

Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources



**WINR**  
marten

Eskasoni • Membertou • Potlotek • Wagmatcook • We'koqma'q  
Volume 10 • Issue 4 • Kesik/Winter 2015

Celebrating



YEARS



WELCOME

**UINR**—Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources was formed fifteen years ago, in 1999 when the five chiefs at the time signed the official papers to set up an organization to represent Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities on natural resources and the environment. The signatory Chiefs were **Allison Bernard** (Eskasoni), **Lindsay Marshall** (Potlotek), **Terry Paul** (Membertou), **Morley Googoo** (We'koqma'q), **Mary L. Bernard** (Wagmatcook).

This special issue of UINR MARTEN looks back over the past five years at the people, projects, and partnerships that make UINR tick! If you'd like to learn about the first ten years, check out the chronology of those first years at [uinr.ca/library](http://uinr.ca/library).

For this roundup we pick up where we left off in the summer of 2009 and bring you right up to 2015.



# 2009



UINR staff were the first in the Maritime region to participate in the Community Aquatic Monitoring Program (CAMP).



UINR began Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network training (CABIN) with our science staff and Unama'ki Guardians.



The first class of Unama'KIDS graduated at a ceremony in Eskasoni and got together with new kids that would be the next year's group.



UINR worked with Parks Canada to study the population of American eel in Cape Breton Highlands National Park.

## Assembly of Nova Scotia MI'KMAQ CHIEFS



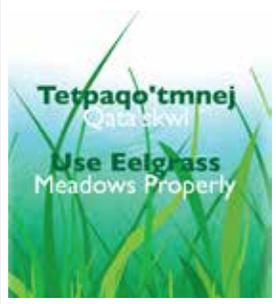
**Tia'muwe'l Netuklimkewe'l**  
Unama'ki Moose Harvesting  
According to Netukulimk

After years of consultation, research, and planning, Mi'kmaq guidelines for moose hunting in Cape Breton were released. **Tia'muwe'l Netuklimkewe'l—Unama'ki Moose Harvesting According to Netukulimk** was created by the Mi'kmaq people of Nova Scotia and is an important step for Mi'kmaq self-governance over traditional resources.

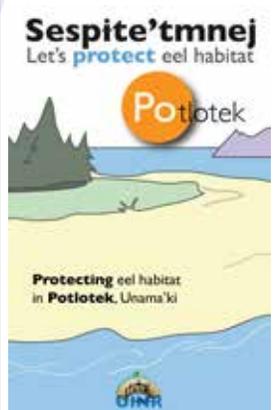
# 2010



UINR hosted a one-day workshop: **Tetapuo'tmnej Nipukt—Making the Most of Our Hardwood Resources** that looked at ways to blend traditional wood production with new uses to get maximum value from every tree.



We published **Tetpaqo'tmnej Qata'skwil—Use Eel Meadows Properly**, a brochure on the importance of eelgrass to our environment and steps we can take to help it grow.



**Sespite'tmnej—Let's Protect Eel Habitat in Potlotek** is the first in a series of booklets we published for each Unama'ki community on things we can do to help the environment.



UINR's video **Netukulimk** won three Cape Breton Filmmakers Association awards—Best Film Under Five Minutes, Best Educational Film, and Best Editing. **Netukulimk** is one of a series of short films.



**Lorraine Marshall** was presented with **Canada's Assistant Deputy Minister Award of Excellence** for innovation and creativity in the development of resource tools to improve water safety, emergency preparedness, and response plans for water in First Nations communities.



UINR's **Tetpaqiewanej Jakejk—Let's Take Care of the Lobster** is a publication that shows ways that lobster fishers can minimize their ecological footprints and gives a background on the life of the lobster.



# 2011



With \$500,000 in emergency funding approved by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to protect culturally significant lands in Malikewe'j, planning to complete work on the eroding bank at the community cemetery began.



UINR worked with our partners at Cape Breton University and Parks Canada to study Kluskap's Cave's significance to the Mi'kmaq people and ways to protect the area.



**Apistane'wj-The American Marten**, is the subject of a new play by UINR's Unama'KIDS. UKids coordinator **Selena Cremo** worked with **Maura Lea Morykot** to put together and tour the play on the endangered marten and attempts to reestablish it in Unama'ki.



Wisqoq, or Black Ash, is a very important tree to Mi'kmaq people. To raise awareness of its importance and to take a step in its return, Unama'KIDS and the five Chiefs planted trees in each of our communities.



Spring 2011 was the first year that UINR's smolt wheel was installed in Middle River. The wheel collects salmon smolt, safely directing them into a tank where they are counted. Every day, technicians monitor the collection and, once sampled, the smolt are set free to continue their journey.



UINR and the Cape Breton Collaborative Salmon Initiative hosted a workshop that brought together Mi'kmaq and non-native people from around the Island to look at ways to work together to increase the plamu/salmon population and improve the health of its environment.

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**The Spirit of the Lakes Speaks**, a document created by the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative, was released. With a vision for the protection and sustainability of the Bras d'Or Lakes and watershed, the document is a "process plan" for people and government that work and live around the Lakes.



UINR's **Tyson Paul, Shelley Denny, and Angela Denny** organized a community clean up at Malikewe'j.



A tree planting day at Malikewe'j had grade eight students from Eskasoni Junior High and community residents come together to plant seedlings on the newly restored bank at the cemetery.



UINR completed a study to help understand the local eel population in the Bras d'Or Lakes. The research, supported by Aboriginal Funds for Species At Risk, documented eel habitats outside Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities.



UINR joined Cape Breton University's Unama'ki College in its dedication of **Kina'matnewey Na Klinkn (Strengthening Knowledge)** in the University's courtyard. **Lisa Young** joined CBU President **Dr. John Harker** in a ceremonial planting of culturally significant Mi'kmaq plants.

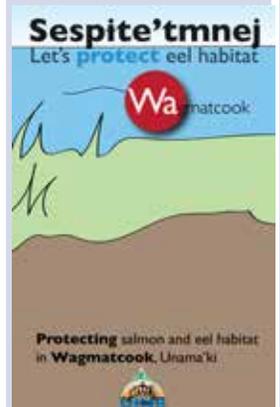


Our **Feast in the Highlands** was held to celebrate the annual moose hunt and spread the word of the Moose Working Group's progress in moose management.

# 2012



After five years of research, community meetings, and discussions with Elders and fishers, UINR released a new publication on Bras d'Or Lakes' eels. **Kataq-Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Bras d'Or Lakes Eels** was written by UINR's **Shelley Denny, Angela Denny, and Tyson Paul**, but they credit the dozens of Elders and community fishers who freely shared their observations, practical knowledge, and stories about fishing eels in the Bras d'Or Lakes.



Protecting salmon and eel habitat in Wagematcook is the topic of a publication that gives practical how-to information on things that you and your family can do to preserve and protect the environment.



As part of the research on Kluskap's Cave, UINR and Parks Canada staff took a field trip to the well-known site.



UINR was able to provide a solution to the problem of unsafe drinking water for some residents in Malikew'ej'. Six homes were installed with ultraviolet light and a micro-filtration system that kill all microorganisms and remove particulate matter, including parasites.



**Nikani Awtiken** is a Mi'kmaq phrase that means "trail blazing" or "creating a new path." High school students from Unama'ki participated in a week-long camp on forestry, natural resources, and employment opportunities in the sector. **Nikani Awtiken** is a project of Mi'kmaq Environmental Learning Centre.



UINR and the Moose Working Group hosted an information session with **Helene Van Doninck**, a veterinarian and co-founder of the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre on how lead bullets are affecting eagles and our health, looking at ways that hunters can help eliminate the risk of poisoning.



UINR published **Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge, Distribution of Culturally Significant Plants**, is a publication that identifies plants and their habitats. The report is part of an extensive study that maps out where plants are located in Unama'ki.



The Atlantic Salmon Fund contributed to a project at UINR to enhance salmon rivers in Unama'ki by planting native trees along the riverbanks.



UINR worked on a project to monitor water temperatures in four salmon rivers—Middle, North, Baddeck, and Margaree Rivers.



UINR's second annual clean-up in Malikew'ej' was a great success in 2012, with participation from students of Wagmatcook School, community members, and Guardians.



UINR's **Keith Christmas** along with Unama'ki Guardians joined NS Fisheries and Aquaculture to study invasive species in Blackett's Lake.



UINR is a partner in a federal joint fisheries governance project called **Fisheries—Western and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Fish-WIKS)**. It is a community-led project to improve fisheries management by incorporating indigenous traditional knowledge.



UINR held a special event in Membertou—**Atknujik wla kmu'jk wjit elmi'knikewaq, Restoring Membertou's Connection to the Forest One Tree at a Time**—where we distributed hundreds of trees to the community.



UINR produced a new poster, **Netukulimk: Bras d'Or Lakes Eels** that shows the Mi'kmaqs' special relationship with kataq and ways to help eel habitat.

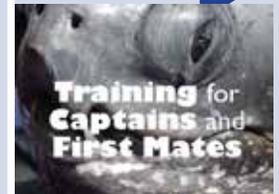


Our 2012 **Feast in the Highlands** came complete with teepees, campfires, outdoor cooking, and a buffet of moose stew, eels, baked beans, fishcakes, salmon, apple pie, luskinikn, and all the trimmings.



**Kataq—Journey of Our Eels**, a new children's book from UINR features illustrations by Membertou artist **Dozay Christmas**. Written by UINR's **Angela Denny** and **Shelley Denny**, the new book has Mi'kmaq translation by **Barbara Sylliboy**.

2013



UINR held training for Captains and First Mates on the identification, handling, and release of marine animals considered species-at-risk including marine mammals, sharks, wolffish, and sea turtles.

2012

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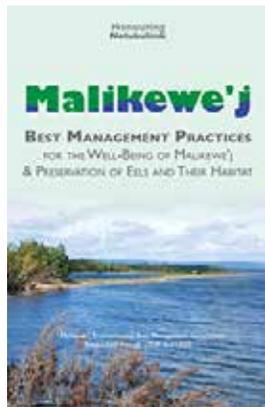
UINR staff met with their Nova Scotia mainland counterparts, Mi'kmaw Conservation Group, to get to know each other and identify potential joint projects.



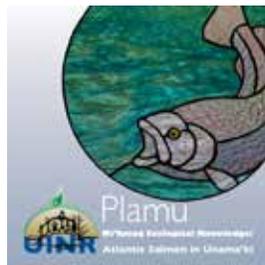
CEPI's **Golden Awards** recognize outstanding achievements in the protection or restoration of the Bras d'Or Lakes' watershed. Awards were presented to **Pat Bates**, Amoeba Sailing Tours, NSCC Environmental Tech classes of 2012-2014, and Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association.



UINR, Atlantic Salmon Federation and Margaree Salmon Association, worked together on **Every Fish Matters**, an educational project to identify salmon smolt, parr, and brook trout and ways to protect their populations and habitats. Signs were posted along Unama'ki salmon rivers.



UINR released the community-inspired **Best Management Practices for the Well-Being of Malikewe'j and Preservation of Eels and Their Habitat**. A community lunch was held at the new cookhouse followed by a ceremony to release and distribute these important community guidelines. Every Band Council signed off on the guidelines and people from every community contributed to the publication's contents.



**Plamu-Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Atlantic Salmon in Unama'ki** is a publication in our series on Mi'kmaw Ecological Knowledge.



**Eel Stewardship—Where Do We Go From Here?** is UINR's report from a workshop held to gather traditional knowledge on eels from our Elders and fishers.



Unama'KIDS built bat houses, saw a presentation on bats, and had a graduation party all rolled into a one-day event at the end of the school year.



**Shelley Denny** and **Tyson Paul** on one of their many visits to our smolt wheel in Middle River: Check out our Facebook page for a step-by-step view of their work on young salmon, from catch to release.



UINR's **Mark MacPhail, Annie Johnson, Charlie Dennis, and Lisa Young** plant trees at Malikewe'j to help control erosion.



UINR released a series of ten short videos on eels. They look at everything from the commercial eel fishery, cooking and eating eel to traditional eel fishing and making eel spears. You can see them all on UINRtv at uinr.ca



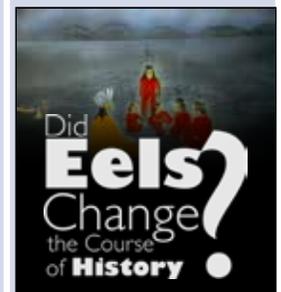
We had lots of help at our 2013 Malikewe'j Spring clean-up that included students from Waycobah School, Guardians, and UINR staff.



Chiefs representing our five Mi'kmaw bands along with **Marc Dube** from Port Hawkesbury Paper, signed a new five-year forestry agreement with UINR outlining the roles and responsibilities for harvesting and silviculture, paying special attention to species-at-risk and areas for traditional-use plants. Quotas for pulpwood, stud wood, saw logs, and biomass were also detailed.



**Alex Levy** and **Michel Biron** from Fisheries and Oceans Canada joined UINR's **Angela Denny, Shelley Denny, and Tyson Paul** at a session to provide community updates on salmon populations



**Did Eels Change the Course of History?** is a video that tells a story that took place 300 years ago during the siege in Louisbourg. UINR worked with **Albert Marshall** to develop a script, artist **Dozay Christmas** illustrated the tale, and **Madeleine Yakimchuk** created the video.

2013



This year's **Nikani Awtiken** summer camp on the Bras d'Or Lakes, reconnected Mi'kmaq youth with nature, traditional Mi'kmaq values and practices, all the while having a great time!



**Frederick Whoriskey** from Ocean Tracking Network at Dalhousie University gave salmon scale aging training to UINR, Unama'ki Guardians, and Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife staff.



UINR Guardian Program Liaison Coordinator **Keith Christmas** organized electrofishing training with Parks Canada for Unama'ki Guardians in Cheticamp River.



**Shelley Denny** and **Tyson Paul** worked on Community Aquatic Monitoring Program with Membertou Guardians.



Unama'KIDS spent a beautiful fall day cleaning up the shores of Chapel Island in Potlotek.



UINR worked with DFO Gulf Region and Potlotek Guardians to capture adult salmon to tag, measure, scale, sample, and release.



**Shelley Denny** and **Tyson Paul** did swim-throughs to count salmon with DFO on Middle and Baddeck Rivers.



After three years of operating a smolt wheel in Middle River, UINR was able to estimate the number of smolt leaving the river in spring 2013 at 10,943.



A record number of people turned out for our **Annual Feast in the Highlands** this year. Everyone, from youth to Elders, enjoyed the weather, the company, and of course the food!



Wisqoq (Black Ash) was added to Nova Scotia's species-at-risk list. **Mark MacPhail**, UINR's Director of Forestry, is a member of a recovery team that has habitat protection and improvement of Wisqoq numbers as two of its primary goals.

# 2014



UINR's Guardian Program Liaison Coordinator **Keith Christmas** organized a day-long ice safety training session for Unama'ki Guardians.



UINR Community-Based Water Quality Monitors **Lorraine Marshall** and **Tyson Paul** were awarded Certificates of Achievement recognizing their contributions to ensuring safe drinking water quality in Membertou, Potlotek, Wagmatcook, and We'koqma'q.



UINR published **Ji'kaw: Striped Bass in Unama'ki**. Information for this publication was collected through a series of interviews and workshops that followed established Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge protocols.



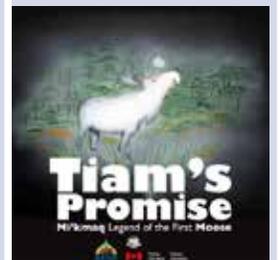
**Peju: Cod in Unama'ki** joined our other publications on Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge on Eel, Striped Bass, and Salmon. Together they give a deep understanding of these species, their history, and importance to the health, well-being, and survival of Mi'kmaq people.



UINR conducted lynx monitoring to determine if lynx and its main prey, the snowshoe hare, are in the area of a proposed wind power project in East Bay Hills. UINR's **Mark MacPhail** and **Jason MacLean** surveyed the area and they found good evidence that lynx inhabit the area.

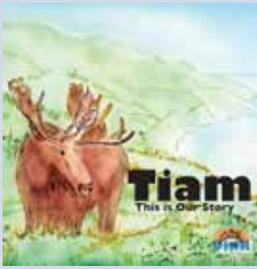


Guardians from We'koqma'q and UINR's **Charlie Dennis** joined with Margaree Fish Hatchery to release 13,000 salmon parr in Middle River, in the hope of bringing back the Atlantic salmon in Unama'ki.



**Tiam's Promise** is the second in our "Legend Series" videos. It tells the story of Tiam's first appearance to the Mi'kmaq people and the agreement that was made between moose and people.

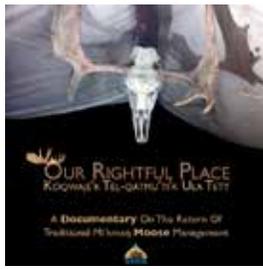




**Tiam: This is Our Story** is a new publication that tells the story of moose in Unama'ki from the appearance of the first "spirit" moose to the present day. Written by UINR's **Lisa Young** and **Clifford Paul**, it is both entertaining and educational. It is written in English and Mi'kmaq making it useful for language learning.



**Tiam: Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge** is a publication that gathers traditional knowledge of moose and its importance to the culture and survival of Mi'kmaq people now and through the ages. Written by **Nadine LeFort** with **Clifford Paul**, **Ernest Johnson**, and **Charlie Dennis**, the book looks at every part of the moose that is traditionally used by the Mi'kmaq people.



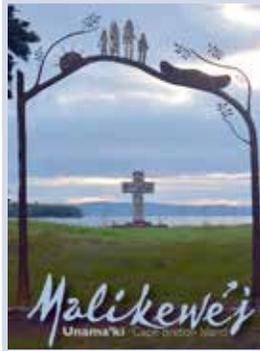
**Our Rightful Place** is a documentary video that chronicles the work of the Moose Working Group that developed voluntary guidelines for Mi'kmaq moose harvesting in Unama'ki. Three years in making, videographer **Madeline Yakimchuk** follows the story of the Mi'kmaq identifying a problem and using the Mi'kmaq way to develop a solution. A traditional Mi'kmaq moose harvest echoes the main story and gives a look at the underlying philosophy.



UINR's annual **Spring Clean-up** in Malikewe'j took place and we were pleased to see that all the hard work has been paying off with a cleaner community.



UINR Guardian Program Liaison Coordinator, **Keith Christmas**, worked with AFS Guardians and Technicians on barachois assessments around the Bras d'Or Lakes.



A monument to the people of Malikewe'j past, present, and future, was unveiled at the community's annual outdoor mass. The metal archway leading to the community's graveyard was created by Cape Breton artist **Gordon Kennedy** with input from workshops, and conversations with Malikewe'j residents.



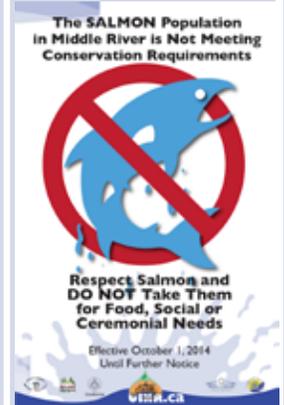
**Malikewe'j: Understanding the Mi'kmaq Way** a publication written by **Nadine Lefort** with **Charlie Dennis**, tells the story of Malikewe'j through photos, illustrations, and stories from long-time Mala residents. It discusses the special cultural and spiritual relationships Mi'kmaq people have with Malikewe'j and looks at Grand Council's traditional role in resource management, with lessons on how to re-establish the "Mi'kmaq Way" as community caretakers.



UINR's **Angela Denny**, **Tyson Paul**, and **Shelley Denny**, were in Quebec City this summer presenting their poster, **Managing for Seven Generations: Mi'kmaq Knowledge, Eels and the Bras d'Or Lakes** at the 2014 Annual Conference of the American Fisheries Society in Quebec City.



UINR Guardian Program Liaison Coordinator, **Keith Christmas**, held a two-day workshop to develop a unified vision for the future of natural resource management in Unama'ki. Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy Program Managers from across Unama'ki and Fisheries and Oceans Canada representatives attended.



UINR and the five Unama'ki communities posted signs along Middle River asking people not take any salmon for food, social, or ceremonial purposes. The salmon population in the river is not meeting conservation requirements, with very low numbers being found.



A ceremonial tree planting at UINR's Annual **Feast in the Highlands** was held with **Susie Marshall**, **Kerry Prosper**, **Flo Young**, **Cameron Paul**, UINR's **Lisa Young**, and **Charlie Dennis**.

*2015 and beyond....*

UINR has plenty planned for 2015 and the years ahead. Stay up-to-date on all our activities, opportunities, and resources by visiting our website and following us on Facebook and Twitter. We look forward to seeing you!



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