



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers  
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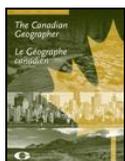
**Concordia U's Jochen Jaeger argues for ecologically responsible development:** China's half-globe-spanning Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has the potential to be a blueprint for responsible development, provided certain criteria are met. That's the position of a [paper](#) recently co-authored by Concordia researcher Jochen Jaeger, in the prestigious journal *Nature Sustainability*. Launched in 2013, the BRI is a massive, decades-long program of infrastructure investment and development scheduled to take place in at least 64 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. By 2049, an estimated \$8-trillion will be spent on some 7,000 individual projects. It is being billed as a new "Silk Road." As it is planned now, the BRI will expand existing land trade routes and develop new deep-water ports across the Indian and Pacific oceans. According to the Chinese government, two-thirds of the planet's population and one-third of the global economy will be involved. Jaeger, an associate professor in Concordia's [Department of Geography, Planning and Environment](#) and the graduate program director of Concordia's Environmental Assessment Program, believes that the international community shares the responsibility of mitigating the BRI's massive footprint. "China has the opportunity now to make sure that high-end environmental standards are met," he says. "However, the international banks financing the BRI have to require high-quality environmental impact assessments as a condition for their loans. If the BRI must happen, it should be used as an opportunity to ensure that this will be done at a high standard." An expert in landscape and road ecology, Jaeger has studied the impacts new roads have on local wildlife. He says the BRI could be a launch pad for new norms in road construction and impact mitigation if available scientific evidence in road ecology is actually used in high-quality impact assessments. "For example, any new project should consider the effect of road mortality on wildlife populations, the barrier effect for animal movement, the spread of invasive species, and increased access to wildlife populations for poachers," he adds. "It would be best to avoid areas with high biodiversity in the first place, but the extraction of raw materials such as sand needs to be considered as well, since sand extraction has already exceeded its natural renewal rate and is severely affecting river deltas and coastal and marine ecosystems far away from the constructions sites of the new roads." [Concordia News](#)

**Brock U graduate student Dana Harris makes Top 20 in research photography contest:** Master of Sustainability Science student Dana Harris is wrapping up her degree program with a bang — or rather, a snap. She and 19 other researchers from across Canada are vying for the 2018 People's Choice Award in a national research photography contest offered by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). NSERC's Science Exposed showcases images taken during scientific research being conducted in all fields by faculty and student researchers in post-secondary institutions and researchers in public and private research centres. Public voting to help determine the contest's winners is now open on the Science Exposed website and continues throughout the summer. She says she uses the photo and others like it as a conversation starter to explain her research, which

examines the impacts of climate change on sub-arctic ecosystems. “When I would show my friends and family pictures of what my jack pine cells look like, they would say, ‘oh, I thought that was a scarf or knitting or netting,’” she says. “That’s where I got the title of my photo.” The image, shot from a microscope, shows the jack pine tree’s phloem, cambial and xylem cells (blue dye) and mature xylem cells (red dye) in a thin slice of the wood. It is one of a series of images taken weekly over the past year to track the growth of the jack pine tree’s various cells. Harris’ photo, titled “*Exploring the Jack Pine Tight Knit Family Tree*,” shows phases of developing xylem cells that are found in a wood sample cored from the outermost part of a jack pine tree in the Northwest Territories. [Brock University News](#)

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### New in [The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien](#)



Randy W. Widdis. 2018. [Railways and borderland spaces: The Canada–US case](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. doi.org/10.1111/cag.12470

Transportation has played a decisive role in transforming the economic and social geography of both the United States and Canada and in this context, railways have been prominent. Their extension in both the American and Canadian hinterlands was designed to organize territory, increase the number of settlements, support resource exploitation, and facilitate the development of regional and national markets. While geopolitical protectionism played a somewhat more prominent role in the development of railways in Canada than the United States, rail expansion in both countries was not circumscribed by the international boundary. In fact, in many cases the border actually transcended such development. In other words, the Canada–United States border has historically presented both limitations and opportunities to railway interests. This paper argues that while the basic alignment of borderland rail networks was established during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the nodal structure, hub status, and corridor alignments of railways since the 1930s have changed drastically. It also contends that because such networks responded to changes in technologies, regional development, and market forces, they played different roles in configuring the various regions of the Canadian-American borderlands.

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**Queen’s University MA candidate Breah Talan** has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 – 2018 SGPS Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow Excellence Award. [Queen’s U News](#)

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### Recent Theses and Dissertations

Joshua Read. 2018. [Defining fur trade diet in northern Alberta: an examination of faunal material from Fort Vermilion I](#). MA thesis. Department of Geography University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta  
Supervisor: Shawn Bubel

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## Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

F. Ascensão, L. Fahrig, A.P. Clevenger, R. Corlett, J.A.G. Jaeger, W.F. Laurance and H.M. Pereira. 2018. [Environmental challenges for the Belt and Road Initiative](#). *Nature Sustainability* 1 (May 2018):206-209.

Alison Blay-Palmer, Guido Santini, Marielle Dubbeling, Henk Renting, Makiko Taguchi and Thierry Giordano. 2018. [Validating the City Region Food System Approach: Enacting Inclusive, transformational City Region Food Systems](#). *Sustainability*. doi:10.3390/su10051680

Joshua G. Cronmiller and Bram F. Noble. 2018. [The discontinuity of environmental effects monitoring in the Lower Athabasca region of Alberta, Canada: institutional challenges to long-term monitoring and cumulative effects management](#). *Environmental Reviews* 26:169-180.

J. Gao; H. Hou; Y. Zhai; A. Woodward; S. Vardoulakis; S. Kovats; P. Wilkinson; L. Li; X. Song; L. Xu; B. Meng; X. Liu; J. Wang; J. Zhao and W. Liu. 2018. [Greenhouse gas emissions reduction in different economic sectors: Mitigation measures, health co-benefits, knowledge gaps, and policy implications](#). *Environmental Pollution* 240:683-698.

Umesh K. Haritashya, Jeffrey S. Kargel, Dan H. Shugar, Gregory J. Leonard, Katherine Strattman, C. Scott Watson, David Shean, Stephan Harrison, Kyle T. Mandli and Dhananjay Regmi. 2018. [Evolution and controls of large glacial lakes in the Nepal Himalaya](#). *Remote Sensing* 10:798. doi.org/10.3390/rs10050798

W.C. Mahaney, P. Somelar, A. West, R.W. Dirszowsky, C.C.R. Allen, T.K. Remmel and P. Tricart. 2018. [Reconnaissance of the Hannibalic route in the Upper Po Valley, Italy: Correlation with biostratigraphic historical archaeological evidence in the Upper Guil Valley, France](#). *Archaeometry*. doi.org/10.1111/arcm.12405

Peeter Somelar, Signe Vahur, Tark S. Hamilton, William C. Mahaney, René W. Barendregt and Pedro Costa. 2018. [Sand coatings in paleosols: Evidence of weathering across the Plio-Pleistocene boundary to modern times on Mt. Kenya](#). *Geomorphology*. doi.org/10.1016/j.geomorph.2018.05.017

Olga Yudina, Bryan S.R. Grimwood, Lisabeth A. Berbary and Heather Mair. 2018. [The gendered natures of polar bear tourism](#). *Tourism, Culture & Communication* 18:51-66.

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## Other “Geographical” News

### 'It's the Wild West out here': Gulf Islanders raise alarm over too many whale-watching boats:

Some residents of the southern Gulf Islands are worried too many whale-watching boats are chasing too few killer whales — stressing the already at-risk species. Residents report they've seen fleets of up to 25 vessels chasing orca pods during the busy summer months when whale watching is at its peak. They say the problem is compounded because there are no regulations to govern the number of whale-watching boats permitted to track killer whales. Commercial operators often share the location of pods, bringing in vessels from Vancouver, Steveston, Victoria and Friday Harbor on Washington's San Juan Island. [CBCNews | British Columbia](#)

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**Academe sees a new wave of faculty-student relationship restrictions in the era of Me Too:** A number of colleges and universities banned faculty-undergraduate dating or otherwise shored up their consensual relationship policies. Now, in the era of Me Too, another wave of institutions has moved to restrict consensual relationships between students and their professors. And while many involved in or affected by these decisions support them as preventing potential abuse, others remain critical of policing connections between consenting adults. [Inside HigherED](#)

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### Some Not So “Geographical” News



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[@CanGeographers](#) Weekly: <https://paper.li/CanGeographers/1394987315>

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