



# UINR marten

Eskasoni • Membertou • Potlotek • Wagmatcook • Waycobah  
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## Bras d'Or Lakes management on track?

"Healing and reconciliation," is how Elder Albert Marshall put it after the two day workshop held by Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative(CEPI). The Elders of Unama'ki gathered with CEPI in a workshop designed to clarify CEPI's vision for a management plan for the Bras d'Or Lakes watershed.

"Reconciliation must begin before the two groups can begin healing. Throughout the workshop CEPI never acknowledged that there was a problem," Albert explains. "If CEPI is serious about integrating Mi'kmaq knowledge and thinking in the management plan and process, all the non-native partners need to learn more about Mi'kmaq ways."

The workshop was a response to questions that arose in the Unama'ki First Nations communities on how traditional Mi'kmaq values and knowledge were being included in the management plan process.

The first day had members of the CEPI committee explaining their roles and expertise. Representatives from government, university and the private sector talked about their contributions to the process and their commitment to a healthy Bras d'Or Lakes. The second day, participants broke into small groups to address several questions.

"Unama'ki Elders are sincere in their wish to see the CEPI process succeed, but the next step must include traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge in a meaningful way. Time will tell."

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*Photos (from top): Peter (Seven) Bernard with the youngest participant at the CEPI workshops; Fisheries and Ocean Canada's Jason Naug enjoys a casual chat with UINR's Allison McIsaac and Shelley Denny; 2-Eyed Seeing with Elder Albert Marshall and Cape Breton University's Bruce Hatcher. Below: Elders gather with CEPI.*



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Comments and questions are welcome. Email us at [info@uinr.ca](mailto:info@uinr.ca)



## There goes Mala...

Banks along the shores of Malagawatch are eroding at an alarming rate. UINR has taken action to address the problem by erecting a barrier and signs warning of the erosion. **We strongly recommend that people keep their distance from the banks to prevent injury.**

In an effort to help, UINR laid geotextile fabric over the bank to the shore, fortified by sandbags. We are developing a long-term strategy to permanently address the problems.

Malagawatch is a special place. Over 650 hectares of land on the Bras d'Or Lakes, Malagawatch has the distinction of being shared by the five First Nations bands in Unama'ki. While some people live there year-round, Mala, as it is affectionately known, is mainly a retreat. Mi'kmaq people have gathered there for a very long time.

Malagawatch has an old cemetery, dating back hundreds of years and a special shrine is erected there. Situated on the banks of the Bras d'Or Lakes, the area has experienced major erosion. In the past year, much of the bank has fallen away, threatening the graves with the possibility that they could be lost.

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*Photos (from top): Fragments of green clay pottery; View of the erosion showing cottage in foreground and shrine in distance; UINR staff lay geotextile reinforced with sandbags to help protect the bank; Annie E. Johnson hauls sandbags, UINR erected signs and warning fencing*



# UINR NEWS

UINR's Director of Forestry **Mark MacPhail** recently won the bronze medal in the 30th World Arm Wrestling Championship in Kelowna, B.C. Mark was in competition with almost 1000 arm wrestlers from 37 countries.....Welcome **Chief Kenny**



**Basque**, Potlotek—the newest member of the UINR Board of Directors. Chief Basque brings a personal interest in natural resources to his role on UINR's Board..... UINR staff have had a busy season, travelling across the country to attend conferences on a wide range of topics, from First Nations forestry to eel research.... Welcome to **Tonia**



**Sylliboy** who is filling a new position at UINR. She's our Species at Risk Coordinator and has set up a new UINR office in Potlotek. If you have any questions on species that are endangered or at risk in Unama'ki, drop Tonia a line at [tonia@uinr.ca](mailto:tonia@uinr.ca) .....**Janice Googoo** has left her position as UINR's Finance Officer

for a similar position at Membertou's Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey.....It's confirmed. UINR biologists have found eel bladder parasite in an eel sample caught in the Bras d'Or Lakes in September: First discovered in North America in 1999, the parasite can lead to the eel's death. Watch our next newsletter for more information.....A ceremonial drum has been made for the Chapel Island Mission by Eskasoni drummer **Clark Paul**.....A new type of beetle has been discovered on the mainland and it has been named *Euvira micmac*, after the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.....Our UnamaKIDS had the honour of being involved in the release of American Marten in the Highlands. Some of the kids even got to open the door to release them into their new home. This is a project with Parks Canada to re-establish the endangered population in Unama'ki.....

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 **OYSTER**  
garden  
will return in next issue

# Pjila'si

In some ways it seems like it was just yesterday that the spark ignited for what was to become the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources. 10 years later and UINR is the First Nations voice on natural resources and the environment in Unama'ki.

UINR is a unique and effective partnership of state-of-the-art marine science and traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge. We work on a wide range of management plans—moose, salmon and lobster—and we lead partnerships with other agencies and government departments. Our Natural Resource Officer program will be a model for effective First Nations' enforcement.

It's been a busy 10 years!

We have plans to celebrate our Anniversary throughout 2009—a new website, multimedia interviews with our staff and a few parties too!

Another winter has arrived and, as it is with every season, it brings changes. All the First Nations' communities in Unama'ki elected their Chiefs and Councils for the next two-year term. Cape Breton municipalities have elected their mayors, wardens and councils and, federally, we have a new order in Ottawa.

At UINR, these changes mean a new group of people to contact and inform about our activities and partnerships and an opportunity to welcome the newest member to our Board of Directors, Kenny Basque from Potlotek.

Around the office we are welcoming Tonia Sylliboy who has set up a UINR office in Potlotek to coordinate Species at Risk for the whole province.

In this issue, we give you a closeup look at one of the new species that has entered the Bras d'Or Lakes—the tunicate. It is threatening our native species like oyster and eels and has been found on eel grass, covering boating gear, oyster shells, etc. It could become a real problem.

UINR is taking an active role in preserving the Malagawatch graveyard that is having a terrible erosion problem. We discovered a huge piece of the bank eroded, uncovering an unusual stone wall. We have scientists and archaeologists looking closely to find out what has been uncovered and we are developing a plan to help slow the erosion of this important Mi'kmaq site.

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Chief Charlie Dennis  
**Pjila'si**



# Mawikwamk Wjit Tia'muk Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose

## Moose gathering

The findings of a two-day conference—Mawikwamk Wjit Tia'muk—Mi'kmaq Gathering on Moose have been released. Delegates representing Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq communities met and discussed developing guidelines for the native moose hunt in the Cape Breton Highlands.

Dan Christmas, a conference facilitator explains, "The Mi'kmaq have treaty and aboriginal rights to hunt and we have taken an important step in determining how, as a Mi'kmaq government, we wish to exercise these rights to harvest in a manner respectful of the moose, other hunters and the environment."

Clifford Paul, Moose Management Coordinator with UINR continues, "As a result of two years of community education and discussion around the moose hunt, we found there was consensus on many issues and several topics needing more discussion. The Mi'kmaq Chief and Councils, as well as the Grand Council sent delegates to the Gathering to address these issues in order to reach consensus and instruct technical staff on the drafting of the guidelines. We anticipate that the guidelines, once completed and approved, will be implemented

for the 2009 hunting season. We expect the guidelines will be initially adopted on a voluntary basis."

Dan Christmas concludes, "This is the first attempt by the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs at creating a community-based, grassroots oriented mechanism to address treaty rights implementation and future governance. By being involved in the creation of these processes, community members will become integral players in their future."

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*Photos (from top): Clifford meets with young hunters; Delegates from across Nova Scotia attended the two day conference; A talking circle was the format for the gathering.*



# Moose management

## This squirt is NOT welcome!

The Golden Star Tunicate...sounds harmless enough but this is an invasive species that has been found in the Bras d'Or Lakes on eel grass, shellfish and just about anywhere it can attach itself, smothering its host.

An aquatic invasive species is an organism that has extended its traditional range either naturally, or brought to new areas intentionally or unintentionally.

Invasive species can have significant effects on the ecosystem, both economically and ecologically, by competing with and preying on native fish, invertebrates and plants. Once an aquatic invasive species is established, it is very difficult and costly to control or eliminate.

Tunicates, often called Sea Squirts, are animals with no skeleton. Five types of tunicates can be found along the Atlantic Coast of Canada. Their distribution depends on water temperature and salinity.

In the Bras d'Or Lakes, the Golden Star Tunicate, *Botryllus schlosseri*, is most common. In the photo on the right, a tunicate has taken over oyster shells.

### How are they introduced?

Recreational boating	Aquarium or water gardens
Release of live bait	Live food fish trade
Aquaculture	Man-made canals

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## Lend us an eel!

UINR is doing research on eels in the Bras d'Or Lakes and we are looking for 15 eels from fishers in each First Nations community. If you are spearing eels this winter and would like to help us with our research, give Shelley Denny a call at 379 2024 ext. 229 or toll free at 1 888 379 UINR (8467). We can return the eel cleaned and skinned for you to eat. We only need the parts that you would not eat anyway!

shelley.denny@uinr.ca

## What do YOU think?

UINR has received funding for habitat enhancement in the Bras d'Or Lakes. Habitat enhancement is any change that we can make to improve the habitat's value and its ability to meet the needs of one or more species. For example, we have been involved in placing artificial lobster reefs to provide new habitats for lobster.

We are holding open discussions with First Nations communities in Unama'ki throughout February to hear your ideas on what you think would be the best way use this money. We'll also tell you about some of the habitat enhancement initiatives that we have done in the past.

Keep an eye out for meeting dates in your community.

shelley.denny@uinr.ca

# UNAMA'KIDS <sup>6</sup>

Unama'KIDS is off to a great start! We started the fall season with a trip to the Highlands for a feast. Clifford Paul, our Moose Management Coordinator, hosts an annual feast in the Highlands at the height of the moose hunting season. Parks Canada, Natural Resources and whoever happens to be in the vicinity were welcomed with an array of tasty traditional foods including moose (of course!)

In October, we went on a guided walk through the new Goat Island walking trails that are currently under construction in Eskasoni. It was a beautiful fall day and the walk around the island was just what was needed to get our appetites up.

Puppeteer Iris Currie hosted a show on the endangered Piping Plover. After the show, the Unama'KIDS made their own puppets in a workshop.



The highlight of the year was participating in the release of the American Pine Marten in the Highlands. It is exciting that these young people were part of the release intended to re-establish the Marten in Unama'ki and that the animals that they helped release are the future for this important native species.

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# Unama'KIDS

# it's all about the people

## Annie E. Johnson

Annie E. Johnson is familiar to everyone who reads the UINR Marten...she's our resident cartoonist! What you might not know is that Annie has other, more serious responsibilities at UINR.

Currently, Annie oversees UINR's operations and is filling Lisa Young's position as Director of Administration while Lisa is on maternity leave. "I started at UINR as a summer student and I've been with the organization for over three years. In that time, I have been Administrative Assistant, Assistant to the Administrative Assistant, Finance Assistant, Finance Officer, and most recently, Director of Administration."

A graduate of Eskasoni High School Class of 2000, Annie completed her Bachelor of Arts Community Studies degree AND a Bachelor of Business Administration degrees in May 2007. She has taken courses to attain a Certified Aboriginal Finance Manager designation with the Aboriginal Finance Officers Association of Canada, but as that designation is a combination of courses and experience, she has put the courses on hold while gaining more practical experience.

Before joining UINR, Annie worked for several years with Eskasoni Economic Development's entrepreneurship summer camps for youth all over Nova Scotia. She also worked as a substitute teacher aide in Eskasoni Middle School. Annie is currently involved with the Eskasoni Parents Against Drugs initiative and helps organize the annual Acho Man Disco Dance in memory of her uncle.

When not volunteering or working, Annie spends as much time as possible with her dog Kalypso. Staff members say she bought her current vehicle (a small SUV) because she needed it to lug Kalypso around with her!

An avid reader, Annie spends a good chunk of the her time reading. Lately, she's into mysteries and vampires.

"When you love your job, going to work and doing your work is not difficult, and with a team like the one we have at UINR, it's easy to love your work. Our staff is one of the most productive I know of. I'm proud to be part of this team, and to have people like Elder Albert Marshall and Chief Charlie Dennis as my mentors. I learn and undertake new things all the time when I'm here, and I truly appreciate that."

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Photos (from top): Annie shares a moment with Allison McIsaac at Malagawatch; Annie chats with Indian and Northern Affairs' Jerry Wolchuk and Yves Bosse from Parks Canada; Annie facilitates a conference session.



# It's all about the people

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## Another year over At UINR

The calendar year for 2008 has come to a close... UINR staff has had time over the holiday break to reflect on this past year's achievements...



## We had another successful Pine Marten release in the Cape Breton Highlands Park with various partners...



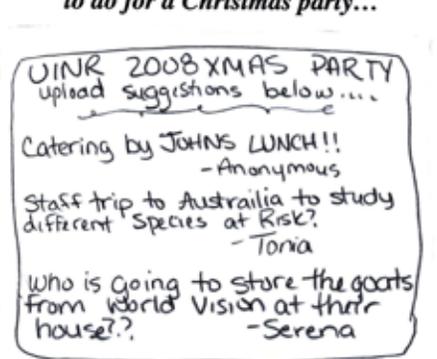
## Mark brought home his first medal from the World Championships of Arm Wrestling...



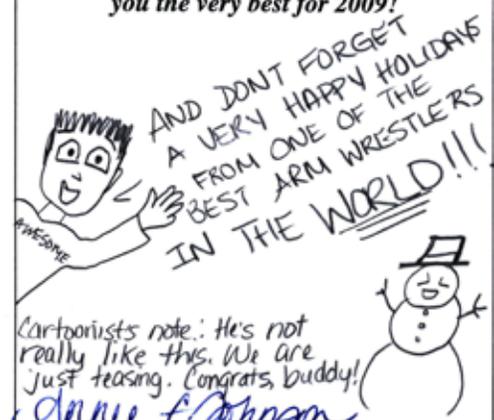
## Our Moose Symposium back in the fall is still being talked about...



## The staff had some odd ideas as to what to do for a Christmas party...



## From our UINR family to yours, we wish you the very best for 2009!



Cartoonists note: He's not really like this. We are just teasing. Congrats, buddy!

Donna E. Johnson

