

DECEMBER
2017

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

{{ECHO}} Update

Environment, Community, Health Observatory Network
Strengthening intersectoral capacity to understand
and respond to health impacts of resource development



(From left: Diana Kutzner; Sarah Skinner; Marieka Sax; Kate Snedeker; Chris Buse; Margot Parkes; Lars Hallstrom; Madeline Wilson; Barry Booth; Joseph Gothreau; Dar Amsalu)

Battle River Watershed Alliance and Northern BC Regional Case ECHO team members in Camrose, Alberta, on October 2nd, 2017.

Welcome to our quarterly ECHO update: December edition!

Our December update provides an overview of activities and insights gained by our regional case teams since September and how ECHO Network activities are shaping up across the Network, including with our collaborating teams at the international level. We hope you enjoy this newsletter and welcome suggestions for future updates!

Core team initiatives over the last three months of the ECHO Network:

Since our September update, our core ECHO Network team progressed a variety of activities, ranging from the structures and processes needed for multi-institutional research ethics, to firming up our multi-site governance structure, conducting entrance interviews with a core group of ECHO Network team members and planning ahead for project-wide and specific research projects.

- We have laid the foundation for our **ECHO Network Learning Community**. In August, we circulated and collected the ECHO Network Global Consent form. This step was enabled through the approval of the research ethics protocol for Phase 1 of the research work plan for the ECHO Network, for which UNBC will be the overall Board of Record. If you have any questions about this please contact Diana Kutzner (diana.kutzner@unbc.ca).
- **Welcoming core ECHO Network research staff:** Dr. May Farrales, Dr. Vanessa Sloan Morgan, and Dr. Ben Brisbois have officially come on board as Post-doctoral Fellows either supported by or linked to the ECHO Network. Our current ECHO Network 'core' research team is 15 members strong. May is leading the arts-based narrative / creative experience theme of ECHO, supported by the Health Arts Research Centre (HARC; <http://healtharts.ca/>) and ECHO; Vanessa is leading the entrance interviews as a foundational feature of our learning community; and Ben is advancing project outputs from the Health Impacts of Resource Extraction and Development (HIRED), linked to the network's Northern BC regional case.
- **Designing an ECHO Network Learning and Impact Framework:** We are committed to

establishing systems to track the learning and impact of the network, including inputs, outputs, research activities and agreed collective learning priorities relevant to the research objectives and outcomes of all components of our research. Tanis Hampe at Northern Health with assistance by Diana Kutzner, ECHO Research Manager, and the **Team Learning and Impact**, are leading the co-design of the overarching learning and impact framework for the ECHO Network, with input from across our team.

- **New ECHO Network website** –the new ECHO Network website is under active development! The new website address is www.echonetwork-reseaecho.ca and will be updated and populated with ECHO Network related news and materials for launch early in 2018. If you have suggestions or capacity that could contribute to the website, please let us know!
- **ECHO Network committees and working groups** are progressing different aspects of our ECHO Network workplan and objectives. Exciting cross-fertilization among the regional cases is happening through the Operations Committee, which has also trained on a monthly basis to become savvy Igloo users. ECHO Network oversight is happening through the Steering Committee meetings while shared interests are emerging and being pursued in Teams and Working Groups (WG) including the Team Equity, Team Watersheds, the Team Learning & Impact, the Research Design WG, and others, including 2018 exchanges between groups such as Team Data and Team GECHO (focused on Geospatial ECHO themes).
- Our monthly **ECHO Network Research Assistants** meetings are coordinated by Shayna Dolan, Research Assistant and Project Assistant to ECHO. These meetings enable an information exchange for the RAs but also an opportunity for RAs to engage in ECHO related training, for instance with regards to establishing an online reference database through.
- Upcoming primary research activities include **May Farrales's Arts-based Narrative research project** and our **ECHO Network survey**.
- Facilitating team collaboration across space and time, through the adoption of the Canadian-based digital platform known as **Igloo**, which we are currently customizing to our team's needs. Igloo will become our **collaborative online platform** for core ECHO Network research team members in early 2018.
- **Series of exchanges across regional cases** –in early October the Northern BC regional case team members had an opportunity to travel to the Battle River (see also BRWA update in this newsletter). In January 2018, Margot Parkes will be returning from her travel to **ECHO Network partners in Australia and New Zealand**. Exciting connections and potential exchanges of tools and processes with our international ECHO Network partners are already shaping up as a result of the travels.

ECHO preview: Upcoming meetings and events, involving or hosted by ECHO team members

We welcome team suggestions for future upcoming events and meetings. Please email ECHO Research Manager, Diana Kutzner at Diana.Kutzner@unbc.ca

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| January 18-19, 2018 | The UNBC Cumulative Impacts Research Consortium (CIRC), with support from the Environment, Community, Community Health Observatory (ECHO) Network and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), is a policy-focused forum . Detailed event description can be found at the following link: https://www.unbc.ca/events/45388/2018-circ-forum-january-18-19-2018 |
| July 30-Aug 1, 2018 | The ECHO Network Annual Meeting will be hosted by the University of Alberta and the Battle River Watershed Alliance in Camrose, Alberta. You should plan to arrive in Camrose on July 29th; the meeting is scheduled to end in the afternoon of Aug 1st. There may be opportunities for ECHO related team meetings on the following day(s); stay tuned for further details! |
| August 15-18, 2018 | Some ECHO Network team members are looking ahead to the 7 th biennial conference of the International Association for Ecology and Health in Cali Columbia; see also http://ecohealth2018.co/ . Abstracts deadline is at the end of December 2017. |
| <u>Looking ahead</u>
April 7-11, 2019 | This event in Rotorua, Aotearoa New Zealand, may be an opportunity for exchanges with Oceania ECHO groups: 23rd IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion "Waiora: Promoting Planetary Health and Sustainable Development for All". http://www.iuhpe2019.com/ |
| Summer 2019 (dates tbc) | The next ECHO Network Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Université de Moncton and NBEN in New Brunswick. dates will be identified and announced as soon as possible. |

New Brunswick Regional Update

Upon her arrival to the team in September, New Brunswick Environmental Network's new Research Coordinator, Ariane Juneau-Godin, dove right into the organization of the annual conference of the **Children's Environmental Health Collaborative (CEHC)**, which was held on November 28th, 2017 in New Maryland, New Brunswick. The Conference was titled: **"A Tale of Two Necessities: Children and Resources Development"** and aimed to look into the impacts of resource development on children's health (see also here for an overview of the event <http://nben.ca/en/tale-of-two-necessities-children-and-resource-development>).



Session participants at the CEHC Annual Conference, Nov 28th

This year's conference theme was chosen in part to integrate ECHO's concepts within the CEHC. We were able to welcome Dr. Céline Surette, from the Université de Moncton, who gave an interactive workshop which led participants to reflect on their connection to their watershed, as well as Dr. Donald Cole from the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, who spoke about the importance of applying the precautionary principle when addressing issues relating to cumulative effects impacts of resource development on health. We also had the pleasure to hear from Marjorie McGibbon, RN and Paediatric Oncology Patient Navigator for one of New Brunswick's two health authorities, on the topic of children's vulnerability to environmental exposure and the importance of looking at children's health from a global health perspective. The recent reorganization of the province of New-Brunswick's Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health has had a significant impact on the state of Public Health in the province, as well as on the work of the CEHC.

Lastly, NBEN has recently created a new Environmental Rights Caucus comprised of environmental groups, which will be advocating for the passing of an Environmental Bill of Rights at the provincial Legislative Assembly. We hope the upcoming 2018 provincial election will be fertile ground to raise awareness towards this issue among candidates and MLAs. Finally, the research team has recently added a new member to its team—Anne Fauré, a Post-doctoral Fellow, has started to conduct several ECHO Network Entrance Interviews and began to compile a literary review geared on cumulative impacts.

Greetings from the Battle River Watershed Alliance (BRWA)!

The Battle River Watershed Alliance has had an exciting fall, with many projects on the go!

We hosted an engaging and informative **"Finding Common Ground" bike tour** from September 5-7th, which included visits to many energy and resource development hubs in our watershed. Discussions centred around the question of how we "power our way forward", and touched on the complex ways in which economic, community, and ecological considerations inform how we approach energy options and opportunities in our watershed. We are currently developing a **"how-to" guide** to provide ECHO Network partners with insight into the process we undertook to plan and implement the bike tour.



We were happy to host many members of the BC ECHO Team in Camrose on October 2nd. The morning included lively discussions about **"state of the watershed"** reporting and indicator development, experiential education connections

between AB and BC, and other ECHO-related work. In the afternoon, the team ventured out into the snowy weather for a mini-tour of the watershed.

ECHO Network Research Assistant Dar Amsalu has been working to pull together information on the plethora of environment, community, and health data sets available in Alberta and across Canada, which will help inform our work of developing a more robust watershed health indicator framework. Dar is also undertaking a literature review to investigate potential linkages between cancer and drinking water contamination in Canada and the US. This information will support future work with Alberta Health Services.

Looking ahead to the new year, the BRWA is planning to host two **Municipal Watershed Forums** in March 2018 to connect with new and returning municipal staff and councillors following the October 2017 Alberta elections. This will be an opportunity to update municipalities on the BRWA's current work and discuss possibilities for future work and partnerships. We look forward to working with ECHO team members to incorporate environment, community, and health discussions into these forums.



ECHO team members meeting the Battle River on a snowy October morning: from left, Joseph Gothreau, Barry Booth, Dar Amsalu, Lars Hallstrom, photographer.

Updates from First Nation Health Authority Regional Case

The BC Hub for the **Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network** has hosted a few more great monthly webinars since our last update. The most recent webinar's focus was on "**LEO in the Classroom**". Tracey Murphy, a social studies teacher with Saanich School District on Vancouver Island, shared her experience of introducing the LEO Network to her grade 10 class. Her class has just begun to dive into the LEO Network and the benefits of using this platform are already being identified.

A few examples of these benefits are that the students are learning new skills, learning and engaging with the Elders in their communities and the LEO Network is providing a platform for teachers to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into their curriculum. It is very exciting to see how this work will progress over the school year! The webinar session was recorded so if you are keen to listen to the session please email Dionne Sanderson at Dionne.Sanderson@fnha.ca.

Our regional case team had our first meeting in early October and we are having our second meeting in the middle of December. FNHA has been working on the development of an **ecological indicator for health** and the approval of overarching research ethics related to the ECHO Network project. Jordan Brubacher, Research Assistant working with our regional case, has been creating great GIS visualizations (i.e. maps) exploring the anthropogenic exposures on the environment for potential use in environmental health research.

Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network

the eyes, ears and voice of environmental change

Register for free and explore at:
www.leonetnetwork.org

For more information, contact
Thomas.Okey@gmail.com
or
Dionne.Sanderson@fnha.ca



The LEO Network BC hub has monthly webinars with guest presenters.

Updates from Northern BC Regional Case

Throughout the fall, the UNBC Cumulative Impacts Research Consortium (CIRC) had the opportunity to facilitate a workshop session with members of the **Nechako Watershed Roundtable** Core Committee. This workshop focused on discussing land-use planning that promotes the long-term health of ecosystems and communities and, importantly, involves communities in planning and decision-making processes. We also facilitated a community workshop in Fort Nelson, in which we presented a suite of publicly available information into a **“regional profile”** displaying socioeconomic, health and environmental indicators for the Northern Rockies Region. In addition to getting feedback on the usefulness of this tool, and the ways in which it complements ongoing processes in the Northern Rockies, workshop attendees shared stories in relation to the connections between environment, community, health and resource development.

In September, members of the CIRC team attended and presented at the **RAIL Commons conference in Olds, Alberta**, before travelling on to tour the Battle River Watershed with members of the BRWA-ECHO contingent. CIRC, with the support of ECHO and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), is in the process of planning a policy-oriented symposium in Prince George on January 18-19, 2018. This event will provide an opportunity to convene conversations with people and organizations interested in and actively working on issues related to the myriad impacts of resource development throughout northern BC.

Northern Health and the First Nations Health Authority held a series of community engagement sessions in Fall 2015 exploring health and community impacts in relation to resource extraction and development, and recently released a report summarizing our findings (available at: <http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Northern-First-Nations-Caucus-Overview-Fall-2015-Full-Report.pdf>). The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly rich and insightful, and the report highlights a number of challenges, opportunities and best practices that exist in this area.

Updates from the ‘emerging’ Oceania Regional Case

The Oceania region provides a focus for international learning and exchange as our ECHO Network develops. To progress this opportunity, project co-lead Margot Parkes has engaged in collaborative activities with members of the ECHO Network in Aotearoa/New Zealand (with Helen Moewaka Barnes, and other members of the Te Aho Tapu team of the Nga Pae o te Maramatanga/Maori Centre of Research Excellence, including Garth Harmsworth, Gail Tipa, Wendy Henwood, Tim McCreanor) and Australia (with Pierre Horwitz, Anthony Capon, and other members of the Oceania Ecohealth Chapter). Activities in Oct-Dec 2017 have underscored fertile ground for sharing and exchange of ECHO Network tools and processes. Specific examples arising from site visits throughout the region include:

- Cross-sectoral and intercultural lessons from the Peel Harvey Catchment Council, Western Australia, including Indigenous knowledge-holders involvement in catchment restoration and management, and integrative modeling of environment, community, health impacts of wildfires following the 2016 fires in the catchment;
- Applications for ECHO-related geospatial tools (a combination of the UNBC Watershed portal and LEO Network tools) to support Maori-led initiatives that respond to cumulative impacts of hydro-electric development, forestry and intensification of agriculture, such as in the Waitaki Catchment. Plans to trial the geospatial portal tool with ECHO collaborators in NZ are proposed for early 2018.
- Maori-led wetland restoration and catchment management initiatives in response to cumulative land and water challenges that affect communities, environments and health. Site visits in Waikato and Northland regions demonstrated Indigenous-led examples of “taking notice for action” in ways that connect sectors and cultural priorities, and foster healthy livelihoods, living systems and lifestyles.
- Opportunities to connect across Canadian and Oceania regional cases will continue to be explored and profiled in future ECHO updates. Opportunities for **international exchanges** among early career researchers and learners is a clear priority, including planning in advance for these in relation to upcoming events and activities (see ECHO Preview, p.2).



From left: Margot Parkes, Chris Buse, Joseph Gothreau, and Marieka Sax—representing “ECHO” in human form on their way to Olds, AB.



ECHO team members (Margot Parkes, Pierre Horwitz) are welcomed to Rukumona Marae as part of a launch and site-visit of wetland restoration initiative involving ECHO collaborators at Manaaki Whenua/Landcare Research, working with the Ngāti Hauā Mahi Trust.

ECHO Team Member Profiles

Ariane Juneau-Godin - NBEN Regional Coordinator

In September, the New Brunswick Environmental Network hired its new Environmental Health Programs Coordinator. **Ariane Juneau-Godin** has been working in various community organizations over the past 10 years, and is currently completing her Masters in Environmental Studies at the Université de Moncton. She was very happy to join the team and take on her new position within the NBEN and as the Regional Coordinator for the ECHO Network.



Post-doctoral Fellow: May Farrales

May Farrales received her PhD in Geography at the University of British Columbia. May studied the sexualities of Filipino/as in Canada through ethnographies of Filipinos on and in relation to the unceded and traditional lands of the



Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. She explains how the Philippines and Canada's colonial conditions influence how they articulate their sexualities. May's research and teaching interests are in thinking at the nexus of race, gender and sexuality through the prism of different forms of colonialism.

May is involved in the ECHO project's arts-based and narrative inquiry. Working in collaboration with the Health Arts Research Centre, arts-based methods will be used in the ECHO Network as one way to track how the network is engaging in intersectoral understandings and responses that address the cumulative health impacts of resource development. She is also involved in the network's Equity team.

Post-doctoral Fellow: Vanessa Sloan Morgan

Vanessa's research interests lie at the entanglements of humans with lands, and how the structures that shape our lives impact these relations. Growing up on Vancouver Island and living, most recently, on Coast Salish territories in Vancouver, BC, Vanessa's disciplinary background is in human geography and environmental studies. Since November 2017, Vanessa has been a Postdoctoral Fellow with the ECHO Network and is conducting entrance interviews with key ECHO members to begin exploring the Network's learning process. Vanessa will return to Prince George in January 2018 to also expand on how youth are engaged in the ECHO Network.



UNBC Undergraduate Student: Alex MacDonald



Alex is an undergraduate student in her third year at the University of Northern British Columbia working towards her Bachelor of Health Science majoring in Community and Population: Environmental Health. Born and raised in a small town in British Columbia she became interested in the relationship between health and the environment. As soon as she graduated she followed her passion to Prince George to begin her studies in Health Science. Alex started working with the ECHO Network in late October as a Research Assistant at the University of Northern British Columbia. Alex is supporting the ECHO Network Research Manager with various critical tasks related to building the ECHO Network's various research learning and impact as well as reference databases, website design, ECHO Network member distribution

lists, creating ECHO Network updates such as this one, and other activities as needed. Alex also supports research activities under the umbrella of Margot Parkes' CRC portfolio.