



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 392, February 18 2016**

Compiled by Dan Smith [<cag@geog.uvic.ca>](mailto:cag@geog.uvic.ca)

U North British Columbia's on the disappearing glaciers of British Columbia's Coast Mountains:

Most of the coast's glaciers are rarely seen, either remote from cities and towns or hidden from view in the mountains. There are glaciers everywhere, some huge, but more of them tucked away in alpine saddles and basins. "If you want to see them, see them now," says Brian Menounos, a glaciologist with the University of Northern British Columbia. Menounos is surveying coastal glaciers in western North America using lidar, a detection system that measures the distance from an overhead aircraft to a glacier's surface by firing a laser up to 380,000 times per second, then capturing its light-speed bounce back in a mirror. The lidar survey, when compared to past air and satellite imagery, will give a more precise sense of what is happening to British Columbia's coastal glaciers, and set a baseline against which to measure changes in the future. Already, glaciers across the province are known to be losing thickness at an average rate of about 75 centimeters of meltwater per year. That means more than 20 cubic kilometers of ice are disappearing across British Columbia annually. Menounos says he would be surprised if Vancouver Island—the largest island on the west coast of North America, and currently polka-dotted with what is marked on maps as "permanent snow and ice"—still had glaciers beyond 2060. If you find that hard to believe, consider the fact that what is now Glacier National Park, just stateside across the Canada-US border in the Rocky Mountains, had 150 glaciers in the mid-1800s and has 25 today. Smithsonian.com

U Alberta's climatologist Andy Bush reports Alberta glaciers' days are numbered: The Majority of Earth's glaciers not expected to survive the century, says Andy Bush from the University of Alberta Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. Glaciers are melting rapidly across the globe; by Bush's estimate, they will be all but gone within the next 50 years. "The results that we have indicate that after about 2050, pretty much everything will be gone except at the highest elevations—and that's in the Rockies as well," says Bush. His estimates, based on his work in numerical modelling, have also been corroborated by other studies using different tools such as dynamic modelling. Alberta glaciers' days are numbered. "What happens is that, as things warm up, of course the glacier just retreats up to higher elevations," Bush explains. "The rate at which it is projected to happen in the Rockies is pretty much the same as the Himalayas—but the Himalayas are higher, so they are projected to last longer." Although there's not much that can be done at this point to slow or halt the eradication of glaciers, Bush stresses that the most critical changes we can make are in our attitudes toward water usage. "People need to be aware that their water resources aren't going to last forever," he says. "People make that assumption often, but it's a finite resource." [U Alberta Faculty of Science](http://UAlbertaFacultyofScience)

U North British Columbia's Greg Halseth on Fort McMurray's boom-to-bust experience: The wealth and sophistication of Fort McMurray is hard to compare with smaller boom towns, but one common feature is that the decline is often gradual, as enormous reservoirs of wealth seep out of the community. After many years of prosperity, residents cannot accept that the party is over. According to Greg Halseth, a specialist in the rise and fall — and rise again — of one-industry communities, keeping hope alive is crucial as Fort McMurray's economy goes off the boil. He says the damage of a long, slow decline is psychological as well as economic. Halseth, who holds a prestigious Canada Research Chair at the University of Northern British Columbia, says boom-and-bust communities share some common vulnerabilities that go back to the fur trade. They depend on the health and changing values of a much bigger market. "Canada, as a resource-exporting nation, is what's called by economists a 'price taker,'" says Halseth. "We don't set the price for oil. We don't set the price for copper or gold or any of those things." "When there's a boom, we spend every nickel of it," says Halseth. "And when there's a bust, we don't have the fiscal resources to transform our economy." Halseth says there are many one-industry communities that have stayed the course, remaking themselves into healthy, diverse communities, albeit at a smaller size. "They've often done some terrific, tremendous things," he says. Industries can also bounce back as the rising demand for iron or oil brings a new wave of investment. The trouble is down-swings in the cycle can stretch out too long, leaving many businesses and homeowners unable to hang on. Some industries never return to their former glory. [CBCNews|Business](#)

U Toronto's Matti Siemiatycki reports new Toronto transit network could reshape the city: The 15-year transit plan unveiled Tuesday could change not only how Torontonians get around but the shape of the city itself. The new proposed network of rapid transit across Toronto is made up of projects that are underway or have been part of Toronto's planning process in recent years. It includes extending the Bloor-Danforth subway, the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, a relief line, SmartTrack/GO RER and LRTs along Finch, Sheppard, Jane and Queen's Quay. Architect and planner Ken Greenberg and Matti Siemiatycki, a University of Toronto geography and planning professor, said that change could be for the better, bringing new neighbourhoods and completing existing ones. Siemiatycki and Greenberg highlighted a few areas that are ripe for change if the new lines on Toronto's transit map become reality 2031. The city's plans show a SmartTrack stop and a relief line stop at Gerrard Square, Siemiatycki said. The area of Gerrard and Pape is made up of large parcels that could easily be redeveloped—including a couple of large parking lots and Gerard Square mall. "The community will have its own views on acceptable density, how tall the buildings are going to be, what type of amenities they want to see in there," Siemiatycki said. "It could spur an interesting community development conversation." [Toronto Metro](#)

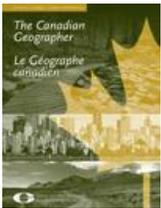
U Victoria's geographers Maycira Costa and Randy Scharien share MEOPAR and Irving Shipbuilding Award for Ocean Research: The Marine Environmental Observation Prediction and Response (MEOPAR) network and Irving Shipbuilding Inc. have announced the recipients of \$1.8 million to support nine new ocean research projects that align with MEOPAR's aim to strengthen Canada's ability to anticipate and respond to marine risk. Declining salmon stocks in the Salish Sea is the focus of [Maycira Costa](#) who is using new technologies and approaches to study changes in the marine environment, including turning to the public for help collecting ocean data. As soon as this spring, researchers will use a variety of channels to collect spatial-temporal environmental data including satellites, tablets and sensors on ships of opportunity, citizens such as fishermen and ferry passengers, and research cruises. [Randy Scharien](#)'s team will collaborate with government and industry partners to improve the observation and prediction of summer sea ice conditions using the leading-edge capabilities of satellite synthetic aperture radar (SAR) data. As the Arctic experiences environmental change and increasing marine activity, the demand for timely and accurate sea-ice information is also growing. These data will foster the development of tools to support safe navigation and avoidance of ship-based oil spills. [UVic Media](#)



U Victoria geographer Peter Keller named Simon Fraser U's next Vice President Academic and Provost. Keller comes to SFU following an impressive tenure at the University of Victoria where he is a professor in the Department of Geography. He most recently served two terms as dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. [SFU News](#)

U Victoria's Ian Walker and PhD candidate Michael Grilliot provide comments on what may have caused a landslide which sent a large portion of a waterfront lot into the Gorge Waterway in Victoria. [Victoria Times Colonist](#) | [CBC Radio Victoria](#)

New in The Canadian Geographer



Stephanie E. Coen, Rajendra P. Subedi and Mark W. Rosenberg. 2016. [Working out across Canada: Is there a gender gap?](#) The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12255

Craig E. Jones and David Ley. 2016. [Transit-oriented development and gentrification along Metro Vancouver's low-income SkyTrain corridor.](#) The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12256

Conference News



[#WDCAG2016](#) abstract submission deadline extended to Feb 22, 2016
Conference Webpage: [@UNBCGeography Hosting WDCAG 2016](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Steven Farber, Benjamin Ritter and Liwei Fu. 2016. [Space–time mismatch between transit service and observed travel patterns in the Wasatch Front, Utah: A social equity perspective](#). *Travel Behaviour and Society* 4:40-48.

S.R. Fassnacht, M. L. Cherry, N.B.H. Venable and F. Saavedra. 2016. [Snow and albedo climate change impacts across the United States Northern Great Plains](#). *The Cryosphere* 10:329-339.

Marwan A. Hassan, Stephen Bird, David Reid and Daniel Hogan. 2016. [Simulated wood budgets in two mountain streams](#). *Geomorphology*. DOI:10.1016/j.geomorph.2016.02.010

Chris H. Hugenholtz and Geoffrey A. VanVeller. 2016. [Wind hazard in the alpine zone: a case study in Alberta, Canada](#). *Weather*. DOI:10.1002/wea.256

Scott J. Ketcheson and Jonathan S. Price. 2016. [Snow hydrology of a constructed watershed in the Athabasca Oil Sands Region, Alberta, Canada](#). *Hydrological Processes*. DOI:10.1002/hyp.10813

Trevor J. Porter, Duane G. Froese, Sarah J. Feakins, Ilya N. Bindeman, Matthew E. Mahony, Brent G. Pautler, Gert-Jan Reichartf, Paul T. Sanborn, Myrna J. Simpson and Johan W.H. Weijers. 2016. [Multiple water isotope proxy reconstruction of extremely low last glacial temperatures in Eastern Beringia \(Western Arctic\)](#). *Quaternary Science Reviews* 137:113–125.

Jean-Sébastien Landry, Navin Ramankutty and Lael Parrott. 2016. [Investigating the effects of subgrid cell dynamic heterogeneity on the large-scale modelling of albedo in boreal forests](#). *Earth Interactions* 20. DOI:10.1175/EI-D-15-0022.1

L Shillington. 2015. [Children's media landscapes and the emotional geographies of urban natures](#). *Identities and Subjectivities*. Editors: Nancy Worth, Claire Dwyer and Tracey Skelton. *Geographies of Children and Young People*. Volume 4.

Other “Geographical” News

Vancouver eyeing regulations for urban farms: The City of Vancouver is poised to introduce a new series of licensing and size regulations for residential and urban farms. A city staff report recommends limiting residential farms to 325-square metres and restricting commercial farms to 7,000-square metres. The proposed bylaws would only apply to farmers selling produce to restaurants or at farmers' markets. [CBCNews | British Columbia](#)

Yukon's massive Casino Mine project sent for highest level of review: The Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) has sent the massive, and controversial, Casino Mine project for the highest level of review, the first time that's happened in YESAB's 10-year history. YESAB's executive committee announced the move Thursday, at a rare media conference in

Whitehorse. The board said the Casino Mine project raises serious concerns about impacts on caribou, and tailings and waste management. [CBCNews | North](#)

Some not so “Geographical” News



The CAG works for geographers on [Twitter](#). Keep up-to-date by following [@CanGeographers](#)
GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>
[@CanGeographers Weekly](#): <https://paper.li/CanGeographers/1394987315>
