



Annual Report 2007-2008

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1 Message from the President

Welcome to all of our new members! CMI's ranks have grown considerably this past year, with our individual members surpassing the 100 mark. Our corporate membership has also swelled impressively. I will look forward to interacting with this larger group during the activities in the coming year. However, our past year deserves some reflection here, as there were many interesting outcomes.

A year after a Director's workshop in Nelson to brainstorm the society's purpose, goal, and associated objectives, we have emerged with a revitalized set of statements to help guide the organization's direction in the upcoming years. I will take the opportunity here to thank all the CMI Directors for their continued commitment and effort in making the Institute a relevant and important promoter of ecological knowledge and improved management in the region. I hope you can take a moment to read through these statements (see page four) and think about how well they align with your impression of CMI's role.

Our last CMI Annual Researchers' Meeting and AGM at Radium Hot Springs in early May reflected our theme for our year. The research presented at this meeting highlighted a variety of regional and local restoration projects in which members have been involved. The end of the meeting was capped off with Dave Sunbo's excellent field tour of Parks Canada's ongoing restoration of the forest surround the Redstreak Campground area on the mountain bench above the town of Radium.

Later on in the year, CMI partnered with the BC chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration in presenting a much larger conference called *Ecological Restoration in Southeastern BC: Grasslands to Mountaintops*. This event was held in Cranbrook and fully subscribed at 180 participants. It featured wide-ranging examples of restoration work undertaken by academics, students, consultants, government land managers, and larger private corporations in the region. CMI organised a hands-on course in soil bioengineering, instructed by David Polster, which preceded the Cranbrook meeting. David's excellent course will also precede our 2008 Annual Researchers' Meeting in Revelstoke.

CMI offered several opportunities to explore statistical software over the year. Dr. Joseph Thorley taught three introductory courses on using R software. This is an open source, free statistical language that is very powerful and supports a wide variety of methods used by ecologists. Joseph's courses smooth out the steep learning curve associated with command line software interface. If you are interested in learning how to use R, I highly recommend Joseph's introduction.

On a similar note, Dr. Carl Schwarz presented an excellent course on the design and analysis of mark-recapture studies, in November in Revelstoke. As always, Carl's course received much acclaim, and we hope to have him back to teach similar statistical courses in the future.

Brendan Wilson
President
Columbia Mountains Institute

2 Operations of the Columbia Mountains Institute

2.1 About the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology

The purpose of the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology is to improve ecological management by increasing and sharing knowledge about the ecology of the Columbia Mountains and regional ecosystems.

The CMI was incorporated as a society in 1996, and is based in Revelstoke, British Columbia. The society is directed by a maximum of fifteen Board members. An Executive Director supports the Board on a contractual basis. The CMI retains the services of a bookkeeper and a webmaster.

2.2 Board of Directors for 2007-2008

Executive	
Brendan Wilson, President	Selkirk College
Ian Parfitt, Vice President	Selkirk College
Del Williams, Treasurer	Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation
Susan Hall, Secretary	Parks Canada
Directors	
Doug Adama	BC Hydro
Ian Adams	Corvus Communications
Martin Carver	Ministry of Environment
Patrick Daigle	BC Ministry of Environment
Jenny Feick	BC Ministry of Environment
Rachel Holt	Veridian Ecological Consulting
Mike Miller	Consultant
Chris Steeger	Pandion Ecological Research
Staff	
Jackie Morris	

Directors' meetings were usually held on the second Thursday each month with the exception of July and August. Minutes of meetings are on record at the CMI office.

2.3 Policies and guidelines for the CMI

This year the CMI Directors re-visited the society's purpose, goal, and objectives. The CMI has dropped the "research" objective, and although we still support researchers in many ways, we will no longer be directly involved with research projects. The revised information is presented here.

CMI Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

Ratified March 13, 2008 by CMI Directors

CMI Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology is to improve ecological management by increasing and sharing knowledge about the ecology of the Columbia Mountains and regional ecosystems.

CMI Goal

Our goal is to foster collaboration on, and provide communication and education in support of, scientific research on key ecological themes within the Columbia Mountains and regional ecosystems.

CMI Objectives

CMI Objective #1

To guide CMI actions and priorities, the most pressing ecological themes for this region will be identified annually.

CMI Objective #2

Facilitate the communication and sharing of knowledge related to the chosen ecological themes.

CMI Objective #3

Offer continuing education and skill development opportunities to support communication, collaboration, and scientific research related to the chosen ecological themes.

CMI Objective #4

Encourage and support scientific research that will further knowledge, and applications of that knowledge related to the chosen ecological themes.

CMI Objective #5

Collaborate with other agencies and individuals to advance the objectives of the CMI.

CMI Objective #6

Continue to be a financially sound and well-managed society.

The Directors developed a Policy for Nominating and Selecting CMI Directors, and it was ratified on March 13, 2008. This Policy supplements the requirements of our bylaws.

As required by our bylaws, the Directors set the quorum for conducting business at a Directors' meeting. Four Directors are required for routine business, and six are required for significant decisions. Routine business includes tasks such as review of committee reports, review of regular financial statements, and minor administrative matters. "Significant" tasks are activities such as approving annual budgets, major financial decisions, approving changes to CMI goals and objectives, screening of Board nominees, and appointing of Directors to the Board.

Members wishing to review these documents are welcome to request a copy from the CMI office.

2.4 Membership of the CMI

The Columbia Mountains Institute ended the year with 102 individual members (up 28% from last year), and 40 corporate members (up 38% from last year). Over 340 people receive the CMI emailed updates directly at their computers. The updates are circulated further within the corporate memberships.

CMI corporate members for 2007-2008

- BC Hydro, Generation Environment, Burnaby office
- BC Hydro, Columbia Basin Generating Area
- Canadian Mountain Holidays
- City of Revelstoke
- College of the Rockies
- Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission
- Columbia Basin Trust
- Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority
- Denbow
- Dillon Consulting
- Downie Timber
- DWB Forestry Services Ltd.
- EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd.
- Forest Extension and Research Partnership
- FortisBC
- Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier
- Golder Associates, Calgary

- Golder Associates, Castlegar
- Golder Associates, Edmonton
- Guide Outfitters Association of BC
- Integrated Land Management Bureau, Kootenay Region.
- Interior Reforestation
- Ministry of Environment, Kootenay Region, Fish and Wildlife Branch
- Ministry of Environment, Ecosystems Branch, Victoria Office
- Ministry of Environment, Environmental Stewardship Division , Cranbrook office
- Ministry of Forests and Range, Integrated Resources Section
- Ministry of Forests Research Branch, Victoria office
- Ministry of Forests and Range Tree Improvement Branch
- Minto Manor Bed and Breakfast
- Okanagan College
- Parks Canada, Calgary Office
- Parks Canada, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks
- Parks Canada, NT and YK
- Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation
- Selkirk College, School of Renewable Resources
- Summit Environmental Consultants Ltd.
- Tembec Forest Industries
- West Fraser Mills
- University of BC Okanagan
- Wildsight

2.5 Supporters of the CMI for 2007-2008

The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology gratefully acknowledges the financial and in-kind support of agencies that partner with us to make our events and our projects a success. The generosity of these agencies is recognized in the information about each past conference at the CMI website (www.cmiae.org).

We also acknowledge the large number of volunteer hours contributed to the CMI by our Board of Directors, and by the members of the organizing committees for our various events. These people keep us well connected to ecological issues in southeastern BC. The CMI continues to be effective because of their willingness to contribute time and expertise.

Our Contribution Agreement with Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks continued into the third year of the five year Agreement. This includes \$3000 in

annual financial support. Our two agencies share overlapping mandates and there are opportunities to work together to achieve better environmental management in the region.

2.6 Administration of CMI

The society continues to contract to Jackie Morris for the purposes of running the affairs of the society and coordinating all aspects of our events. Jackie is supported by Kathryn Tompkins, bookkeeper, and Evan Batke, web master.

3 Activities of the Columbia Mountains Institute

3.1 Continuing education

Workshops and Courses

A major goal of the CMI is to identify current ecological issues, then host workshops or courses to address these issues. The following events were held in 2007-2008. More details about each of these events, a list of event partners and supporters, and conference summaries (=“proceedings”) are available on the CMI website in the “Past Events” section. Conference and course evaluation forms were collected and, for the conferences, summarized in the conference summaries.

CMI Annual Researchers' Meeting and AGM

May 5-6, 2007

Seniors' Hall, Radium Hot Springs, BC

Every year CMI members get together to provide updates on their projects, catch up on the news, and hear about new ecological initiatives in southeastern British Columbia. This year, in addition to the regular assortment of talks, we highlighted habitat restoration activities in the East Kootenays. About 35 people attended this meeting at the Seniors' Hall in Radium. Presentations were held all day on Saturday, May 5 and on the morning of Sunday, May 6. Field trips were held in the afternoon of May 6. Thirty-eight people attended the meeting. Not all could stay for the second day.

Introduction to Using “R” Software

Prestige Inn, Nelson BC

This course was offered three times this year: May 8-9, 2007

May 15-16, 2007

September 25-26, 2007

This two-day course introduced users to R software, so that they were able to begin performing statistical analyses and plotting graphs on their own. The course was suitable for individuals who have never used R before as well R-users looking to consolidate their understanding of the basics. R is a free programming environment for statistical analyses and graphics that is becoming increasingly popular among numerical biologists. R is extremely powerful, can be readily extended to non-standard methods through the downloading of packages, and runs on a wide variety of operating systems (www.r-project.org). The course was taught by Dr. Joseph Thorley, R.P.Bio. (Poisson Consulting Ltd.). The class

size was limited to 8 people per class. Twenty-two people took the course over the three offerings.

Soil Bioengineering Course

October 10-11, 2007

Prestige Inn, Cranbrook BC

This event was co-hosted by the CMI and the BC Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration. It was held immediately before the ecological restoration conference. This two day course was taught by David Polster of Polster Environmental Services, to 32 participants. David discussed soil bioengineering techniques and options involved in restoration and reclamation of damaged ecosystems, using a combination of structural materials, vegetative cuttings, and other specialized techniques. Soil bioengineering is an applied science that uses live plant materials to perform an engineering function such as slope stabilization, soil erosion control, or seepage control. The first day of the course was a classroom session and the second day was hands-on project in the field.

Ecological Restoration in Southeastern BC: Grasslands to Mountaintops

October 11-13, 2007

Prestige Inn, Cranbrook BC

This event was co-hosted by the CMI and the BC Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration. Registrations were capped at a full house of 180 people.

Southeastern British Columbia is a hotbed for ecological restoration. We listened as eighteen speakers and two evening speakers told us about new initiatives, restoration activities, and research in the region. Posters, displays, four field trips, and opportunities for informal networking add to the exchange of knowledge.

Themes covered at this conference included:

- Restoration of grasslands and forests at different elevations
- Rehabilitation of mine spoils
- Restoration of wetland and aquatic features.

Managing Environmental Impacts of Linear Corridors and Infrastructure

November 7-8, 2007

Revelstoke Community Centre, Revelstoke BC

This event was the sixth in our series of conferences addressing the environmental management of corridors. Previously known as the “Roads and Rails” series, this year we expanded the theme to include all types of corridors. At this workshop we examined problems and solutions related to environmental management of linear corridors and related infrastructure. The following topics were addressed:

- Update on regulatory requirements and standards
- Corridors and wildlife – reducing mortality, etc.
- Project planning and management – case studies, cumulative impacts
- Right of way management – vegetation, etc.
- Emergency response: prevention, planning, and preparedness.

November 7 included a full day of presentations and opportunities for discussion, followed by a reception at the Revelstoke Railway Museum. On November 8, presentations continued until about noon. Posters and displays were on display in the conference room for the duration of the workshop. About 130 people attended the conference.

Design and Analysis of Mark-Recapture Studies

November 20-22, 2007

Coast Hillcrest Hotel, Revelstoke BC

Our instructor for this course was Dr Carl Schwarz, Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science, Simon Fraser University. The course examined common mark-recapture methods. While the focus was on methods commonly used in fisheries management, the methodology presented is suitable for many other situations as well. Aspects of study design (e.g. sample size) and the analysis of the final results will be presented. The course consisted of theory and worked examples, using mostly MARK. An overview of methods coming in the future was also presented. There was an opportunity for participants to work through their own projects. Class size was limited to 16 people.

In 2007-2008, preparations began for the following events to be held in the next fiscal year.

- Soil Bioengineering course (repeat) April 28-29, Revelstoke
- CMI Annual Researchers' Meeting, May 1, Revelstoke
- Introduction to R software course, May 28-29, 2008
- Soil Bioengineering course (repeat) fall 2008
- Invasive Plants Management course, fall 2008 (David Polster)
- Environmental planning for wildland / urban interface fires, November 2008, Cranbrook
- Ecosystem Services, spring 2009

We anticipate hosting more of Dr. Schwarz's courses as his schedule permits.

3.2 Supporting applied ecological research

CMI email bulletins

The CMI's email bulletins provide members with updates on CMI news, funding sources, websites, new documents, job postings, workshops, and other topics of interest to researchers in the field of applied ecology. Information is sent as a monthly or bi-monthly bulletin. Twelve bulletins were sent in 2007-2008, plus assorted announcements for events. A print archive of the emails is maintained at the CMI office, and an on-line archive of these bulletins is available on the CMI website. Bulletins are sent to over 340 people, and distributed further within the networks of our corporate members.

CMI web site (www.cmiae.org)

The CMI website continues to provide information on current ecological issues to members and the general public. Members and Directors think of the web site as a tool for delivering information to adult resource managers and scientists and indeed it is used for this. However looking at our web site statistics for the web site files that are downloaded most often, it is clear that the web site is also supplying good information at the layman level. Of the twenty files that were downloaded most often in 2007, ten of them were natural history articles provided by Michael Morris of Parks Canada.

Our web server reports statistics on monthly and annual reports. The numbers here are from the annual report, which is January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007 (not quite the same as our fiscal year).

	2007	2006	% Change
Unique visitors	52 574	56 513	-7%
Total visitors, some were repeats	72 345	74 633	-3%

There is no apparent reason for there being fewer downloads in 2007 than in 2006.

The CMI produces a text summary of presentations after every event (not courses). These are made available on our website; thus the information from the events is available to a much wider spectrum of people than were able to attend the events.

- The conference summary for the Ecological Restoration conference was posted in mid-March, and by April 25, had received **157** downloads. (The document receives additional downloads directly from the web site of the BC Chapter for the Society of Ecological Restoration.)

- The Linear Corridors conference summary was posted in late March, and by April 25, had received **202** downloads. Both documents were sent to the BC Ministry of Forests and Range and Ministry of Environment libraries, where they will also be downloaded.

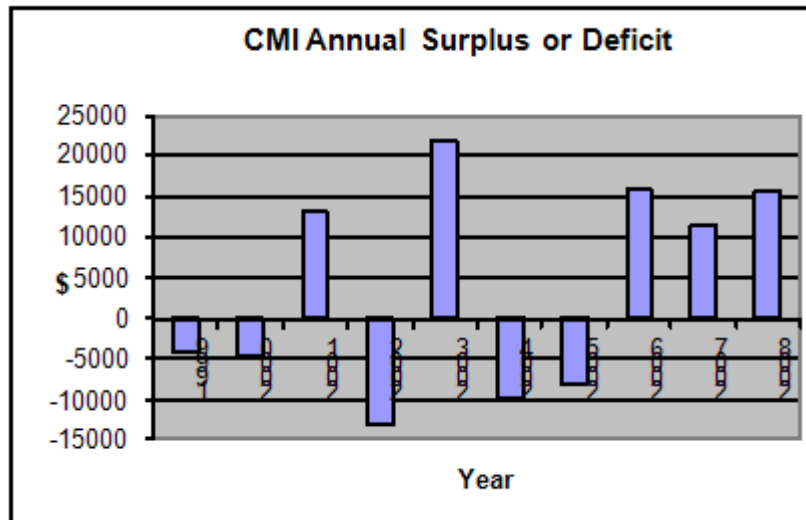
3.3 Collaboration

This year was the second year of a five year Contribution Agreement with Parks Canada (Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks). Parks Canada contributed \$3000 to CMI's operating budget. The two agencies share a common goal of improving environmental management in this region.

CMI's conferences are a success because of collaborative efforts by government and private agencies. In-kind and financial support from these partners enables our events serve the needs of these agencies, CMI members, and the greater public. A list of partners and funders appears on the reports for each past event on the CMI web site.

4 Preface to Financial Statement

The un-audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008 report a net surplus of \$15,585 on total expenditures of \$145,706. This brings our accumulated surplus to over \$61,153. We had cautiously predicted a small deficit for 2007-2008, but healthy attendance at our events, fundraising efforts for some of these events, and careful cost control has provided CMI with a surplus for the third year in a row. We are now in a healthier financial position with which to continue our mandate.



Year-end surplus/deficit for CMI between 1999 and 2008

Operating funds for CMI come primarily from conference and course proceeds, and membership fees. Fees are kept as low as possible and smaller events usually operate on a break-even or produce only small surpluses. Larger events bring the potential of larger surpluses, but also carry the risk of larger deficits should attendance not be as high as anticipated. CMI was quite active this year with two well-attended, large events (*Managing Environmental Impacts of Linear Corridors and Infrastructure*, and *Ecological Restoration in Southeastern BC*) and several courses contributing to our surplus.

Our members and our volunteer Board of Directors continue to keep us in touch with current ecological issues and skill development needs—this is what keeps our events relevant and well attended. The support of our partners and event sponsors is also acknowledged as important to our society's financial standing.

Del Williams
Treasurer
Columbia Mountains Institute

*The Financial Statement is not attached.
Please contact the CMI office for a copy.*