



### Coyote's Tail

According to British Columbia's numerous Interior First Nations, the Old One sent Coyote to travel the world and make it a more habitable place. Coyote is known as a transformer, providing for the peoples of the land and teaching them how to use their gifts wisely.

Coyote told the people of the land that it was theirs to enjoy and share, not to destroy or exploit. His many works included introducing the people to the vibrant rivers filled with fish, and along their shores he showed them rich fishing spots.

As Coyote helped to teach the people, the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) hopes to guide the people to live sustainably within the Fraser Basin.

The Council is working to assist today's and future generations in sustainable living through its Charter of Sustainability and its four directions:

- Understanding Sustainability
- Caring for Ecosystems
- Strengthening Communities
- Improving Decision Making

Coyote Whispers honours the works and programs aimed at achieving sustainability for the people living in the Thompson Region.

We hope that ideas expressed in this publication will help others to achieve their goals.

# Coyote Whispers

THOMPSON REGION NEWSLETTER – FRASER BASIN COUNCIL

## How do we measure up?

How do you know that spring has arrived? Is it the sudden appearance of robins, the colourful display of crocus and daffodils bursting through the soil, or is it the newfound spring in your step as the sun shines down on your face. Regardless of what you choose, you are using an indicator to tell you that winter has finally come to an end.

We all use indicators in our daily lives. For example, the temperature will help you gauge how to dress, it's time to fill your vehicle when your gas gauge drops below the red, and when your stomach growls it's dinnertime.

The Fraser Basin Council has been working to develop indicators, which will help us to understand the state of sustainability of the Fraser Basin. In November of 2000 the Council held its second State of the Fraser Basin Conference. At the conference the Council released a workbook document entitled *Sustainability Indicators for the Fraser Basin*. The Workbook profiles a draft set of 40 sustainability indicators that could be used to assess progress towards sustainability across the Basin.

Building on the feedback received from the Conference, the Council hosted Regional Workshops around the Basin to gather local perspective on these proposed indicators and to discuss new potential indicators. The Thompson Region of the Fraser Basin Council was the first to host Regional Workshops. Three highly successful workshops in Merritt, Kamloops, and Salmon Arm were held with some 50 people attending, to give their input on the initial 40 indicators proposed in the *Sustainability Indicators Workbook*.

Although the proposed indicators reflected an

attempt to measure sustainability, there was general agreement that there were several areas where the proposed indicators were lacking. Within the health field several suggestions for indicators were made, be it emergency response, visits to emergency rooms, waiting lists, access to doctors, and access for disabled persons to services.

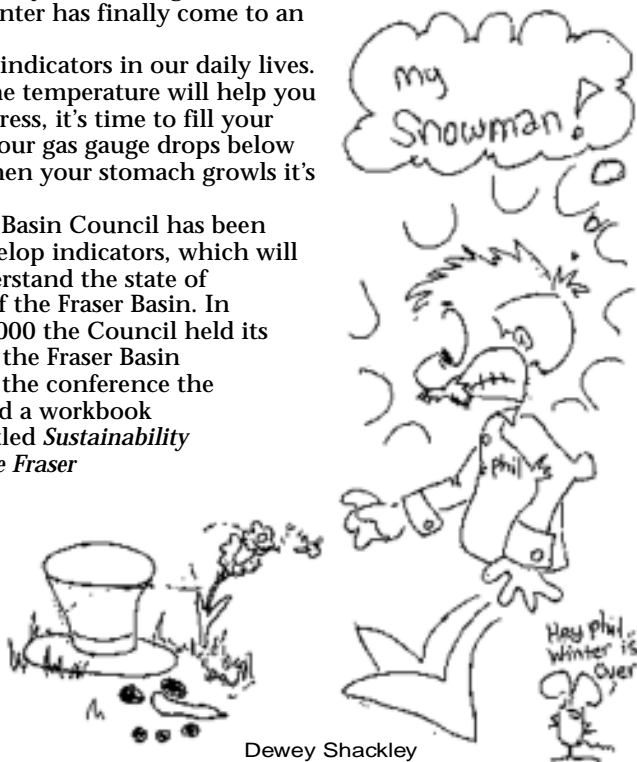
Many agreed that the proposed indicators designed to track progress on new relationships between aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities could be improved upon. One suggestion was to track the number of Memorandums of Understanding and partnerships between First Nations and non-aboriginal interests.

Another common theme was the health of the local economy, with a number of indicators being proposed such as the amount of foreign investment in an area, house pricing, infrastructure upkeep, and the number of times money changes hands within a community.

The Fraser Basin Council will be reporting on a final set of indicators in the fall of 2001. Information on the

results of the Regional Workshops and On-Line Indicators Survey will be available on the FBC website this summer. Hopefully, sustainability indicators will be used by each and every one of us to gauge the work we are doing toward sustainability of the Basin. Thanks to all who attended the workshops and to those that completed the on-line indicators survey.

For more information please visit the Fraser Basin Council web page ([www.fraserbasin.bc.ca](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca)) and click on sustainability indicators.



Dewey Shackley



UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY

# Living to Learn

Kevin Taylor, Mayor of Lillooet

We at the District of Lillooet believe that our communities must prepare for the emerging knowledge-based society. To do so, we must build on our knowledge base and work with all people in our communities to ensure that no one is left behind. Thus, for the past two years the District of Lillooet has been an active partner in a federal-provincial Learning Communities Initiative.

Through the Learning Communities Initiative, we have been working at the community level to build a new type of partnership aimed at increasing our communities' capacity to respond to the rapid social-economic changes that are challenging us all. With funding and support from the BC

Ministry of Community Development, and working in partnership with the Office of Learning Technologies of HRDC, the District of Lillooet is implementing the learning community project.

These projects involve the application of learning technologies to enable local economic and social development by building networks within and between a growing number of communities in both rural and coastal areas. They also build on the co-operation of these provincial-federal partners to promote a wide variety of non-formal learning opportunities and other educational initiatives.

The District of Lillooet is gradually using our local human and social capital to enable a lifelong learning approach community-wide. Our priorities are community-established and owned. Some programs strengthen pre-school learning by encouraging parents to be their children's first teachers; others support community-based approaches to adult literacy and the development of community work opportunities for young people. Yet others build much needed bridges between First Nations and non-aboriginal people as we work together to promote local community development.

Along with local school and college partners, the Lillooet community library, health, recreation and cultural bodies are collaborating with the economic sector and our municipal governments to support a collaborative strategy focused on making lifelong learning a reality for all. We are intending to use our communities' full learning resources to build a new future for citizens of Lillooet. 🌱



IMPROVING DECISION MAKING

# Mooooo-ving

Graham Strachan, P.Ag Member, C.O.W.S.

C.O.W.S. Yes, another acronym but this one does have a connection with the 1200 lb. four-legged bovine that makes it easier to remember. The Committee On Watershed Stewardship (C.O.W.S.) got its start as a small group of individuals, agencies and non-government organizations that helped the BC Cattlemen's Association with their education day back in 1997. The topic for that day was riparian management that attracted two well-known speakers from Alberta: Barry Adams and Lorne Fitch. Rather than disband after the event, the group decided to stay together and meets informally every second month.

Perhaps the easiest way to describe the purpose of C.O.W.S. is to give you the mission statement: "The mission of the committee is to encourage and facilitate communications and extension activities regarding environmentally-sustainable agricultural use of watersheds in general, and riparian areas in particular, within the southern interior of British Columbia." The makeup of the committee changes over time but currently involves provincial government agencies including Environment, Lands & Parks, Forests, Agriculture - both federal and provincial, Energy & Mines and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. 🌱

Other members include the BC Cattlemen's Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fraser Basin Council, Forestry Continuing Studies Network, BC Grasslands Council and several private consultants.

As a member of this group I've found it a very useful forum to discuss information on various demonstration and research projects underway or being planned, to share any new educational and extension materials as well as any changing policy directions within government. The ability to build partnerships and enhance awareness of each other's activities are perhaps two of the biggest reasons the group has stayed together. Each member has a specific area of expertise and interest and the goal of working towards good stewardship practices is a common thread that keeps the group motivated.

Over the last few years C.O.W.S. has developed a strong collection of information on riparian management that we try to make available to other organizations that may find it of value. More recently the group was a partner in putting together the 'Green Zone Seminar' held in Kamloops in January where close to 300 people attended. For any further information about the group drop me an Email at [Graham.Strachan@gems8.gov.bc.ca](mailto:Graham.Strachan@gems8.gov.bc.ca). 🌱



Patricia Parent & Kelsey Shields planting trees at Cayoosh Park  
Photo courtesy Bridge River-Lillooet News

CARING FOR ECOSYSTEMS

# The Little Greenhouse that could!

It's not only the seedlings that are growing strong in Shackan; it's also the greenhouses themselves. Since the first greenhouse on the Shackan Reserve was started in 1996 with base funding from the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, two new buildings have sprung up and 40,000 plants are produced each year.

Shackan Greenhouses grow only indigenous plants gathered by hand from seeds on the land, and is just one of numerous projects that have been implemented by the Nicola Watershed Stewardship and Fisheries Authority to develop various types of fisheries and habitat enhancement projects every year within each band.

The Nicola Watershed Stewardship and Fisheries Authority (NWSFA) is the fisheries arm of the Nicola Tribal Association (NTA).

The NTA is comprised of 7 native bands including Upper Nicola, Coldwater, Lower Nicola, Nooaitch, Shackan, Cook's Ferry and Siska Bands.

Jim and Betty-Jean Bergh of the Shackan Reserve are the caretakers of the greenhouses with the help of Sharon John, also of Shackan. These caretakers take great care of the seedlings and enjoy tending to them each day throughout the year. By listening to the land, the Berghs have learned many

innovative and successful ways of gathering seeds and growing healthy seedlings.

For example, Jim and Betty-Jean explain that propagating from seeds rather than cuttings will ensure greater diversity in the seed stock and less risk that aphids and other pests will be transferred back to the greenhouse.

Recognising the need to use traditional knowledge for the protection of fish habitat sites, efforts are underway to utilise the rich indigenous knowledge of the surrounding

communities. Some advantages of this can be seen in the excellent growth and survival rate (80%) of Silver Wolf Willow seedlings which are grown from seeds collected from bear scat. Today, Shakan Greenhouse uses sulphuric acid to imitate the bear. They also use leaves gathered from hillsides and yards as an insulator for all the seedlings in the greenhouse as they don't carry diseases and protect the young seedlings from disease and frost. Jim and Betty-Jean grow and recommend planting River Birch along the river and streams to avoid beaver damage.

Shackan greenhouses grow deciduous trees species: Willow, Red Osier Dogwood, Cottonwood, Alder, River and Paper Birch, etc. as well as brush species, such as the Prickly Rose, Saskatoon Berry, Currant, Choke Cherry, and Douglas Maple. Finished stock is made available to clients including First Nations, federal, provincial and local governments, as well as community groups utilising the seedlings for riparian and slope rehabilitation.

From gathering seeds on the land, to growing and tending seedlings, to selling them to local governments, community watershed groups and individuals, the Nicola Watershed Stewardship and Fisheries Authority can be proud of their success in caring for ecosystems. 🌱



Betty-Jean Bergh

Red osier seedling

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

# Siska honouring artists

Nestled unobtrusively in the heart of the Fraser Canyon is the home of the Siska First Nation, one of 16 bands of the Nlaka'pamux



Nation. While some members of the community work in resource-based industries like logging, the Siska community is unique in the emphasis they place on the diversity of their peoples.

Nlaka'pamux peoples have a reputation as basket makers and carvers. That artistic heritage has found expression in many of the art forms created today. The Band operates a soapstone quarry to supply materials to the carvers. The carvers, in turn, transform the stone into the soft subtle lines of world-class sculpture. Each piece resonates with the Spirit of ancient symbols, age-old traditions and of the animals the people have lived with in harmony for thousands of years.

Several years ago, leadership of the Siska

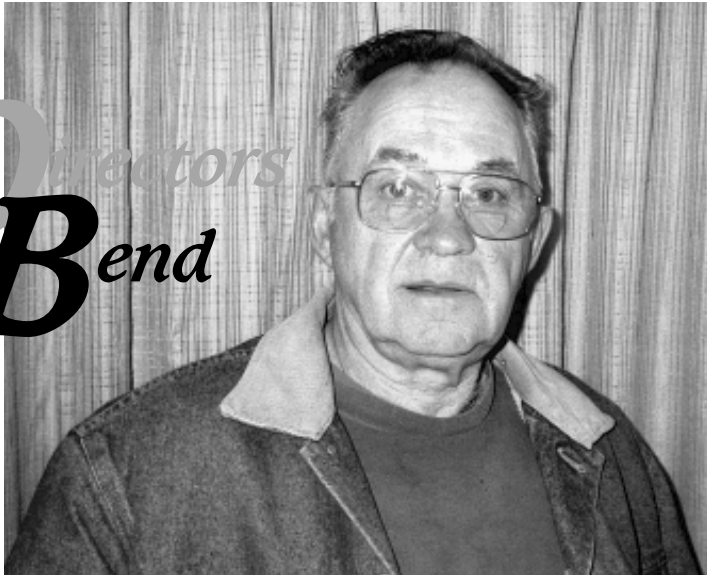
community identified an opportunity to build on the talents of their artists by creating the Siska Art Gallery. The gallery became a place to showcase the talents of the Nlaka'pamux people and soon became a "must stop" on the Trans-Canada highway.

Building on this success the community then identified a number of first nations artists that were incarcerated in Mountain Prison and were creating beautiful pieces of art while they were confined. The community contacted the prison authorities and offered their facilities as an outlet for these artists to sell their works and earn funds they could access after they had completed their period of incarceration.

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# Directors Bend



**Joe Post**  
*represents the  
TNRD on the  
Fraser Basin  
Council*

Greetings, Everyone.

As a new Director with the Fraser Basin Council, I am pleased to be a part of the Council's ongoing efforts guiding communities toward sustainability across the Basin and within the Thompson Region. My time is also shared with the Thompson Nicola Regional District, where I am a Director for "Area M". In both positions, I hope to serve the diversity of all interests in a balanced manner.

I am enjoying my work with the Fraser Basin Council, because I am able to interact with people, learning and sharing information on sustainability – which involves balancing social, environmental and economic issues and needs amongst all stakeholders. It's not an easy process, but it is certainly necessary.

My family and I emigrated from Holland to the BC Interior in the summer of 1950. My father started out working in what was then, the Nicola Valley Saw Mill. This helped us start our own family dairy. At that time we had 1 acre and 7 dairy cows. We milked the cows wherever we found them, whether it was in the town of Merritt or in the surrounding range.

Married in 1955, my wife and I have stayed in

the Nicola Valley to raise our 3 children, Randy, Diane, and Lisa. For over 23 years I have worked in the lumber/logging industry as an owner/operator of a fleet of trucks and as a logging contractor. Later, for 16 years we operated a 200 head cow/calf ranching business. I have served as a Kinsman, an Executive on the Nicola Stock Breeders Association and Director on the BC Livestock and BC Cattlemen's Associations.

Through these experiences I have learned many lessons. One of the most important is that one must know how to read the land, treat it well, and it will serve you and provide a healthy living. I find this life lesson echoed in the vision and work of the Fraser Basin Council: "the Fraser Basin is a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment".

As the Thompson-Nicola Regional District representative on the Fraser Basin Council Board of Directors, I hope to build on the aforementioned lessons and experiences and subsequently give something back to the land and its people.

Sincerely,  
Joe Post

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### **Thompson Regional Committee**

Deborah Abbott \*  
Nlaka'pamux Nation

Dorothy Argent \*  
Public Representative

Dennis Lapierre \*  
Columbia Shuswap Regional District

Arthur Manuel \*  
Secwepemc Nation

Joe Post \*  
Thompson-Nicola Regional District

George Saddleman \*  
Okanagan Nation

Dr. Robert Smillie \*  
Public Representative

Kevin Taylor  
Mayor Lillooet

Sheila McLean  
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Morgan Wells \*  
Stl'at'imc Nation

Bob Ellis  
Savona

Marnie Gillis  
City of Kamloops

Bill Kershaw  
Barriere

Don Holmes  
Paul Lake



\* Fraser Basin Council Director

## **SISKA ART GALLERY – from Page 3**

The program has met with outstanding success. The gallery now employs several Band members, has assisted the Siska artists to gain world recognition and has helped those unfortunate enough to have experiences with the law to build on their talents and become craftsmen in their own right.

So, if you are traveling the Canyon on your

way to the coast or the interior take some time to visit Siska. You can refresh yourself with a cappuccino from their coffee bar, enjoy a home-made sandwich or ice cream, and most importantly find people secure in their heritage, a people that greet you with warmth and friendship and, who knows, you might even find that special piece of art you need for Aunt Millie. 🌸