



Fraser Basin Council

February 18, 2009

VANCOUVER CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

'09
youth uniting
for sustainability
BC YOUTH CONGRESS



summary and recommendations
for youth engagement from
the BC Youth Congress



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(top) Nadia Chaney – Youth Congress MC / Facilitator
 (bottom) Air Quality Health Index representatives Darcie Pineo and Agnes Pisarski



purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to communicate the key learnings and outcomes of the BC Youth Congress and provide recommendations on ways to enhance youth engagement initiatives to be more effective and meaningful and to have lasting outcomes that benefit youth and their communities. It is hoped that all organizations, groups and individuals seeking to engage youth in their programs and activities will benefit from this report.

key recommendations from the Youth Congress

On February 18, 2009 ninety youth leaders from across British Columbia attended the Fraser Basin Council's first BC Youth Congress themed "Youth Uniting For Sustainability". The key messages from Youth Congress participants on ways for community leaders and decision-makers to enhance youth engagement were:

- Create opportunities for meaningful engagement to build youth capacity to participate through mentorship, intergenerational dialogue and action;
- Engage youth from the outset when planning engagement initiatives such as advisory committees, learning events or festivals, and include youth in decision-making processes, not only one-off consultation events;
- Provide opportunities for youth to learn new skills and practise them by participating in "real-world" processes;
- Recognize the importance of cultural diversity and provide opportunities to connect youth from Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal and ethnic or immigrant communities to increase cultural understanding and racial tolerance;
- Support youth-led initiatives and recognize the contribution youth make to their communities;
- Identify and engage youth leaders in decision-making processes and remember that "leaders" are not always the highest achievers, top of class or those with the loudest voice;
- Provide real and tangible responsibilities for youth to build intergenerational trust and establish ongoing commitment to community sustainability initiatives.

(bottom) Youth Congress participant photos and biographies were displayed at the Congress so participants could put a "face to a name".



Youth Congress background information

The BC Youth Congress was designed and led by the Fraser Basin Council's Youth Advisory Committee and brought together ninety youth leaders aged 16 to 29 years from across British Columbia. The overarching goals of the Youth Congress were to provide opportunities for youth to:

- Learn from each other by discussing their experience leading and participating in community-based sustainability initiatives;
- Build their capacity, expand their networks, and gain new skills to enhance community engagement and leadership;
- Have fun and celebrate their outstanding contributions to communities across BC;
- Engage in youth-to-youth and intergenerational dialogue with key community leaders;
- Identify barriers to youth engagement and opportunities to catalyze sustainability initiatives that are relevant to their own communities;
- Come away energized and confident that their contributions to community are valued and that they have knowledge and skills to help others take action for sustainability.

Youth Congress participants were selected by the Fraser Basin Council's Youth Advisory Committee through a rigorous nomination process based on the nominees' level of community engagement and vision for the future and the actions they planned to take after the Youth Congress. Youth leaders from across the province and from a wide range of communities, large and small, rural and urban, attended the Youth Congress. This included communities

beyond the Fraser Basin boundaries such as Tumbler Ridge, Prince Rupert and Chetwynd in the North; Cranbrook, Kimberley, Golden and Grand Forks in the Columbia Basin; Victoria, Qualicum Beach and Port Alberni on Vancouver Island; Penticton in the Okanagan; as well as Powell River and Halfmoon Bay on the Sunshine Coast.

Communities within the Fraser Basin region were also well represented, with youth participants attending from such communities as Vanderhoof, Prince George and the Sai'kuz First Nation in the Upper Fraser region; Quesnel, Williams Lake and the Tsilhqotin Nation in the Cariboo-Chilcotin region; Kamloops and Pritchard in the Thompson region; Abbotsford, Langley, Chilliwack and the Sto:lo Nation in the Fraser Valley region; as well as Maple Ridge, Coquitlam, Burnaby, Vancouver, Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton in the Greater Vancouver-Sea to Sky region.



(top) Bonnie Khlon from Kamloops
(bottom) Graham Girard from Coquitlam

overview of Youth Congress proceedings

The Youth Congress was a full-day event specifically designed to maximize opportunities for participants to connect with youth leaders from across the province, learn new skills and be recognized as valuable members of their community. 90% of evaluation respondents said the Youth Congress met their expectations with 88% rating the overall benefit of the Youth Congress “very good”, or “excellent”. The Youth Congress agenda is attached as Appendix A and includes further information on the program content, speakers and activities. The list of participants and their home communities is included in Appendix B.

morning plenary

Three activities were incorporated into the morning plenary session following a welcome address by the Chair of the Fraser Basin Council, Dr. Charles Jago and a traditional prayer from Sto:lo Nation Elder Maxine Prevost and youth representative Danya Brown.

i) keynote presentation: being caribou

The opening keynote “*Being Caribou*” presented by Karsten Heuer chronicled Karsten’s transformative experience traveling 1,500 kilometres on foot over a five-month period with the endangered Porcupine Caribou Herd as they migrated to their calving grounds in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. In addition to instilling a sense of awe and inspiring the Youth Congress delegates, *Being Caribou* emphasized the importance of connecting with the natural world and our intricate interdependence with ecosystems, both large and small. *Being Caribou* also highlighted the cultural significance of the Porcupine Caribou Herd to the Gwich’in, Inuvialuit, and Inupiat way of life in Alaska and the Yukon Territory.

The keynote presentation closed with an impromptu performance of a traditional clan song about the significance of caribou to First Nations people by Congress participant Jasmine Thomas of the Sai’kuz First Nation.

ii) inspirational youth panel dialogue

Three inspirational youth leaders from British Columbia participated in a panel dialogue that focused on the lessons they have learned along the way, inspiration in their own lives and ways to maximize the potential of youth to be leaders in their own communities. Nadia Chaney moderated the panel dialogue and participants were Emily Jubenvill, recently voted the “Greenest Person in Canada,” Thomas Kineshanko, “Climate Entrepreneur” & CEO of Habitat Enterprises and; Ken (Wameesh) Watts, Youth Representative for the BC Assembly of First Nations.

iii) group dialogue on community sustainability

This dialogue focused on the concept of community sustainability and the changes needed to help make communities truly sustainable. For the purpose of this dialogue, participants were seated at regionally-based tables to ensure a common understanding of regional geography, local issues and communities. These pre-determined groupings helped participants to establish networks and relationships with youth from the same geographic region.

When defining the term “Community Sustainability” participants identified the following key elements:

- A strong sense of place, family and connections to other community members;
- Responsibility to share and respect one another;
- Knowing your neighbours and being willing to help in good times and bad;
- Sharing power with decision-makers – not just a top-down or regulatory approach – not “us and them”;
- Self-sustaining and self-reliant – a sustainable community should not need to rely on outside sources for food, water, energy or employment.

Participants provided examples of community-based sustainability initiatives they were involved with, or had encountered in their communities, including:

- Local government initiatives – such as the Sustainability Charter in Langley, the Tri-Cities Green Council, and recent greenbelt purchases;
- Community engagement and education initiatives – sustainability café dialogues, salmon hatchery education programs, Langley Environmental Partners Society, Bike to Work Week, as well as community engagement initiatives centered on the Longhouse providing cultural teaching and learning, positive engagement and giving back to the community;
- Local business initiatives – car share programs such as the Cooperative Auto Network, Building Opportunities with Business organization in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, and shops that support local economies by promoting local produce over imported products.



youth recommendations: how can we create sustainable communities?

Participants identified a number of key areas that need to be changed or enhanced in their community and identified barriers that need to be overcome to help create truly sustainable communities. In particular, participants talked about the need for enhanced **collaboration and communication** between groups and diverse stakeholders so the community can work together for common goals, rather than being isolated in silos or duplicating efforts. Participants recognized there is a growing need to move beyond the short-term economic gain to focus on long-term community well-being, while incorporating the economic and financial aspects of sustainability.

There was strong support for enhanced **communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth**. In particular, participants identified a need for more education and dialogue on Aboriginal culture, so people from all backgrounds have a better understanding and respect for traditions, stories and practices. In addition to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal engagement, participants identified a need for better communication and learning between youth and non-youth from all of Canada's diverse cultures, especially youth who are new immigrants to Canada as they are often marginalized through language barriers and may be unsure how to best integrate or engage with Canadian society.

Another key theme identified was the need for more opportunities for **intergenerational dialogue and mentorship** – rather than one-off events that bring youth together sporadically to talk about a specific issue or aspect of community sustainability. Youth leaders are seeking opportunities for meaningful engagement in local issues and decision-making processes. Mentorship opportunities were identified as a valuable way for youth to learn about the “real world” and experience how decision-making, planning processes and negotiations occur. Participants agreed that opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and mentorship would strengthen their leadership skills and better enable them to make a tangible difference to the well-being of their own communities.

Participants agreed that the contributions youth make to communities across British Columbia need to be **recognized and valued** by community leaders and decision-makers, as well as other members of the community – this will help to create a positive feedback loop and encourage youth to be involved in their communities because they can clearly see the rewards and benefits.

Participants noted that **sustainable living needs to be “the norm”** not the exception. Decision-makers, planners and businesses all play a role by taking leadership and promoting products and practices that support local economies, reduce negative impacts on the environment and enhance community and social well-being. Furthermore, **environmental and outdoor education** was recognized by participants as an extremely valuable way to engage young people with the natural world at an early age. Participants agreed that providing opportunities for young people to experience nature will help ensure they develop a strong understanding of society's intricate connections to, and reliance on, the natural environment.

(left) Some of the BC Youth Congress participants

networking luncheon

The Columbia Basin Trust kindly sponsored a networking luncheon that was facilitated by the Columbia Basin Trust's youth representatives. Special guests were invited to the networking luncheon including the Chair and Directors of the Fraser Basin Council, along with Fraser Basin Council staff and other key community members. In addition to providing an opportunity for intergenerational dialogue, the luncheon was an excellent opportunity for informal dialogue and networking among the Youth Congress participants.

afternoon concurrent sessions: how do I connect sustainability with...

In the afternoon, participants were offered three concurrent sessions to choose based on the theme of "How Do I Connect Sustainability with..."

- MY COMMUNITY
- MY CAREER
- MY GOVERNMENT

Participants self-selected their preferred session in advance of the Youth Congress, and the concurrent sessions were led by multi-disciplinary teams of four or five facilitators each with specific experience in the session topic and youth engagement techniques. The facilitators collaboratively planned their session to ensure that all participants were actively engaged in the dialogue and identified sustainability actions relevant to their own communities or individual situations.

CONCURRENT SESSION 1: HOW DO I CONNECT SUSTAINABILITY WITH MY COMMUNITY?

This concurrent session was co-facilitated by:

Emily Menzies *Climate Action Facilitator, Ministry of Environment / Capitol Regional District;*
Ryan Barfoot *Sustainability and Eco-Education School District 47;*
Matt Thomson *Research Assistant, Social Planning and Research Council of BC;*
Maggie Baynham *Coordinator, Go Beyond - Campus Climate Network;* and
Amy Cousins *Sustainable High Schools Coordinator, Sierra Club of Canada.*

The main purpose of the My Community session was to further explore the concept of "sustainable communities" and identify ways youth can help to create sustainable communities such as: joining existing initiatives; starting their own projects and fostering inclusive leadership. The session was designed to introduce participants to a wide variety of community-building approaches, tools and opportunities, and to support their growth and self-awareness. Participants were encouraged to identify sustainability activities that relate to their personal needs as well as their level of skill, experience and interest. They were given a list of specific community engagement resources, including a list of websites, summaries of key community dialogue strategies such as World Café, Open Space Technology, action planning and mapping, as well as basic group facilitation techniques.

Following the initial group introductions and session overview by the facilitators, the My Community breakout session utilized a World Café style dialogue around three key themes:



I) MAPPING COMMUNITY

A hands-on discussion on the benefits of community mapping to identify gaps and opportunities for enhancing sustainability within communities. Participants mapped their own communities and identified strengths, weaknesses and potential opportunities for youth-led action.

II) STARTING COMMUNITY

An action planning discussion utilizing the BC Sustainable High Schools Action Planning Toolkit and including:

Action Visioning: an "imagining" process that involved youth participants identifying what they wanted to change in their community.

Action Planning: Following the action visioning exercise, participants discussed the five W's:

- **What** exactly do you want to do?
- **Why** do you want to do it?
- **Where** is your project going to take place?
- **When** is your project going to start and finish?
- **Who** do you want or need to be involved?

III) LEADING COMMUNITY

A group discussion of what leadership means, how it changes in different contexts, the key qualities of a leader and the opportunities and barriers for youth to be leaders in their own communities.

The main outcome from the My Community session was to engage the participants with the idea that communities are made up of people and places, and that everything is interconnected. In addition, participants were able to identify and commit to tangible sustainability-focused actions to take within their own communities.

"Youth choose to create change through actions like volunteering, because we don't really think our vote counts or know who to trust ... it is easier to feel a connection to your community, than your government."

CONCURRENT SESSION 2: HOW DO I CONNECT SUSTAINABILITY WITH MY CAREER?

This concurrent session was co-facilitated by:

Karen Kun *Publisher, Corporate Knights Magazine;*
Matthew Carroll *Climate Action Facilitator, Ministry of Environment / Metro Vancouver;*
Lani Johnson *Employment Support Coordinator, Building Opportunities with Business;* and
Thomas Kineshanko *CEO, Habitat Enterprises.*

The purpose of this session was to explore the concept of sustainable careers and “green jobs” and was designed to introduce participants to tools and approaches to shaping their career choices and identifying key elements – personal, environmental, social and economic – that help to make careers “sustainable.”

At the start of the session, participants talked about why they had decided to attend the My Career session and discussed their education and career experience to date. This helped to identify a number of common themes of interest to participants, including:

- Learn about what others are doing in the sustainable career realm;
- Explore career options and paths to follow;
- Learn ways to make my career “sustainable” while earning enough money to do the things I enjoy doing;
- Identify how to establish a career that incorporates environmental sustainability and youth engagement;
- Consider whether it is more important to have “real world” experience or stay at university to complete a Masters degree;
- Learn about internship and mentorship opportunities and how to find them.

This initial group discussion helped to build commonalities between participants and shape the small group dialogue topics, which focused on:

- How can I make my job sustainable?
- Life balancing skills
- Is a “career” an outdated concept?
- How do you find your “true” career path?

During the session, a number of sustainability focused “green job” websites were recommended by participants who had used them to identify job and internship opportunities, including:

- Charity Village: www.charityvillage.com
- Goodwork Canada: www.goodworkcanada.ca
- Environmental Careers Organization: www.eco.ca
- Lighthouse Sustainable Building Centre: www.sustainablebuildingcentre.com
- Provincial Government jobsite: www.employment.gov.bc.ca
- Federal Government sites such as the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade: www.international.gc.ca and Canadian International Development Agency: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/youthzone

The key outcome from the My Career session was to enable participants to identify their concerns, hopes and dreams for their future careers, as well as key actions to help ensure their chosen career paths are aligned with their sustainability principles. Participants were also able to share their concerns about the reality of “burn-out” and feeling overwhelmed with various commitments as they try to take on too many responsibilities, such as school, part-time work and volunteer roles.

CONCURRENT SESSION 3: HOW DO I CONNECT SUSTAINABILITY WITH MY GOVERNMENT?

This concurrent session was co-facilitated by:

Amber Church *Climate Action Facilitator, Ministry of Environment / Metro Vancouver;*
Donna Caddie *Project Manager – Living Water Smart, Ministry of Environment;*
Bruce Ford *K-12 Education Coordinator, Metro Vancouver;*
Julianna Torjek *Youth Outreach Team, City of Vancouver;* and
Laura Cornish *Youth Engagement Coordinator, Climate Action Secretariat*

The purpose of this session was to explore the concept of governance and the role youth can play in governance and decision-making. The session was designed to encourage dialogue around four governance related themes: voting; democracy; integration of government; and advocacy and volunteerism.

A sociometry icebreaker activity was used to identify the level of engagement with government. Sociometry is an interactive activity where participants are asked a question and they respond by standing along a “Yes – No” continuum. The My Government sociometry questions and participant responses were:

- 1 Have you ever talked to or met a politician?** Most participants said “yes” – examples included community events, open houses and in public (e.g. restaurants).
- 2 Have you ever attended a community open house to express your views?** Most participants said “yes,” but not all agreed it was an effective community engagement mechanism.
- 3 Have you ever emailed or written a letter to a politician or government?** Almost all participants said “yes.”
- 4 Have you ever written a government grant proposal?** Almost everyone said yes, and most had been successful in their application.
- 5 Do you think government helps you?** Responses were mixed to this question some said “yes” while others said “no.”

The sociometry activity was followed by table dialogue on four topic areas:

- Voter turnout;
- Democracy;
- Integration of government; and,
- Advocacy and volunteering.

KEY THEMES AND OBSERVATIONS FROM THE DIALOGUE

- Most youth participants in the My Government session had been, or were currently involved as a volunteer in their community, mostly with non-profit organizations or advocacy groups. Participants noted that in general, people volunteer or get involved with community groups because they recognize that it helps to create change and they want to “give back” to their community.
- In general, the participants agreed that youth are more likely to get involved with volunteer work rather than voting, as voting is not seen as having an immediate impact on youth or the “system.” Volunteerism, on the other hand, was seen to provide immediate rewards at the personal and often community scale.
- Participants noted that youth apathy towards voting exists partly because youth under 18 years old are not eligible to vote and the engagement or dialogue process is generally not geared towards youth. Participants also

“Democracy means my voice is being heard.”

noted that youth are generally under-represented in community consultation processes and rarely get an opportunity to voice their opinion or express their views. This reinforces the view that it is adults who are the real decision-makers, not youth. Participants noted that youth need access to politicians as well as education about the importance of voting, the political process and party politics at an earlier age so they value their right to vote and know how to effectively engage in public processes.

- During the dialogue, participants agreed that it was important for different political parties or organizations to support good ideas regardless of who initiated the idea: *"don't dump ideas merely because another [opposition] party initiated the plan or policy."* They also recognized the inherent problems with the increasingly competitive nature of policies, politics and politicians: *"It is embarrassing to see politicians bickering, yelling and booing [in Parliament]... this is not a constructive way of leading government!"*

The main outcome of the My Government session was that it enabled participants to discuss the various roles of government and identified methods to enhance the level of youth engagement in government and in their communities. Participants also recognized that integration across governments is often difficult because of different priorities and mandates assigned to the various levels of government.

"Volunteerism has become a cool thing to do – now we need to make voting cool too!"
"Younger generations learn about issues if they're engaged in them – not if they read about it or hear it on the news."



(top) Youth participate in the My Community session at the Youth Congress (bottom) My Career session facilitators receive thank-you gifts from Davee Palmantier, Youth Advisory Committee member (centre)



really fast skills

Following the afternoon concurrent sessions, participants attended two “Really Fast Skills” sessions designed by experienced facilitators to equip participants with hands-on skills they could apply in their own lives or communities. The Really Fast Skills session included the following topics, based on the theme “How Do I ...”

- Do Worm Composting;
- Network Effectively in Scary Situations;
- Reduce Water Consumption at Home, Work or School;
- Gather Food and Medicine from Nature;
- Grow a Garden in One Square Foot;
- Be PowerSmart; and
- Explain Climate Change to a Non-Believer.

(top left) Laura Darch from BC Hydro presents the “Be PowerSmart” Fast Skills Session
 (top right) Liz Perkins and Amanda Chow from Environmental Youth Alliance present the Worm Composting Fast Skills Session



(bottom left) Amber Church, Ministry of Environment Climate Action Facilitator, teaches participants how to explain the the science and impacts of climate change
 (bottom right) Society Promoting Ecological Conversation (SPEC) container garden (photo courtesy of Tara Moreau)

Youth Congress messages for community leaders

The Youth Congress culminated in a group discussion and evaluation process. In table groups, participants identified key messages from the Youth Congress to transfer to the community leaders at the 6th Biennial State of the Fraser Basin Conference on February 19–20, 2009. The messages from the Youth Congress largely focused on creating opportunities for meaningful youth engagement and included:

- Integrated sustainability action planning that engages youth and creates opportunities for mentorship and intergenerational dialogue;
- Establish Youth Advisory Councils to inform local government;
- Engage youth now by providing real, tangible responsibilities and roles;
- Create space for inclusive decision-making, mentorship and hands-on experience.

BC Youth Congress closing reception

The City of Vancouver and its Youth Outreach Team hosted a closing reception and intergenerational dialogue for Youth Congress participants and special guests, including participants of the City's Youth Politik program, City of Vancouver Councillors and staff, and Fraser Basin Council Board Directors and staff. This event was designed by youth from the City's Youth Politik program as an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the contribution of youth to communities across BC. In addition, the Closing Reception provided an excellent opportunity for informal dialogue and networking between youth and key community leaders and enabled Youth Congress participants to put their networking skills into practice. The Closing Reception also created an opportunity for the City of Vancouver to seek input from youth on a number of key issues that the City, and many other communities across the province, are facing. These issues were incorporated into the structured dialogue component of the Closing Reception and included:

- Community engagement and social inclusion;
- Food security and community well-being; and,
- Employment and future opportunities for youth.



Youth Congress participants at the State of the Fraser Basin Conference

Over 400 community leaders participated in the State of the Fraser Basin Conference and viewed the Youth Congress messages, along with the participant biographies and map of BC that illustrated where participants were from and the connections and networks they had made during the Youth Congress.

The Fraser Basin Council, with generous support from Vancouver International Airport Authority and Coast Capital Savings, sponsored 30 youth from the Youth Congress to attend the State of the Fraser Basin Conference. These Youth Congress participants helped to transfer the key learnings and messages from the Youth Congress to the State of the Fraser Basin Conference and actively participated in all aspects of the conference including the plenary dialogue, concurrent sessions and Gala Awards dinner. They also helped to demonstrate the value of meaningful youth participation in traditionally adult-focused dialogue. In addition, Emily Jubenvill presented the youth voice and offered inspiration for the future as a participant on the closing panel.

The calibre of youth participants and their level of engagement at the State of the Fraser Basin Conference was recognized by a number of conference delegates and speakers, including the Honourable Iona Campagnolo, City of Prince George Councillor Debora Munoz and Shawn A-in-Chut Atleo, BC Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.



(top) James McNish, Simon Fraser University student from Prince Rupert, maps his Youth Congress connections

(bottom) A custom designed wall map of British Columbia was used to visually represent the home communities of the Youth Congress participants and to track the many connections that were made among participants during the day. This map was displayed, along with participant biographies and the Youth Congress Messages for Community Leaders, for State of the Fraser Basin Conference delegates to see



commitments and recommendations

YOUTH COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY ACTION

During the afternoon concurrent sessions, participants identified specific goals and actions to initiate or focus on in their own communities. These commitments, along with a timeframe, were noted on a Youth Congress Action postcard.

The completed postcards were collected from participants and mailed back to them three weeks after the Youth Congress as a reminder of the action they had committed to. Actions and goals identified by participants ranged from personal or family-oriented sustainability initiatives such as:

“exercise and be positive”

“start worm composting and teach my family to use it”
and, *“simplify my life”*

through to longer term community-wide engagement initiatives such as:

“bring the whole community together to help with building the plans for our new skate park”

“connect aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth to promote sustainability in our communities”

“include social, environmental, youth, and aboriginal planning at the municipal level by amending the official community plan” and

“start a youth and elder forum for communication and knowledge passing”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

While the vast majority of participants agreed that the BC Youth Congress met, or exceeded their expectations, there were a number of excellent suggestions on ways to improve the Congress and other youth-focused events in the future. This included creating more opportunities for informal networking and dialogue among participants and ensuring more time is available during the structured dialogue components for in-depth discussion on regional-specific issues. In addition, a number of Congress participants recommended that the event be hosted over a two-day period to allow for more in-depth dialogue and build on connections with other youth leaders. Participants also wanted more time to learn and practice the hands-on skills offered in the Really Fast Skills sessions.

The Fraser Basin Council and its Youth Advisory Committee will take these recommendations into consideration when planning the next BC Youth Congress as well as other youth engagement initiatives.

THE FRASER BASIN COUNCIL COMMITMENT TO YOUTH

The Fraser Basin Council recognizes the valuable role youth play in shaping our communities and helping to achieve the Council’s vision of social well-being supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment. The Fraser Basin Council will maintain its connections with the Youth Congress participants, and will follow up with a selection of participants regarding their progress towards the sustainability actions they identified at the Congress.

In the coming year, the Fraser Basin Council will work closely with youth from across the Basin to create opportunities for youth engagement in its programs and initiatives. In addition, the Council and its Youth Advisory Committee will pursue opportunities to build the capacity and leadership skills of youth, particularly in relation to their engagement in community planning and decision-making process. The Fraser Basin Council will seek to establish regional focused “e-hubs” for Youth Congress participants – and other interested youth from the region – to connect with each other and to promote opportunities for youth to enhance community well-being.



“If adults extend the hand of opportunity, then we, the youth, will grasp it firmly.”

February 18, 2009

VANCOUVER CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

'09
youth uniting
for sustainability
BC YOUTH CONGRESS



on behalf of the Fraser Basin Council and the FBC Youth Advisory Committee,
welcome to our first-ever BC Youth Congress!



Welcome!

We are here today as youth leaders representing communities across BC and coming from a broad diversity of backgrounds, experiences and beliefs.

The BC Youth Congress – Youth Uniting for Sustainability – offers a unique opportunity for us to reflect on the wide range of sustainability activities we are engaged in and to look at the positive impacts we are making in our communities. This is a time to celebrate our contributions, to learn from each other and to identify positive actions we can take now and into the future to ensure the health and well-being of our communities and the environment.

Kara Fridriksson

Chair, FBC Youth Committee



The Fraser Basin Council recognizes that the energy, innovation and leadership skills of youth are key to achieving our vision of social well-being supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment.

On behalf of the Directors and staff of the Fraser Basin Council, and the many other people who will join us at the State of the Fraser Basin Conference in the coming days, we look forward to learning from you and benefiting from the energy and ideas that flow throughout this Youth Congress. Perhaps most importantly, we want to pay tribute to the commitments you make here today and the sustainability actions you will undertake on returning to your home communities.

Dr. Charles Jago

Chair, Fraser Basin Council

congress agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30 am	Congress registration and initial networking activities A light breakfast will be served
9:00	Official welcome and introductions
9:30	Keynote Presentation – Karsten Heuer presents his inspirational story “Being Caribou”
10:30	Morning break – group photo and community mapping exercise
11:00	Inspirational Youth Panel Dialogue – Three youth leaders from across BC present their stories and ideas for the future
11:40	Community Sustainability – your ideas for today and into the future
12:20 pm	Lunch & networking session – hosted by the Columbia Basin Trust, with special guests
1:30	Concurrent Break-Out Sessions – Skills Development and Action Planning <i>How Do I Connect Sustainability With... My Community? • My Career? • My Government?</i>
3:00	Afternoon break – view information booths, make connections, stretch and complete the community mapping exercise
3:20	Really Fast Skills Session <i>How Do I... Worm Compost? • Reduce my water consumption? Network effectively in scary situations? • Gather food and medicine from nature? • Be PowerSmart? • Explain climate change to a skeptic? • Garden in one square foot?</i>
4:10	Where to from here? A look at the “Long View” and personal sustainability
4:25	Congress Messages for the State of the Fraser Basin Conference & Evaluation Exercise
4:40	Wrap-up & evaluation exercise
5:00	Informal networking, mingling and mapping final connections
5:30	Closing Reception & Dinner – Hosted by the City of Vancouver at the Pan Pacific Hotel

speakers

MODERATOR

Nadia Chaney is our Moderator for the day. Nadia is a social artist and youth engagement leader, and has worked extensively on issues of identity, diversity, empowerment, participatory process and non-violence. Nadia has emceed and facilitated at a wide range of events such as Under the Volcano, The Tacoma World Affairs Summit, SFU Centre for Dialogue, Directions Street Youth Services, Peer Perspectives, and the Power of Hope as well as various communities, colleges and schools in the Lower Mainland, and in the Pacific Northwest. In 2008 Nadia played over 130 shows with the hip hop collective, Metaphor, in schools across BC.

Visit byanydreamsnecessary.com.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Karsten Heuer, best-selling author of *Being Caribou* and *Walking the Big Wild*, is a wildlife biologist and park warden. For the past decade, he has spent much of his time following some of North America’s most endangered wildlife, on foot and skis. Karsten shares his experiences travelling in the midst of a Caribou herd migration. Is it any wonder such a close encounter might change a person’s outlook on life?

Reach Karsten at feedback@necessaryjourneys.ca and drop by his website at www.beingcaribou.com.

PANELISTS

Emily Jubenvill was voted “Canada’s Greenest Person” in 2008 in an international contest sponsored by 3rd Whale. She has since joined the organization, launching 3rdWhale Mobile, which allows iPhone users to access business information “on the go,” helping them make greener choices. Hear from Emily on the roles that youth will play in the next wave of sustainability and how she believes we can let life can be organized for us, or we can take action to create our own future.

Reach Emily at emily@3rdwhale.com and visit www.3rdWhale.com.

Thomas Kineshanko is a climate entrepreneur. He is co-founder and CEO of Habitat Enterprises, a firm that is helping to mitigate climate change by finding, designing and implementing carbon projects. He brings a passion for “carbon creativity” – finding ways to reduce as much greenhouse gas as possible in as short of a timeframe as possible. Thomas has advised clients such as Infrastructure Canada and Evolution Markets, and is working in Latin America, Alberta, and British Columbia.

You can connect with Thomas at info@habitatenterprises.ca and by visiting www.habitatenterprises.ca.

Wameesh (Ken Watts) is from Port Alberni, BC, his mother of Xaxli’p First Nation and his father of Tseshaht First Nation. A graduate of Malaspina University-College, with a BA in First Nations Studies, Ken works for the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in Victoria as Sports and Recreation Coordinator. Wameesh is the male youth representative for the BC Assembly of First Nations, where he strives to serve as a positive role model for First Nations youth, bringing their issues to the political forefront, supporting regional youth initiatives, and creating good working relationships. Ken will offer a First Nations perspective on the environment, economic development and how we can move forward together.

Email him at maleeyouth@bcafn.ca and visit www.bcafn.ca.

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KARSTEN HEUER

EMILY JUBENVILL



THOMAS KINESHANKO



WAMEESH (KEN WATTS)

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Karen Kun

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REALLY FAST SKILLS SESSION

“HOW DO I...”

WORM COMPOST?

Amanda Chow

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REDUCE MY WATER CONSUMPTION AT HOME, SCHOOL OR WORK?

Donna Caddie

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GATHER FOOD AND MEDICINE FROM NATURE

Ryan Barfoot

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NETWORK EFFECTIVELY IN SCARY SITUATIONS?

Karen Kun

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SAVE ENERGY AT HOME, WORK OR SCHOOL?

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GROW A GARDEN IN ONE SQUARE FOOT?

Ilse Saraday

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EXPLAIN CLIMATE CHANGE TO A SKEPTIC?

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the golden rules of networking

– Karen Kun, Publisher, Corporate Knights Magazine and Networking Diva

- 1** Get yourself out there; you can't network sitting behind a desk or staying home!
- 2** Be confident, know your strengths, and play to them.
- 3** Know what you want from the people you are networking with.
- 4** Communicate up to 3 main points clearly – including specific areas you'd like to follow up on.
- 5** Have a clear closing message, including why and when you will follow up with a new contact.
- 6** Have a business card with your contact information, and always ask for others' cards if you plan to follow up – don't expect them to follow up with you just because you gave them your card.
- 7** Remember the 3-minute network rule: It is not spoken, yet understood, that as you network, most people will give about 3 minutes of their time. Make sure you can wow your new contact within that timeframe, and if you say you will follow up, then do!
- 8** Dress the part – if it's a formal event, dress appropriately; if it's a picnic, don't wear a suit.
- 9** Practise, practise, practise – attend events that will have the types of people you want to meet.
- 10** Learn how to ask meaningful questions.
- 11** Research people you want to meet who are attending the event. Identify where you have common interests or experiences to help initiate connections.
- 12** Don't take rejection or missed opportunity personally. Ask yourself, "How I can learn from that experience," and identify ways that you can make your "pitch" more appealing.
- 13** Get out there and have fun!

thank you to our generous sponsors for helping make the BC Youth Congress an extraordinary event!



APPENDIX B

BC Youth Congress participants

	NAME	COMMUNITY	REGION
1	Alana Kulchar	Vanderhoof	Upper Fraser
2	Alex Chen	Richmond	GVSS
3	Alicia Vanin	Qualicum Beach	Vancouver Island
4	Alison Burton	Cranbrook	Kootenays
5	Amber Church*	Burnaby	GVSS
6	Amy Greenwood	North Vancouver	GVSS
7	Amy Jean Cousins*	Victoria	Vancouver Island
8	Becs Cumming	Victoria	Vancouver Island
9	Bonnie Klohn	Kamloops	Thompson
10	Brooke Carere	Victoria	Vancouver Island
11	Bruce Ford*	Vancouver	GVSS
12	Bruce Nip	Burnaby	GVSS
13	Carly-Jo Proudfoot	Cranbrook	Kootenays
14	Chad Stump	Quesnel	Cariboo-Chilcotin
15	Christine Grossutti	Grand Forks	Kootenays
16	Daniel Helm	Tumbler Ridge	Northern BC
17	Daniel van der Kroon	Abbotsford	Fraser Valley
18	Danya Brown	Sto:lo Nation	Fraser Valley
19	Davee Palmantier	Williams Lake	Cariboo-Chilcotin
20	Dawn Johnson	Vancouver	GVSS
21	Deidri Jack	Williams Lake	Cariboo-Chilcotin
22	Donna Caddie*	Victoria	Vancouver Island
23	Dufferin McCarthy	Whistler	GVSS
24	Elizabeth Henry	Vancouver	GVSS
25	Emily Jubenvill*	Vancouver	GVSS
26	Emily Menzies*	Victoria	Vancouver Island
27	Erica Nitchie	Williams Lake	Cariboo-Chilcotin
28	Erik Sin	Cranbrook	Kootenays
29	Erin Vieira	Kamloops	Thompson
30	Fangwen Zhao	Vancouver	GVSS



	NAME	COMMUNITY	REGION		NAME	COMMUNITY	REGION
31	Gina Neumann	Vancouver	GVSS	61	Laura Cornish*	Victoria	Vancouver Island
32	Graham Girard	Coquitlam	GVSS	62	Lydia Victor	Chilliwack	Fraser Valley
33	James McNish	Burnaby	GVSS	63	Maggie Baynham*	Vancouver	GVSS
34	Jamie Biggar	Victoria	Vancouver Island	64	Manpreet Kaur Sidhu	Prince George	Upper Fraser
35	Jarrid Jenkins*	Vancouver	GVSS	65	Marcia Cleveland	Kamloops	Thompson
36	Jasmine Thomas	Prince George	Upper Fraser	66	Matt Thomson*	Vancouver	GVSS
37	Jennifer Ternoway	Cranbrook	Kootenays	67	Matthew Carroll*	Burnaby	GVSS
38	Jessica Whitesel	Cranbrook	Kootenays	68	Natascha Hedrich	Pritchard	Thompson
39	Joanne Tsung	South Surrey	GVSS	69	Nicole Roy	Cranbrook	Kootenays
40	Jo-Leen Sellars	Williams Lake	Cariboo-Chilcotin	70	Nissa Wallace	Riondel	Kootenays
41	Joni Morris	Burnaby	GVSS	71	Nzeba Chantal Tshimanga	Maple Ridge	GVSS
42	Joyce Lin	Richmond	GVSS	72	Omar Bhimji	Vancouver	GVSS
43	Julianna Torjek*	Vancouver	GVSS	73	Peter Horton	Fort Langley	Fraser Valley
44	Julie Choi	Langley	Fraser Valley	74	Peter Wang	Langley	Fraser Valley
45	Justine Lee	Vancouver	GVSS	75	Quinn Runkle	Halfmoon Bay	Sunshine Coast
46	Justine Yiu	Coquitlam	GVSS	76	Rachel Lee	Langley	Fraser Valley
47	Kamilah Carter	Crawford Bay	Kootenays	77	Rebecca Howe	Vanderhoof	Upper Fraser
48	Kara Fridriksson	Kamloops	Thompson	78	Richard Chu	Burnaby	GVSS
49	Karen Kun*	Oakville	Ontario	79	Rita Yeung	Vancouver	GVSS
50	Kate Bergen	Penticton	Okanagan	80	Ruth Legg	Burnaby	GVSS
51	Kate Finkler-Kemeny	Vancouver	GVSS	81	Ryan Barfoot*	Powell River	Sunshine Coast
52	Kate Henderson*	Vancouver	GVSS	82	Sandra Bernier	Crawford Bay	Kootenays
53	Kathryn Graham	Prince George	Upper Fraser	83	Summerlove Paul	Chilliwack	Fraser Valley
54	Kay De Boer	Golden	Kootenays	84	Tara Kathleen Standing	Cranbrook	Kootenays
55	Ken Watts*	Victoria	Vancouver Island	85	Thomas Kineshanko*	Vancouver	GVSS
56	Keri Laughlin	Victoria	Vancouver Island	86	Trevor Coburn	Burnaby	GVSS
57	Kimberly Perreault	Kamloops	Thompson	87	Vageli Dadiotis	Victoria	Vancouver Island
58	Kristal Weaver	Chetwynd	Northern BC	88	Vine Madder	Kimberley	Kootenays
59	Kristin Ashly Stevens	Chetwynd	Northern BC	89	Woods Tara	Canal Flats	Kootenays
60	Lani Johnson*	Vancouver	GVSS	90	Yongjie Yon	Langley	Fraser Valley

* Congress participants who were also presenters or session facilitators

acknowledgements

a sincere **thank you!**

The Fraser Basin Council and its Youth Advisory Committee would like to thank the facilitators and presenters who helped make the BC Youth Congress a successful event. In particular, it is important to recognize Congress MC, Nadia Chaney, who successfully kept the jam-packed agenda on schedule while maintaining the momentum and energy throughout the day. Thanks also to Karsten Heuer and the youth panelists – Thomas Kineshanko, Emily Jubenvill and Ken (Wameesh) Watts – who shared their inspirational stories and hope for the future. In addition, the Youth Congress would not have been as successful without the exceptionally talented facilitators who planned, prepared and delivered the afternoon Concurrent Sessions and Really Fast Skills Sessions. The facilitators' names and organizational details are included as part of the Congress Agenda in Appendix A.

Last, but by no means least, the BC Youth Congress was a phenomenal success because of the outstanding youth leaders who took the time out of their busy schedules to travel from across the province to connect with their peers, learn from one another and identify ways to apply their inspiration and new-found skills as leaders in their own communities – THANK YOU!

The Fraser Basin Council Youth Advisory Committee would like to thank Amy Greenwood for organizing the Youth Congress and compiling this report. The Committee is grateful for the support and dedication from all of the Fraser Basin Council staff and Directors who helped make the BC Youth Congress a huge success.

Fraser Basin Council Youth Advisory Committee

- **Alana Kulchar** – Vanderhoof, Upper Fraser
- **Christina Burns** – North Vancouver, Greater Vancouver-Sea to Sky (GVSS)
- **Davee Palmantier** – Williams Lake, Cariboo-Chilcotin
- **Dufferin McCarthy** – Pemberton, GVSS
- **Kara Fridriksson** – Kamloops, Thompson
- **Richard Chu** – Richmond, GVSS
- **Tina Sidorov** – Prince George, Upper Fraser
- **Yongjie Yon** – Langley, GVSS

Fraser Basin Council's Youth Advisory Committee (L to R): Ruth Legg, Vancouver; Yongjie Yon, Langley; Alana Kulchar, Vanderhoof; Amy Greenwood (FBC staff); Davee Palmantier, Williams Lake; Duff McCarthy, Pemberton; Kara Fridriksson, Kamloops; Richard Chu, Burnaby. Absent: Tina Sidorov, Prince George and Christina Burns, North Vancouver.



fraser basin council offices

For more information about the Fraser Basin Council's youth engagement initiatives, please contact Amy Greenwood via email: agreenwood@fraserbasin.bc.ca or phone: 604 488 5356. For more information about the work of the Fraser Basin Council and its regional initiatives, please contact the regional offices listed below.

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