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ST'ÁT'IMC
GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Photo: Nina and other 30 under 30 Environmental Educator award winners from various years. Nina was part of the 2018 cohort of award winners.

Environment

In October, one of SGS Environment Technicians, Nina Andrascik, received a scholarship as an alumni 30 under 30 recipient to attend the North American Association for Environmental Education's annual conference. It was held in Tucson, Arizona and the theme was "Educating for Change." It was held over a span of four days where multiple workshops, discussions, and seminar-style talks took place. Various topics and information were shared including environmental literacy, the importance of decolonizing education, and free citizen science platforms (e.g., FieldScope) where teachers can access data sets through various projects so students can learn to analyze and interpret data right from their backyard, and more. It was an incredible opportunity where Nina met people from all over the continent and the globe.

One of Nina's main highlights included a session with Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Dr. Kimmerer spoke about the need to create and enact land justice, but also the need to decolonize education. She spoke to how there needs to be a relationship between Indigenous knowledge and western science that does not blend one into the other, but where both are woven together along with the knowledge of the natural world to become stronger and invoke growth and development in our day-to-day lives. Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer's session was an hour long and filled the room with inspiration, in-depth thought, and motivation to change away from the 'normal' and work towards educating for change and towards what she calls the 'symbiocene'. A new time in the world to represent humans' kinship with nature and not through the lenses of land as a natural resource but as an identity.

Attending this conference contributed to Nina's professional development for both her role with St'át'imc Government Services and towards her professional designation of Forester-in-Training, where Nina wants to use what she has learned in her everyday life to be a better guest and worker in St'át'imc territory.

White Sturgeon Monitoring with Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)

This September, the SGS Environment team had the opportunity to job shadow Okanagan Nation Alliance's (ONA's) White Sturgeon monitoring program. ONA operates as a governing body that represents the 8 member communities of the Syilx Nation: Okanagan Indian Band, Upper Nicola Band, Westbank First Nation, Penticton Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, and Lower and Upper Similkameen Indian Bands and the Colville Confederated Tribes on areas of mutual concern.

ONA has been monitoring juvenile White Sturgeon since 2017 and is currently 5 years into their monitoring project. The project focuses on the White Sturgeon population in the mid-Columbian river which is situated between the Hugh L. Keenleyside Dam (Castlegar, BC) and Revelstoke Dam (Revelstoke, BC). This section of the mid-Columbian river has been heavily influenced by BC Hydro operations since the construction of the Hugh L. Keenleyside Dam in 1969. The two main goals of the monitoring program are 1) identify and describe juvenile White Sturgeon habitat, and 2) monitor the growth and survival rate of White Sturgeon released from the conservation aquaculture program.

The monitoring process shadowed by SGS Environment consisted of two ONA boats and a team of fish biologists and technicians who set up bait lines at stratified locations along the Columbia. The crews departed from Shelter Bay and interchanged between pulling lines up to check for White Sturgeon at specified locations and setting lines up for the next day of monitoring. The bait lines consisted of hooks spaced on a lead-weighted rope, baited with worms. Each line was anchored to the bottom of the Columbia and had two buoys to signify location.

During the time that SGS Environment job shadowed the ONA crew, three White Sturgeon were caught and processed. This process included taking the weight, measuring the length, flushing the stomach for contents, and checking for general health indicators. In addition to directly handling the White Sturgeon, environmental indicators were also noted. At each location where a White Sturgeon was caught, water temperature and bed material was sampled. The bed material was assessed for substrate type and samples were taken back to the ONA lab for further examination.

This opportunity to job shadow with ONA was very beneficial to the SGS Environment team, as it provided some insight into a successful White Sturgeon monitoring program that is in year 5 of implementation. It will provide guidance as SGS Environment moves forward with the creation and implementation of its own monitoring programs in the future. Many thanks to the ONA crew for hosting us for three days in September and sharing their knowledge on White Sturgeon.

Annual St'át'imc Education and Training (SET) Golf Tournament FUNdraiser

St’át’imc Lifelong Learning Fundraiser Golf Tournament and networking event was held on *September 15, 2022*, at the Sunstone Golf Club and Sunstone Bar & Grill. The event was held to raise funds for the St’át’imc Scholarship Awards Program supporting St’át’imc Lifelong Learners. St’át’imc Scholarship Lifelong Learning Awards Program is devoted to making a difference in the community. SLLS provides scholarship awards to lifelong learners attending Post-Secondary, Skills & Trades, and/or personal professional development. For the past couple of years, COVID-19 has greatly impacted our ability to raise funds for this valuable program. This year our campaign's goal was **$35,000.**

Businesses, organizations, and communities were invited to put teams of four into the Golf Tournament. On top of the basic entry fee, there were also sponsorship opportunities available

Thank you to our 2022 sponsors for helping us reach our goal

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Capital Planning

The Quarterly Capital Planning Meeting was held on October 20, and about 25 people attended. Based on the feedback through the online survey, the material presented was well-organized and understandable. Those who responded to the survey showed great interest in the LaJoie opportunities and all were interested in a community based follow up session. These meetings will be arranged over the coming weeks. The other topic of great interest to businesses was a review of all the potential qualification opportunities (like the recent Invitation to Qualify for Environmental Services) – this material will be developed and shared as soon as available.
Explore project-related information at your own pace by accessing the information on SharePoint.
Here is a small sample of what you can find on the St'át'imc SharePoint Information Portal:

- Reports on the Reservoir Archaeology Program and the Seton Lake Environmental Mitigation Project
- List of the BC Hydro projects in St'át'imc Territory
- Copies of the BC Hydro project opportunities that have been provided to St'át'imc businesses
- Materials and notes on the Quarterly Capital Planning Meetings
- A glossary of the commonly used project and system terms

The St'át'imc SharePoint Information Portal access now requires Multi-Factor Authentication – an instruction sheet has been sent out on how to set this up. The instructions also provide a way to contact tech support should you have a problem. If you did not receive the instructions, please call Sherry Kane at SGS (778.771.5903)

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