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## There's GOLD in them hills!

Ask Albert Toney and Brian Toney and they'll tell you what they are mining is White Gold! Albert and Brian are long-time employees at Georgia Pacific's Melford gypsum mine near We'koqma'q and they love their jobs. "It's like winning the lottery," Brian explains, and this is the general reaction from people who land a job at this busy mine site. "It's close to home, the pay is great, and the medical and dental benefits really make a difference."

Brian Toney would know. He's been an employee at Georgia Pacific for over eight years, and he has plenty of tips for First Nations people who are considering applying. "Enjoy your work, be responsible, get to work on time, and be here five days a week. There are not many jobs like this available in Cape Breton and this is closer to home than a job out west."

With accolades like this, you'd imagine that there would be lineups of First Nations people for the available jobs. Georgia Pacific has, as its goal, a 25% First Nations workforce. However, in a crew of 130, there are just 11 Mi'kmaq workers. There seems to be a couple of stumbling blocks preventing more involvement. One of the chief reasons given is the expense of training as a heavy equipment operator. While courses are available at the Port Hawkesbury and Sydney Community Colleges, the cost is often not supported by the Bands. Kim Bolger, Georgia Pacific's Human Resource Officer, explained that the main problem from the company's perspective was actually getting applications in. She also felt that professional assistance with resumes would be a great help.

Among the union positions required at the mine are general labourers, heavy equipment operators, lab technicians, office staff, pumpmen, mechanics, shovel operators, and graders. Jobs are, of course, open to qualified men and women. Most positions require shift work as the mine runs 24 hours a day.

At the start of each shift, employees get training and upgrading on safety issues. This is one aspect of his employment that Brian Toney really appreciates. "Safety is a really big thing here. I practice safety every minute of the day. It's something that I have taken home with me. Ask my family. I'm always double checking things around the house!"

If you are interested in working with Georgia Pacific, contact your band office for applications.



Left to right: Richard Googoo, Brian Toney, Albert Toney

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





## First native conservation officers

Three Mi'kmaq have become the NS Department of Natural Resources' first full-time aboriginal conservation, enforcement, and liaison officers.

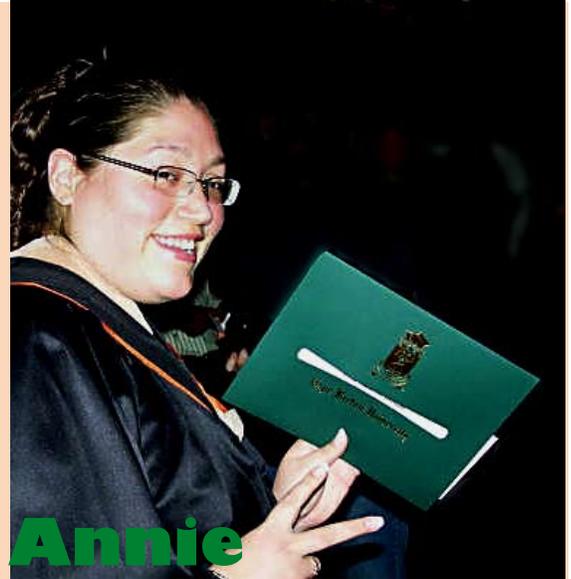
The positions were established to further promote positive working relationships with the Mi'kmaq community in Nova Scotia and to encourage better co-operation in the management of the province's natural resources.

"I am proud to be the Minister who announces this initiative," Natural Resources' Minister David Morse said during a news conference in Eskasoni with Mi'kmaq leaders. "The province is committed to working collaboratively with Mi'kmaq, to sharing our concern for, and interest in, the natural resources this province offers."

Eskasoni Chief Charlie Joe Dennis, speaking on behalf of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, said it was an historic day for Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq. "Early on, in developing a management plan for the Unama'ki moose herd, we identified enforcement as an important part of the picture," he said. "Having First Nations conservation officers in the field across the province is a step forward for us to take responsibility ourselves for the management and enforcement of our people's rights."

The conservation officers are in Whycomomagh, Shubenacadie, and Milton.

Above, left to right: Benedict Toney, Bernie Sylliboy, Gary Lowe, David Morse, Charlie Dennis



## Annie

For most people, getting one degree would be enough of an accomplishment...but not for Annie Johnson, UINR's Financial Officer and resident cartoonist. She just graduated from CBU with two degrees—a Bachelor of Business Administration AND a Bachelor of Arts Community Studies!

It took six years of dedicated work to achieve this milestone and Anne explains her reasoning, "I really didn't want to get tied down to one discipline. I really liked the business aspect of things, always having thought of myself as somewhat of an entrepreneur, but I wanted to keep my options open."

For most of us, this would be enough school for a long time, but not Annie, "While I am happy to have reached this milestone in life, I still don't feel like I'm finished with my professional education—there are lots of other opportunities out there for me to explore, and I am grateful that UINR is so encouraging of my studies and other training opportunities."

When asked what her future plans are, Annie elaborates, "Next on my list is the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association designation, Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager. I'd like to give special thanks to Charlie Dennis and UINR for encouraging me to continue with my studies even though I was at work. Through a lot of crazy work hours and prioritizing classes, exams, and meetings, I got it done."

Congratulations from everyone at UINR for your great accomplishment!

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## Two-eyed seeing



Cape Breton University was the host for a full-day workshop on two-eyed seeing in May and UINR was a major contributor for the event. Clifford Paul was the day's MC and he also gave a presentation on Indigenous Science. Albert Marshall gave a spirited presentation on two-eyed seeing from the perspective of a Mi'kmaq Elder with an emphasis on working together for the benefit of youth. The concept of two-eyed seeing was coined by Albert and it refers to learning to see Indigenous Science through one eye and Western Science through the other.

The workshop was attended by educators, Elders, scientists and students.

The workshop was attended by educators, Elders, scientists and students.

Left: Lindsay Marshall, Cheryl Bartlett, Right: Albert Marshall, Clifford Paul



# Changes at UINR

Charlie Dennis, Executive Director of UINR, has taken a leave of absence from his duties at the Institute. Recently elected as Chief of Eskasoni, he is unable to continue as Executive Director due to his commitments as Chief. He will, however, continue to be involved with UINR as a member of the Board of Directors and with other UINR initiatives.

The Board of Directors has appointed Lisa Young as Interim Executive Director. Lisa has been involved with UINR since its inception in 1999 and previously she held the positions of Director of Administration and General Manager. Before her involvement on the administrative side of things, Lisa worked as a biologist on many research projects on the Bras d'Or Lakes and on moose management in the Highlands. A graduate of York University, Lisa's interest in natural resources found a good match at UINR.

Lisa notes "I have been working with Charlie for almost 10 years and have learned a lot from him in that time. Charlie has built a strong team at UINR and has great confidence that things will continue to thrive while he is gone. I'm glad he is able to take the time that is needed to help revive his community as Chief and I am pleased to be able to help."

Chief Charlie Dennis had this to say, "Appointing Lisa as Interim Executive Director was an easy decision. She has been involved since day one, and I have always looked to Lisa for help and support over the years. I couldn't be more comfortable with leaving her in charge."

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**Mary Collier** Director of Administration **Dale Sylliboy** Forestry Technician

Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources is a natural resource management organization representing the five Unama'ki First Nation communities. One of our main activities is to promote and contribute to the understanding and protection of the environment in the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Our Board of Directors is comprised of the five Cape Breton Mi'kmaq Chiefs.

## Lisa pjila'si



Nipk, Summer is here! With the changing of the season, we are also seeing changes here at UINR. Charlie, our Executive Director, has taken a leave of absence from his position as he concentrates his energy on the job of Chief of Eskasoni. He will still be involved with UINR as a member of the Board of Directors and he will be active in many of the initiatives that he has contributed to over the years. Charlie and I have worked together closely over the years since UINR's establishment, and I think that while he is away I will carry on UINR's mandate to protect Unama'ki's natural resources.

I would like to welcome Mary Collier to the UINR team. Mary is taking over my position as Director of Administration and her years of experience with Potlotek Band Council should bode well in her new position. Dale Sylliboy has also returned to UINR after a brief break during the Stora Enso strike. Dale will be giving Mark a hand laying out areas for tree harvesting and supervising contractors in the upcoming season in the Highlands. While Dale was away, he completed a plumbing course at the Marconi campus of NSCC. Welcome back Dale!

As Mi'kmaq people we have not just the right, but the responsibility to ensure that we manage, use, and protect our natural resources for today and tomorrow's generations. UINR intends to emphasize these responsibilities in everything we do and we are planning to make a concerted effort to educate our people, especially our children, on the responsibilities that come along with our rights. Whether it is how to sustainably harvest smelt or keeping an eye on the moose herd in the Highlands, UINR will be there.

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# The Oyster Garden <sup>4</sup> 8

A Story by Charlie Dennis

Here is a story that's a bit different from the others that I've told in the past. My stories usually begin with facts and fishermen in Malagawatch. With this story, I'll throw you off a little and tell you about something a bit different. This is a story where you can definitely find Traditional Ecological Knowledge, or 'TEK,' whatever makes it easier.

My story begins when I was young, about nine or ten years old. It's one of those times when you take the lessons you were taught by your parents, the things that you never forget.

I'll describe two areas as closely as possible to you. You might be able to identify them if you live in Eskasoni, but it might be harder if you live elsewhere, unless you have access to aerial photos or even a map of Eskasoni.

The other factors we have to consider are the changes in the habitat, climate change, and rising sea levels. Oh yes, back to our story...Our story begins around the middle of May, when my father usually had our boat painted and all set for our daily ventures. After giving the last instructions to Mom, and my grandparents hollering to us to be careful (and my grandfather hollering to me to bring back some nice big oysters), and sailing or rowing a short distance, our adventure would begin.

Some of the instructions given to us were how to properly collect eggs. In this part of our adventure, it was time to go egg hunting. We were after Arctic Tern eggs, or 'Three Eggs,' as we used to call them as children, because they usually lay three eggs. The other name that First Nations people called them was 'Niktu'niej.' We were always instructed to leave some eggs, never to take more than two from a nest. We usually took only one egg from each nest we found, until we had just enough for ourselves, leaving enough for next year or for someone else.

The other instruction was to take a pot with you and try to sink the eggs, or to make sure the eggs sink. If the eggs float, you were to place the eggs back in the nest as soon as possible. After one hundred questions, we learned that floating eggs were too late to cook and the ones that sank were perfect.

After the egg collecting, it was time to cook. Boiled eggs were on the menu and were served with salt and pepper that my mother had carefully packed. Boiled eggs and bannock with some boiled tea—could not get any finer than that. After rolling in the sand because we had just finished stuffing ourselves, it was time to move on to the next leg of our journey.

Before we move on, before I forget, maybe a picture of the island should be mentioned. The picture here was taken in 1998. You notice we have lost the island, the sea level is continuing to rise even today.

Getting back to our story, the next leg of our journey was to harvest shellfish in Anslum Cove. We divided into two groups, some of us harvesting oysters along the beautiful pristine shoreline. I was usually on the task of harvesting oysters, which I loved so much. Maybe this was in the future for me, with all the stories I have told in previous instalments of our newsletter.

My mother and other members of the family would harvest clams and mussels. Once everything was harvested, consisting of the species mentioned, we'd make sure we had enough for shellfish stew back at home. The journey home was rapid because it didn't take that long for our Grandmother to cook the stew. She would cook enough just in case our neighbours came to visit, because everyone was always welcomed. We would all help shucking the shellfish, because refusing to do so would only mean that the stew would take longer. This wasn't the only reason though; togetherness and working together were strong, established factors back then.

The huge meal of shellfish stew and tea biscuits was something that anyone would enjoy. Of course, after the meal, listening to stories and the way things used to be was the highlight at the closing of the day.

Today, you wouldn't be able to harvest shellfish along the shoreline. All those areas for shellfish were closed due to sewage problems and other contaminants. Harvesting oyster in some areas, you might find that they're engulfed with the MSX parasite, and possibly others.

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# Mekwe'k kawatkw

Recently, UINR handed out over 300 mekwe'k kawatkw (red spruce) seedlings to students at the annual *Kids in the Forest* event in Whycocomagh. Blair Bernard and Clifford Paul met with students at the Provincial Park and talked to them about a wide range of natural resource issues important to Unama'ki Mi'kmaq.

Red spruce (*Picea rubens* Sarg.), a native tree of Nova Scotia, is one of the most important in our forests and is designated our Provincial Tree. Its seeds are an important source of food for small birds and mammals and, in winter, larger mammals eat the branches. The Mi'kmaq people used red spruce for medicine, crafts and fibre. As an added bonus, it was used to make spruce beer and the sap can be chewed as spruce gum. It is often used as a Christmas tree. Commercially, red spruce is used in paper making and is sometimes used in making high-end acoustic guitars. It is also used as lumber and in plywood.

Red spruce grows from eastern Quebec to Nova Scotia, and from New England to western North Carolina. Growing from 18-30 m high, red spruce has a trunk about 60 cm in diameter, but some have been known to grow to 46 m tall and 130 cm diameter! It grows slowly, living up to 350 years, and tolerates shade when young. It is often found in pure stands or mixed forests. It likes moist, well-drained, sandy soil and grows well at high altitudes.

Spruce budworm and acid rain are having a negative effect on the health of the red spruce. It can also be susceptible to damage by the eastern spruce beetle, European spruce sawfly, and yellow-headed spruce sawfly.

Once planted and given time, those trees distributed to the students will soon grow into Christmas trees!

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**"The Mi'kmaq are part of the earth, therefore we belong here as do the trees, plants and animals."**

**- Mi'kmaq Chief to Joseph Howe**

## Enhancing Our Community



If things look cleaner around Eskasoni these days, you can thank George Paul and his 12 workers for *Enhancing Our Community*. Since the middle of May, George and his team have tackled roadside, river, and shoreline cleanups, as well as Mountain Road.

Garbage is a concern in every community and Eskasoni's is major. At first, the problem seemed insurmountable. Then they came up with the Spring Cleanup Derby involving the whole community. Nearly 450 residents participated, collecting over 3000 bags of garbage in only two days!

Prizes were added incentive. The adults' grand prize of a 37-inch LCD TV went to Peter Denny who collected 125 bags. The kids' grand prize of a giant waterslide went to Byron Young. Honourable mention must also go to Joe Allan Francis and Joe Marshall who each collected over 100 bags. All the bags collected went to Guysborough to be incinerated.

A Tire Rally was also held, where people could drop off tires for recycling. Tommy Simon donated his tire de-rimmer and the team took off 200 rims in two days. 1845 tires were hauled away for recycling by Morris Trucking.

Through these efforts, the team has identified illegal dumping areas as a major concern, with Mountain Road as a prime example of putting the community at risk. Through public awareness, the team hopes to stop illegal dumping in Eskasoni with everyone taking responsibility for their own garbage and disposing of it properly.

George Paul sums it all up, "We practice our rights, let's practice our ways, be responsible, please do not litter."





Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources  
Moose Management Initiative

## Tiám update

Issues of moose management have been discussed amongst community members at sessions in practically all Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia. Sessions with Indianbrook, Glooscap, and Wagmatcook are planned.

"Information from these sessions are duly noted," Coordinator Clifford Paul explains, "The ability to successfully facilitate discussions on Mi'kmaq moose management shows that Mi'kmaq people take their role as stewards of the resource seriously."

Through community sessions, hunters, Elders, youth, and concerned residents are proud that the Mi'kmaq are providing positive changes combined with community-based input into the future Mi'kmaq management of the herd. The community-driven process is a vital component in the development of our Mi'kmaq Moose Management Plan. It must be designed so that it doesn't infringe upon Mi'kmaq treaty and aboriginal rights, or interfere with the integrity of the moose herd. The plan will represent a sustainable balance between these two factors.

### Mi'kmaq Natural Resource Officers Hired

As many hunters are aware, increased patrols and an increased Mi'kmaq presence in enforcement have brought significant changes to the Mi'kmaq moose harvest, especially as they pertain to hunter safety.

One of the positive outcomes of the increased patrols is the recognized need for Mi'kmaq Conservation Officers. In fact, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources recently hired three Mi'kmaq conservation officers to full-time positions within the department. Congratulations are extended to Conservation Officers Benedict Toney, Wekoqmaq, Bernie Sylliboy, Indianbrook, and Gary Lowe of Milton, on their appointments. (see page 2)

"Our reports have been that when a Mi'kmaq Conservation Officer is involved in dealings with Mi'kmaq hunters," Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn's Eric Zscheile observed, "a positive exchange and rapport is achieved. In other words, Mi'kmaq hunters feel more comfortable with Mi'kmaq Conservation Officers."

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## How bogs kill moose

Bear sign was plentiful as the three of us struggled, slashed, and made our way through thick alder, spruce and swampy areas deep within the plateau of the Cape Breton Highlands.

"That tells us we're near the bogs we are looking for," noted Tony Nette of NS Dept of Natural Resources'. The bogs are ones that moose tend to get trapped in—often with no escape.

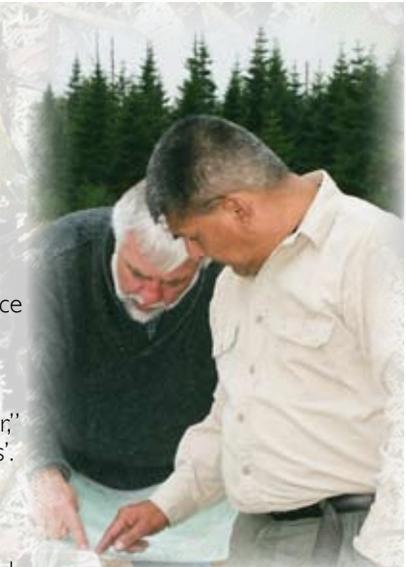
Accompanying Nette were myself (Clifford Paul) and Mi'kmaq archaeologist Roger Lewis from Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn. The area leading to the bogs was unbelievably thick—not designed for human feet to slish through—especially in mid-June when all the biting insects are very thirsty, moose are rearing their calves, and bear are nurturing their young.

Our mission was to photograph, search, and explore these bogs, to look for moose carcasses nearby, and to register the sites on Lewis' handy GPS device. More importantly, and from an archaeological perspective, our goal was to see if there were ancient Mi'kmaq encampments and sites near these bogs. As a matter of interest, the 4500-year old arrowhead found in the Highlands was within close proximity of the bogs. Certainly, fresh kills there may have provided the ancient Mi'kmaq harvester an easy source of meat. Future visits, and perhaps some test digs, may yield the results we are looking for.

These bogs are six to ten feet deep. When a moose steps into one of the pools—that's it! There is virtually no escape. The moose will only be able to use its front legs to escape, but evidence shows the attempts are futile as their sharp hooves just cut the peaty edge of the bog. The peat is not enough ground for the moose to climb out. They succumb to exhaustion and eventual drowning. Bears, coyotes, eagles, and other opportunists feed on the remains.

"We've known these have existed for some time. And one hunter came across these (floating) bogs and reported at least a dozen moose carcasses during last year's hunt." Nette explained. "It is a very interesting natural phenomena. One thing we did learn in our excursion, is we didn't see evidence of animals there in the spring. It is more likely an event that occurs in the late summer and fall."

Should anyone come across similar bogs in the Cape Breton Highlands, please report the location to Clifford Paul, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources 902 379 2163 or email me: clifford@uinr.ca.



## On a mission

Every year, on the last weekend in July, thousands of people gather on Chapel Island at Saint Anne's Mission—the longest continuous Mission in Canada. In addition to its religious importance, the Mission is a place where people gather to share news with other Mi'kmaq from around the region.

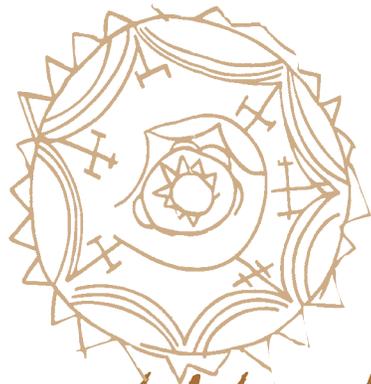
Over four thousand people are expected to attend the event this year, with people staying on the Island and on grounds on the mainland. Although the weekend is a positive and uplifting affair, it does have its dark side—every year the community is left to deal with mounds of garbage and recycling, sewage, and a stressed environment.

This year, Pitu'paq is working on a plan to address these environmental concerns. Pitu'paq is a partnership of the five First Nation Chiefs of Unama'ki and the five municipal Wardens and Mayors of Cape Breton, established to deal with sewage issues in the Bras d'Or Lakes. A planning team has been formed to oversee the Mission project that includes representation from the Mi'kmaq Grand Council—Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy, Grand Captain Andrew Denny and Captain John Duncan Johnson. Tahirih Paul and Barry Bernard are project coordinators.

Visitors to Chapel Island will see significant changes that will improve their Mission experience. A group of dedicated students have been hired and will play an active role in implementing these new, positive initiatives. When people arrive at the Mission, they will be greeted by the students distributing welcome kits with information on sewage, recycling, waste, and safe water plans. All trailers will require a permit with the \$20 fee directed toward the costs of cleanup and sewage and waste management.

The planning team is confident that this is a plan that will provide a cleaner, healthier experience and one that everyone will be happy to support—definitely, a Mission Possible!

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Chapel Island  
**MISSION**  
2007

## Monitoring efforts

UINR has teamed up with Natural Resource Officers (NROs) from Eskasoni, We'koqma'q, and Membertou to collect data on water temperature, salinity, oxygen, and secchi disk readings around the waters of Unama'ki this spring. These measurements will be taken from many different areas in the Lakes and the Mira River to address a number of concerns related to climate change and its impact on the state and composition of the waters' plants and animals, especially oyster population and transmission of MSX disease. A central database will be established at UINR to house this information.



## Gaspereau plan

Eskasoni currently has one commercial license for harvesting gaspereau (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) in the Bras d'Or Lakes. Gaspereau are harvested for bait for other fisheries, and commonly sold fresh but can be salted and sold for other markets. It has become an important source of income for some people in Eskasoni.

Over the past four years, UINR sampled this fishery and collected traditional knowledge from the fishers. Since the monitoring began, we noticed a change in catch composition. Fish are smaller, weigh less, and are spawning younger than fish from other areas, such as Margaree River. In 2005-2006, the majority of the landings were 3-year olds, many of which never spawned before. Since 2006, efforts have been on-going to improve the population structure. Last year, the season was reduced by one day for the 3-4 week fishery. This year, it was reduced to a 2-week fishery from 27 May-8 June. Over time, these efforts will help improve size and allow more gaspereau to spawn at least once before capture. This plan will continue until 2009.

We'koqma'q NROs also assisted UINR by taking samples from one of their community members who holds a gaspereau license. At present, Eskasoni is the only community that has active participation by fishers to develop a management plan.

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## Introducing The Superheroes of UINR

When the staff of UINR get together for their monthly staff meeting, everyone is so eager to talk about what's been going on for different projects... everyone has problems with different things, and one night while they were trying to work through things, still sitting at the staff meeting until the wee hours of the morning, something strange happened...

You'll find a mysterious masked superhero patrolling the highlands this summer looking out for our antlered friends...



The Environmentally-Aware Powers that be decided that they were going to let them take matters into their own hands!



Super Communications Man keeps us all in check with his high-tech comm-link heavy duty control center in the UINR batcave... er.. I mean, at the office... smart



The Fisheries & Research staff wants to tell kids not to fish just for fun! If you catch a fish and aren't interested in keeping it, throw it back!



So the next time you think about littering, abusing our natural resources or if you just need help planting a tree, remember that the superheroes of UINR will be watching!



Annie E. Johnson



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