

GeogNews



Franklin Glacier, with Mt Waddington in background.
British Columbia Coast Mountains

News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers No. 409, June 18, 2016

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

U Waterloo grants Ming-ko Woo an Honorary Doctor of Environmental Studies: Woo is professor emeritus in the School of Geography and Environmental and Earth Sciences at McMaster University. A scientist of international stature, he has made outstanding contributions to the field of hydrology in three main areas: the hydrology of cold regions; wetland ecosystems; and stochastic and statistical modeling. He is considered to have pioneered the field of cold-regions hydrology in Canada, and in the process supervised two generations of scientists who now are established professors or researchers in government institutions. He has been recognized for his many contributions with several noteworthy awards. [Waterloo Daily Bulletin](#)

U Waterloo names Bruce Mitchell a Distinguished Professor Emeritus: For more than 45 years at the University of Waterloo, Mitchell has made exceptional contributions to the field of geography and environmental management in Canada and internationally. His impact as a teacher and mentor, and his service to his university and to scholarly and professional organizations, are equally outstanding. Trained as a geographer, his contributions have extended well beyond his discipline and the sheer volume and impact of Bruce Mitchell's scholarly output sets him apart from his peers. He has published more than 165 journal articles and book chapters, 37 authored or edited books or monographs, and numerous technical reports. In addition to being an outstanding scholar, he has made a profound impact as a teacher and mentor. During his lengthy career he has been the principal advisor for 28 doctoral students and 58 master's students, and many of the students he has mentored have gone on to become leading academics and professionals in their fields. In 1996, he received the University of Waterloo Distinguished Teacher Award. His contributions to the University of Waterloo through service are extensive and significant, having served as: chair of the Department of Geography; Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in the Faculty of Environmental Studies; Associate Vice President, Academic; Associate Provost for Academic and Student Affairs; Interim Associate Vice-President, International; Interim Vice-President, Academic and Provost; Associate Provost, Resources; and Interim Associate Provost, Human Resources. His career achievements have been recognized in various ways. [Waterloo Daily Bulletin](#)

U Toronto PhD student Cynthia Morinville awarded Trudeau Foundation scholarship: Trudeau scholars are outstanding students who are interested in growing in a multidisciplinary learning environment and in addressing important questions for Canada and the world. Each year, the Foundation awards up to fifteen scholarships to Canadian and foreign doctoral candidates pursuing research related to one of its four founding themes. “I’ve always been interested in people’s interactions with their environment,” says Geography PhD student Cynthia Morinville. But that interaction, she says, is tied up with politics. “Whenever you ask questions about environmental sustainability, you have to start with social justice and equality. Access to land and resources is at the base of all radical politics.” Morinville is currently looking at electronic waste and its effect on the people who eke out a living handling and dismantling it. Her research seeks to shed light on the ways in which rare metals embedded in electronic devices are valued, extracted and returned to markets. Before coming to U of T, she earned a master’s degree at the University of British Columbia, where she looked at access to water in Canada and internationally. The issue still interests her. “I think it would be hard to not take an interest in questions of water access and governance,” she says. “Water is not only a necessary substance of life, its material characteristics are such that it constantly circulates and acts as a social connector. It’s a really interesting resource through which we can consider questions of equity, justice and environmental sustainability.” Morinville’s supervisor, assistant professor of geography Rajyashree N. Reddy, says “Cynthia is a student of unusual promise who is deeply passionate about environmental and social justice issues. Her proposed research on e-waste will shed new light on the ethical and environmental dimensions of contemporary practices of planned obsolescence.” [U Toronto News](#)

U Calgary’s Shawn Marshall and U Regina’s Dave Sauchyn on hhy heat, droughts and dwindling glaciers threaten Alberta’s oil sands: It takes about two and a half barrels of water to produce a barrel of oil from bitumen. Much of that water comes from the Athabasca River, which is filled by rainfall and snowpack high in the Rockies. At the moment, oil sands production uses a small percentage of the Athabasca’s flow. But interconnected threats may make the river’s flow far smaller in the future. University of Regina geography professor David Sauchyn says research shows that recent decades have been a wet period. The region’s deeper history shows long, severe droughts. “In a normal year, they’re only taking a few per cent of the river flow,” Sauchyn says. “It’s a fairly large river, and they’re taking a relatively small amount in an average year. If you take a dry year, or a very dry year, that proportion goes way up.” The region’s droughts will come again, Sauchyn says. A new danger, though, comes as we combine cyclical drought with global warming. A long drought, like the one that started in 1790, would have much more serious effects. “The water was below average for 17 consecutive years. If that was to reoccur in the future, it’s reoccurring in a warmer climate. It’s much warmer now than it was in the 1790s – much, much warmer. So it’s a double-whammy.”

The combination of the two factors could be dangerous, says Shawn Marshall, a glaciologist at the University of Calgary: “The fear, I guess, and it’s a legitimate one, is what that’s going to look like.” Part of the Athabasca River’s flow comes from meltwater hundreds of kilometres away, in the Rockies. As the snowpack and glaciers shrink, however, that source can’t be relied on. As the glaciers shrink, however, water flows could actually increase — temporarily. “A few years ago, they thought that the upper reaches of the Athabasca were actually getting increased flows because of the huge amount of glacier melt coming off,” Marshall explains. “But after you’re getting your peak water it starts to decline, because you don’t have as much glacier left.” “As long as the snow keeps falling, in the mountains, there will still be water in those rivers, but there will be less flow, especially in the late summer. You lose that sort of regulator — the glaciers sort of act like a reservoir to store some of that water, but in this case it stores it for centuries, in the case of the Columbia icefield.” “I think the industry feels like they have the water supplies they need from there, but a lot of people think that might not be true, because we haven’t really seen what it looks like when it gets hot and dry in a warmer climate,” Marshall reflects. “And we’ve lost that glacier input.” [Global News](#)

U British Columbia's David Ley leaves Justin Trudeau with a sobering view of Vancouver's housing market: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was scheduled to meet with a round table of experts on Vancouver's housing affordability crisis. UBC geography professor David Ley, who's studied Asian global capital flows for 16 years, said he will suggest to Mr. Trudeau that Ottawa attempt to cool off the top end by taxing it, which would quell the entire market. He said he will also suggest a tax on foreign property purchases. "It would be a bolder move, and I think there's quite an appetite for that. But that would be a bigger ask, and a complicated ask, as you can't always easily tell what is a foreign purchase." He said he'll also ask for regulation of the real estate sector, including measures against money laundering. Indebtedness tied to high mortgages is another one of Mr. Ley's concerns he'd like to discuss with the Prime Minister. "I'm going to raise the issue that we need to protect what we already have – the housing from the '70s and '80s, such as the government-subsidized rentals, whose subsidies are expiring and, not surprisingly, are in need of repair. I think it's an easier task to conserve what you already have," he said. [The Globe and Mail](#)

U Victoria's Chris Darimont on B.C. government removal of wolf hunting limits in Thompson region: The B.C. government has removed seasonal limits on wolf hunting through much of the Thompson region in the newest provincial hunting and trapping regulations, opening the door for year-round hunting. The regulations also increased bag limits — the number of wolves that can be killed by each hunter in a season — in the Kootenays to three animals. "This is typical wildlife management by the B.C. provincial government favouring hunters and cattle producers over other stakeholders, including wildlife," said Chris Darimont, a University of Victoria professor of geography and member of the Raincoast Conservation Foundation. Darimont believes the looser rules around wolf hunting are aimed at pleasing cattle producers in B.C. concerned about losses to wolves. Darimont says if that's the case, the new regulations will probably not help much and might instead simply create a population of younger wolves. "And those are precisely, as we know, the wolves ... that find themselves in trouble with cattle producers," he said. "This might even have a perverse, unintended consequence on conflict with agriculture." The Ministry said those fears were unfounded. "Most wolves fail to reach the age of five years old as they are vulnerable to starvation, disease, injuries from attempted predation events and competition from other wolf packs," a statement read. "However, wolves have biologically high reproductive output because they compensate for higher mortality." [CBCNews | British Columbia](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Lauren J. Davies, Britta J.L. Jensen, Duane G. Froese and Kristi L. Wallace. 2016. [Late Pleistocene and Holocene tephrostratigraphy of interior Alaska and Yukon: Key beds and chronologies over the past 30,000 years](#). Quaternary Science Reviews 246:28–53.

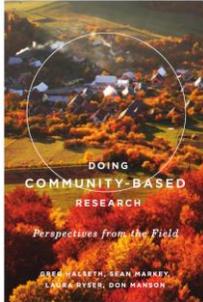
H.B. O'Neill and Chris R. Burn. 2016. [Talik formation at a snow fence in continuous permafrost, Western Arctic Canada](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1905

C.D. Peterson, D.C. Twichell, Mike C. Roberts, Sandy Vanderburgh and S.W. Hostetler. 2016. [Accommodation space in a high-wave-energy inner-shelf during the Holocene marine transgression: correlation of onshore and offshore inner-shelf deposits \(0-12 ka\) in the Columbia River littoral cell system, Washington and Oregon, USA](#). Marine Geology 379:140 – 156.

Scott N. Williamson, Luke Copland and David S. Hik. 2016. [The accuracy of satellite-derived albedo for northern alpine and glaciated land covers](#). Polar Science. DOI: 10.1016/j.polar.2016.06.006

New Book

Greg Halseth, Sean Markey, Laura Ryser, and Don Manson. 2016. [Doing Community-Based Research: Perspectives from the Field](#). McGill-Queen's University Press.



Community-based research (CBR) offers useful insights into the challenges associated with conducting research and ensuring that it generates both excellent scholarship and positive impacts in the communities where the research takes place. This depends on two important variables: the capacity of CBR to generate good information, and the extent to which CBR is understood and constructed as a two-way relationship that includes a set of responsibilities for both researchers and communities. Offering expert advice on the crucial relationship between communities and researchers, the authors of *Doing Community-Based Research* outline the main stages of the CBR process to guide researchers and practitioners. They discuss the reasons for conducting CBR, provide tips on how to design research, detail how researchers and communities should get to know one another, as well as how best to work in the field, and how to turn fieldwork into research that counts. By focusing on the lessons learned from the use of CBR, the authors make the messages, lessons, and practices applicable to a variety of research settings. Drawing collectively from decades of community-based research experience and including vignettes from researchers from around the world who share their CBR experiences, *Doing Community-Based Research* is an essential handbook for scholars, students, and practitioners.



Annual meeting of Ontario Division of Canadian Association of Geographers will be hosted by the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of Waterloo on Saturday October 29th, 2016.

Other “Geographical” News

Alberta coal town Grande Cache may no longer be a town: Grande Cache, the Alberta coal town north of Jasper National Park, is asking the province to consider whether it should continue to exist as a municipality. Earlier this month, council asked the minister of Municipal Affairs to review its viability and consider absorbing the town into the Municipal District of Greenview. Grande Cache faces an uncertain future, with an estimated \$60 million in infrastructure to replace over the the next ten years and a dwindling tax base. Grand Cache Coal, the town's major employer, shut down operations late last year. [CBCNews | Edmonton](#)

Retreating Yukon glacier makes river disappear: It's been the main source of water into Yukon's Kluane Lake for centuries, but now the Slims River has suddenly slimmed down — to nothing. "What folks have noticed this spring is that it's essentially dried up," said Jeff Bond of the Yukon Geological Survey. "That's the first time that's happened, as far as we know, in the last 350 years." What's happened is some basic glacier hydrology, Bond says — essentially, the Kaskawulsh Glacier has retreated to the point where its melt water is now going in a completely different direction, away from the Slims Valley. Instead of flowing north 19 kilometres from the glacier's toe into Kluane Lake (and ultimately, the Bering Sea), that melt water is now draining eastward via the Kaskawulsh River towards the Pacific Ocean off the Alaska panhandle. It's a reminder that glacier-caused change is not always glacial-paced. Last year, the Slims River was still a potentially dangerous waterway, now the area is more prone to dust storms. [CBCNews | North](#)

I use trigger warnings - but I'm not mollycoddling my students: Before we can begin learning, the most important thing that I need each of my students to do is to breathe. The harder they need to think, the deeper they need to breathe. A stuffy classroom can be the death of a debate and critical thinking requires copious amounts of oxygen. I use trigger warnings because they help students to stop for a moment and breathe, which helps them to think. A trigger warning (or content note) alerts readers or viewers to violent and disturbing content, which could be sexual assault, racist violence, transphobic or homophobic slurs. A trigger warning does not give permission for students to skip class, avoid a topic or choose alternative readings. What it does do is signal to survivors of abuse or trauma that they need to keep breathing. It reminds them to be particularly aware of the skills and coping strategies that they have developed and to switch them on. [The Guardian](#)

Climate change, not population growth, plays the main role in predicting extreme droughts, study reveals: Common belief states that the dominant factor determining water scarcity in the next few decades will be population growth. However, according to a new study, it's climate change -- not population growth – that plays the main role in predicting future exposure to extreme droughts. [ScienceDaily](#)

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>