



CSI Report

Scholarships

TEK

Documentary

New Staff

The Oyster Garden

Charlie's Welcome

No More Sewage

NRO

CEPI

Maps

Mark Wrestles

Moose Management

Staff

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Cape Breton plamu getting some help

CSI Cape Breton (Collaborative Salmon Initiative) is a new organization that was endorsed in Wagmatcook at a two-day workshop on Atlantic Salmon in Unama'ki/Cape Breton. Representatives from First Nations, government, conservation groups, scientists, academics, and recreational fishers met at "Dialogue on Plamu/Atlantic Salmon in Cape Breton." The intensive workshop focused on many of the issues facing the Atlantic Salmon and brought together a broad-based group of people concerned with the status and future of Atlantic Salmon in Unama'ki.

"I am thrilled with the level of interest and concern for Cape Breton salmon," says Charlie Dennis, Executive Director of Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR). "We have taken the first steps to make sure that salmon will continue to be an important part of our culture. A management plan developed with the help of the communities will be our priority."

John Hart, President of the Margaree Salmon Association, endorses UINR to take the organization forward. "Charlie's leadership combined with the will of communities across Unama'ki will maintain and improve salmon stocks for the future. The workshop showed a great consensus of spirit. Whether our ancestors have been here for 10 years or 10,000 years, whether we fish to fill our bellies or fish to fill our hearts, we all share common thoughts, bonds and concerns. We are all concerned for the salmon."

Lewis Hinks, Regional Director for the Nova Scotia Atlantic Salmon Federation, is "hopeful that the workshop will lead to greater cooperation among all the groups that benefit from Cape Breton salmon. This can only benefit this magnificent animal over the long term."

Mi'kmaq elder Albert Marshall feels that both the initiative and the salmon can benefit from traditional knowledge. "Combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with modern science could provide a bright future for the generations to come."



The Atlantic Salmon [Plamu] holds a position of significance in the history and culture of both First Nations and Non-First Nations people. Historically, the salmon was a food source for both Mi'kmaq and European settlers. In modern times, Atlantic Salmon has developed an economic significance beyond its use for food, first through a commercial fishery, and most recently through the development of a recreational sport fishery on a number of Cape Breton rivers.



People from First Nations and Non-First Nations communities across Cape Breton/Unama'ki have expressed concern regarding the state of the Atlantic Salmon/Plamu stock in this region. Scientific and anecdotal reports indicate Atlantic Salmon/Plamu populations are in decline and/or not recovering to historic levels. Given that healthy Atlantic Salmon/Plamu populations are of vital importance to all communities and cultures of Cape Breton/Unama'ki, First Nations and Non-First Nations user groups intend to—in cooperation with appropriate provincial and federal agencies—develop a plan to revitalize and rebuild the Atlantic Salmon/Plamu stock for the benefit of current and future generations.



Photos:

Above: Tracy Denny (We'koqma'q fishery guardian)
 Left top: Keith Christmas (Membertou NRO) and Lewis Hinks (Director Atlantic Salmon Federation) share a comment;
 Left bottom: John Hart (president Margaree Salmon Association), Scott Cook (NS Anglers & Hunters) and Charles Doucette (Potlotek) listen intently;
 Below: Elder Florence Young, (Eskasoni);
 Bottom: Joe B. Marshall (KMK) and Larry Marshall (DFO)



We are currently reviewing the report from the workshops and are preparing it for distribution to the conference participants. It will also be available for download from our website www.uinr.ca. If you are interested in what is happening with this resource you won't want to miss the proceedings!



Scholarship Opportunities

If you or someone you know are studying or planning education in the fields of Science, Technology, or Natural Resources, be sure to check out UINR's website at www.uinr.ca for postings of three opportunities for financial assistance. Scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and are available in each community.

In partnership with Stora Enso and Georgia Pacific, UINR is offering scholarships in each Unama'ki community that are intended to promote and encourage education and careers in the field of Science, Technology, and Forestry within the Unama'ki Mi'kmaq Communities.

Deadlines for all the scholarships are October 20, so be sure to check out these opportunities before the dates have passed-



TEK respect

Elder Albert Marshall says it best. "Two Eyed Seeing" is what he calls the approach to incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with traditional scientific methods.

UINR, Parks Canada, and the Government of Canada want to incorporate both TEK and western science in the pursuit of ecological integrity in the national parks. First Nations are always consulted during park management planning. TEK is also used in species-at-risk programs and environmental assessments and screenings.

UINR's Cheryl Bérubé is working on developing processes and protocols that are based on shared ethics and principals, respecting the intellectual property rights of the Aboriginal people.

Watch our next issue for her findings.

Documentary Advances

Catherine Martin Joins the Team

The development phase of the documentary, "MSX – What the Oysters are Saying," coordinated by Madeline Yakimchuk for UINR, has advanced since our last issue. A seven-page PDF document which describes the project's theme, artistic treatment, objectives, and story outline may be downloaded at www.uinr.ca. The proposal is currently in the hands of National Film Board Atlantic.

New partners onside with this project include the Atlantic First Nation Help Desk (www.firstnation-help.com) and Catherine Martin. The Help Desk will be providing video compression and streaming of the final product, as well as participating in the production as part of their own initiatives to provide video training to Mi'kmaq youth.

Catherine Martin of Matues Productions has joined the project as a senior member of the production team. Cathy has agreed to co-produce with Joel Denny of Kewniq Productions, and co-direct with Madeline Yakimchuk of Gryphon Productions. This intercultural team will strive to produce a Mi'kmaq perspective aimed at both the non-Mi'kmaq and the Mi'kmaq worlds. Cathy will also lend her extensive experience and skills in training to the project.

A brief background on Cathy can be found at <http://www.danielnpaul.com/Col/2002/CathyMartin-PursuingFilmMakingDream.html>

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Charlie Dennis Pjila'si



Toqa'q

Toqa'q (Autumn) is the beginning of the Mi'kmaq year. It is the time when salmon go back to the sea and our ancestors would return to the interior. The birds flying south, the eels in the rivers, and the moose in the forests gave us what we needed to survive from year to year and generation to generation. These resources are as important to us today as they were in the past.

In this issue of The Marten, we show you some of the people who participated in and contributed to our first workshop on plamu (salmon) and the formation of CSI Cape Breton (Collaborative Salmon Initiative). The final report from the workshop will be available on our website as will many of our studies and reports. Check www.uinr.ca regularly for postings. It is the best place to find job opportunities, scholarship information, and news from UINR.

Our partnerships with the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Planning Initiative (CEPI) and other initiatives such as Pitu'paq are showing some concrete results. After years of hard work, we are proud to have been a part of Transport Canada's designation of the Bras d'Or Lakes as a non-discharge zone for boating sewage. It is a giant step in the process of keeping our Lakes clean.

Finally, I would like to welcome back Lisa Young, our Director of Administration who was away on maternity leave and Laurie Sutor, our Intergovernmental Relations and Partnership Advisor, who returns from a short break. Also, I would like to introduce you to our new Administrative Assistant, Melissa Nevin. We are pleased to have her join our team at UINR.

Enjoy toqa'q!

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The Oyster Garden 5

A Story by Charlie Dennis



Noel Francis was one of the true oyster fishermen that fished oysters in the different oyster beds in the Bras d'Or Lakes. During most of the oyster season, he and his son would be fishing in Malagawatch and River Denys Basin. At times, he would fish alone as the boys would be doing something else.

Noel was very creative in finding ways and techniques in harvesting oysters. I remember one year when I was fishing oyster along the Boom Channel (north of Malagawatch). The wind had picked up, so it was very hard to do any fishing. I am one of those fishermen that loves to pick oysters when there is no wind and the lake is flat calm. That day the boat was blowing everywhere, so I just gave up and drifted along to shore and hoped the wind would die down. While resting on the shore, somebody all of a sudden shouted to me and said "you can't make any money while you're sleeping!" (In Mi'kmaq of course). Here was Noel, drifting along in his boat and eagerly picking oysters.

I asked myself, "how is he able to do any fishing in this wind?" Anyhow, he landed his boat alongside mine and we decided to boil some water and make some tea, and have some graham crackers (he loved these special brand of crackers). As we were chatting, I noticed a pair of socks hanging over the sides of the boat, one up on the stern and one at the bow. Jokingly I asked, "what invention have you come up with, Uncle?" He explained that he was having problems with the corn oil – every time he would

Noel laughed, and with a chuckle asked me to have a look on the side of the boat. I noticed two pieces of rope hanging towards the bottom, so I took a closer look. He had tied a few rocks to the end of the rope! He had salvaged some old pieces of net along the shore and made two bags of rocks, one on each side of the boat. It took me a few minutes to figure it out. Noel was dragging these bags of rocks along the bottom and in turn, the rocks were slowing down the drift of the boat. When we finished our tea and graham crackers, he said "well, my son, I have to make some money" and shoved his boat out and slowly moved along the shore, picking up oysters. Of course, being a rookie, I waited for the wind to die down and would head back to camp, but kept the ideas he had in my head and eventually did use them.



throw drops of the oil, the wind just carried it away. So what he did was, he took his socks off and went to shore, filled his socks with beach sand, then he filled the socks with Mazola oil.

The end result was that no matter where he went, the effects of the oil gave him a clear vision and no ripples all around his boat. I had to laugh when he told me his new invention, although that wasn't the end of the story! Well, I couldn't resist asking the next question—"How come your boat wasn't getting tossed around by the wind?"

Talk about traditional knowledge! Noel was an excellent oyster fisherman, neither rain nor wind slowed him down—but when it came to cards, the oysters often had to wait, as Noel was an excellent poker player as well...

Sadly missed by everybody, my good friend, Noel Francis.





No more boat sewage

Ben Eoin Campground was the site for a formal announcement by the Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The news conference was held to announce the designation of the Bras d'Or Lakes as a non-discharge zone for pleasure craft. Pitu'paq was instrumental in preparing the application and seeing that it moved through the steps to legislation. Laurie Sutor and Karen Malcolm worked on the detailed application and were thrilled to see the legislation finally in place.

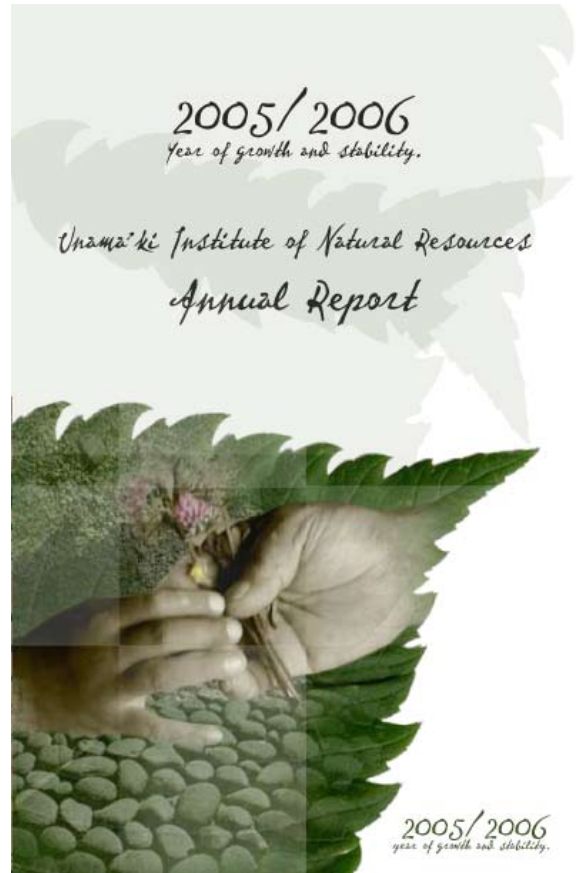


Pitu'paq is a partnership of Cape Breton's five municipal units and five First Nations of Unama'ki with a focus on the Bras d'Or Lakes watershed.



The photo above shows Peter MacKay and Duart MacAulay listening at the press conference; Right: Duart and Peter along with Sharon Carter, Charlie Dennis and newly elected MLA Alfie MacLeod;

Bottom shows Angela Morris, Shelley Denny (UINR), Vera Pierro (DFO), and Albert Marshall (CEPI Elder Advisor) listening to the announcement.



Annual Report Available

UINR's Annual Report for the 2005/2006 fiscal year is available for download at our website. Just go to www.uinr.ca/annual report to get a copy. The report highlights some of UINR's achievements over the last year and includes financial statements for the period.

Here's an excerpt from Charlie Dennis' introduction:

The last twelve months have been exhilarating at the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources. Expansion, change, and evolution have joined together to make our organization stronger than ever. Our commitment to the environmental health of Unama'ki has grown to include the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative, the Pitu'paq partnership, Moose Management Initiative, Collaborative Salmon Initiative, Species at Risk, and a host of marine science, forestry, and other environmental projects.

Our contribution to the understanding and protection of the environment of Unama'ki will continue as we develop new partnerships and watch our current initiatives grow. Our commitment is to the many future generations of Unama'ki people.



CEPI Update

Here's the latest news from the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Planning Initiative (CEPI):



Mark wrestles 2 first prizes!

Mark MacPhail, UINR's forestry guy has a few other talents up his sleeves! Whether those arms are pumped up from his work in the woods or lifting his son, Mark placed first in both the left and right arm competitions in the Canadian Arm Wrestling Championship held in Kelowna, BC.

Mark, from River Denys, defeated Matt Mask of Alberta in the right arm finals and also took the south-paw finals by beating Tyrrel Jessom of Saskatchewan.

Mark will now compete in the upcoming world championship tournament and says he's eager to improve on his past results on the global stage. "I'd like to improve on my sixth place finish. That would be ideal for me but, of course, the biggest goal would be to get on the podium. First, second, or third would be pretty awesome at a world event."

The World Championship is being held in November in Manchester, England.

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- The Steering Committee recently accepted a framework document which provides a road-map for the development of the overall environmental management plan for the Bras d'Or. The management plan will have two levels, one that encompasses the entire Bras d'Or, and separate, focused plans for each of the twelve sub-watersheds within the Bras d'Or.
- A State of the Environment Report is underway by UINR and Environment Canada. This report will give a comprehensive understanding of the conditions of the environment of the Bras d'Or, from water quality and invasive species to furbearing animals and rare plants. A Bras d'Or Lakes Ecosystem Overview and Assessment Report (EOAR) is being completed by DFO in collaboration with UINR. This second report summarizes key ecosystem information and human uses of the Bras d'Or, and incorporates Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK).
- A TEK workshop, was held May 2006. Twenty-five First Nations and twenty-five Non-First Nations Elders were invited to attend. The proceedings of this workshop are nearing completion.
- The Collaborative Salmon Initiative (CSI) workshop was held in June 2006. Seventy participants heard presentations from all levels of government, First Nations elders, youth, recreational fishers, etc., then discussed the issues in break-out groups. Pending review of the proceedings of this workshop, a management planning team will be created to develop a plan for sustainable management of Atlantic Salmon in Cape Breton.
- Over the summer, a planning team was struck to create a communications plan for CEPI. This team has met several times to discuss such communication essentials as a website, content, key messages of CEPI, newsletters, a watershed resident survey to be conducted in 2007, and community outreach. The CEPI website is under development and we are ready to upload content.
- A Senior Council meeting is scheduled for November 14. This meeting includes regional directors general for all the federal departments involved with CEPI, the deputy ministers responsible for those provincial departments involved with CEPI, our Steering Committee, the Chiefs of all Unama'ki First Nations, etc. At this meeting we will showcase CEPI's accomplishments and activities for the past year, and discuss our plans for the upcoming fiscal year.

UINR is committed!

Corporate social responsibility is more than a buzz phrase at UINR. Our commitment is to the environment and our stewardship of the Island's natural resources is our mandate. We are always looking for ways that we can strengthen that focus. Our newsletter, annual report and stationary are all printed on 100% post-consumer recycled papers that use no chlorine. No new trees are used in manufacturing the paper. This small step saves trees, reduces wood and water usage and produces lower greenhouse gas emissions. We waste less energy and use less landfill space. Who would think such a small step would have such a big impact!

Just printing 500 of our newsletters on recycled paper has these benefits:

Net greenhouse emissions reduced: 21 lbs.
Landfill reduced: 11 lbs

Water saved: 102 gallons

Wood saved: 69 lbs.

Energy reduced: 138,000 btu

Protecting our natural resources and using them responsibly is UINR's main priority. Our switch to 100% post consumer recycled paper is a small thing we can do to help the environment.



Moose Management Initiative - Update

Increased presence in the highlands

Hunters can expect to see an increased presence of Mi'kmaq Natural Resource Officers (NRO's) and officials from the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in the Cape Breton Highlands this Fall.

This is an effort for the Mi'kmaq to take increased control of the Mi'kmaq moose hunt. "Members of the Mi'kmaq community at large have continually expressed the need for increased patrols in the Cape Breton Highlands to deal with matters of hunter safety," Moose Management Initiative Coordinator Clifford Paul noted. "This is just a part of a gradual change—a Mi'kmaq-led enhancement—so that the Mi'kmaq can have greater control over the responsibilities that come with our treaty right to hunt."

Additionally, this month the Province of Nova Scotia announced a policy to limit the amount of moose meat a non-native person can have in his/her possession. The policy states that any non-native individual is limited to the possession of up to 100 pounds of moose meat per household per year. To obtain this permit, the Mi'kmaq hunter may have to accompany the non-native recipient in the application process. This policy does not include those non-native hunters that have received permits to hunt in the Nova Scotia DNR Moose Lottery. In recent years, DNR issued meat permits to non-native hunters that had no limits on meat possession. This has led to a situation of non-native individuals abusing and infringing on the Mi'kmaq right to hunt.

The Moose Management Initiative falls under the "Made in Nova Scotia Process" involving the Mi'kmaq people and the Province of Nova Scotia. The initiative involves a strong partnership between the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources and the Kwilmu'k Maw-klusuaqn, Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative. It is guided by the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs.

Members of the Millbrook RCMP Detachment will be in the highlands with a number of community youth taking part in their annual youth moose hunt. As part of the process, the youth receive instruction in hunter safety, ethics, and the practice of Mi'kmaq resourcefulness to hunt for the benefit of the Mi'kmaq community. Hunters, please keep a safe look-out for our youth who will begin their camp on October 12–15. Members of the Indianbrook RCMP will be hosting their youth hunting camp in early or mid-October.

Best of luck and safe hunting to all.

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Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources
Moose Management Initiative

of Natural Resources



Lisa returns

Lisa Young is back to her position as Director of Administration at UINR after a year-long maternity leave. "Hi everyone. As much as I have enjoyed my time off with my daughter, it's good to be back working with the great crew we have here at UINR. The new staff and exciting new initiatives have definitely made it an interesting place to work."

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Welcome Melissa

Melissa Nevin has joined UINR as our Administrative Assistant. When you call UINR or drop by the office, it's Melissa that will likely greet you. Her background includes positions with First Nations organizations in health care and the environment and she has a degree in geography. "I really like working with UINR. It is an exciting workplace, and I enjoy dealing with environmental issues pertaining to Cape Breton Island and the Bras d'Or Lakes."

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