote Sensing of Environment. DOI: 10.1016/j.rse.2014.04.030.

Catrina A. Mackenzie, Timothy D. Baird and Joel Hartter. 2014. [Use of single large or several small policies as strategies to manage people-park interactions](#). Conservation Biology. DOI:10.1111/cobi.12334

Marc Pons, Peter A Johnson, Martí Rosas and Eric Jover. 2014. [A georeferenced agent-based model to analyze the climate change impacts on ski tourism at a regional scale](#). International Journal of Geographical Information Science. DOI:10.1080/13658816.2014.933481

Pamela Moss. 2014. [21 years of Gender, Place and Culture - Some rhizomatic recollections of a feminist geographer: working toward an affirmative politics](#). Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography. DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2014.939159.

Britta Ricker, Sylvie Daniel and Nick Hedley. 2014. [Fuzzy boundaries: Hybridizing location-based services, volunteered geographic information and geovisualization literature](#). Geography Compass. DOI:10.1111/gec3.12138.

Alan S. Trenhaile. 2014. [Modelling tidal notch formation by wetting and drying and salt weathering](#). Geomorphology. DOI:10.1016/j.geomorph.2014.07.014

Y. Yu, J. Li, H. Guan, D. Zai and C. Wang. 2014. [Automated extraction of 3D trees from mobile lidar point clouds](#). The International Archives of the Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences, Volume XL-5, 2014. ISPRS Technical Commission V Symposium, 23 – 25 June 2014, Riva del Garda, Italy.

Linghong Zhang, Chunbao (Charles) Xu, Pascale Champagne and Warren Mabee. 2014. [Overview of current biological and thermo-chemical treatment technologies for sustainable sludge management](#). Waste Management & Research. doi: 10.1177/0734242X14538303

Other “Geographical” News

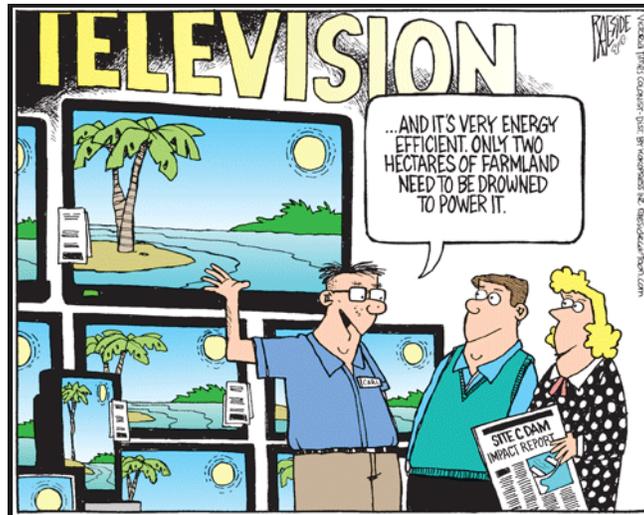
Loss of snowpack and glaciers in Rockies poses water threat: Scientists say that British Columbia’s 17,000 glaciers — both in the Rockies and along the Pacific coast — are losing 22 billion cubic meters of water annually. That’s equivalent to refilling a 60,000-seat football stadium 8,300 times. “The future will not be kind to glaciers and mountain snow cover in western Canada,” says Brian Menounos, a glaciologist at the University of Northern British Columbia. “The Canadian Rockies are not going to turn into the dry mountains of Nevada anytime soon. But thinner, quicker-melting snowpacks, coupled with the loss of glaciers, will fundamentally alter these sensitive mountain ecosystems... We really need to start planning now for the future.” [Yale Environment 360](#)

Whales as ecosystem engineers: A review of research on whales shows that they have more a powerful influence on the function of oceans, global carbon storage, and the health of commercial fisheries than has been commonly assumed. The continued recovery of great whales from centuries of overhunting may help to buffer marine ecosystems from destabilizing stresses, including climate change, reports a global team of scientists. [ScienceDaily](#)

Plastic 'Trash Islands' forming in ocean garbage patch: One thing they've discovered so far is that there may be more trash on the ocean surface than previously thought. The team has also found more permanent fixtures in the garbage patch's landscape. For instance, the team has discovered a "trash island" more than 15 meters long, with "beaches," a "rocky coastline," and "underwater mountains" and reefs made up of ropes, buoys and other plastic debris. Mussels, clams, sea anemones and seaweed were found sheltering on this artificial island. Moore speculates that the island formed after the tsunami that battered Japan in 2011 swept a tremendous amount of ropes, buoys, mooring lines and anchors out to sea from Asian aquaculture farms that were harvesting mussels and oysters. [DNews](#)

Sea level rising in western tropical Pacific anthropogenic as result of human activity: Sea levels likely will continue to rise in the tropical Pacific Ocean off the coasts of the Philippines and northeastern Australia as humans continue to alter the climate, a study concludes. The study authors combined past sea level data gathered from both satellite altimeters and traditional tide gauges as part of the study. The goal was to find out how much a naturally occurring climate phenomenon called the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, or PDO, influences sea rise patterns in the Pacific. [ScienceDaily](http://www.sciencedaily.com)

Some not so “Geographical” News



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