

Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program



Fraser Basin Council



2009/10 FINAL REPORTS

FSWP File Number* 09 LR 104 EE

* Please use the FSWP File Number provided in previous FSWP project correspondence.

1. Project Information

1.1. Project Title

Spawning Stories, Hatching Change

1.2. Proponent's Legal Name

Scout Island Nature Centre

1.3. Project Location

1305A Borland Rd, Williams Lake BC, V2G 5K5

1.4. Contact for this report

Name: Sue Hemphill

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1.5 Funding Amount

Original Approved Grant Amount:	Total FSWP Expenditures:	Final Invoice Amount:	Final Non-FSWP leveraging, including cash and in-kind:
\$12,445.00	\$12,444.17	\$2,489	\$ 11,100

2. Project Summary

Please provide a single paragraph describing your project, its objectives, and the results. As this summary may be used in program communications, clearly state the issue(s) that were addressed and avoid overly technical descriptions. Maximum 300 words.

With "Spawning Stories, Hatching Change" we sought to take social marketing a step beyond the usual. Instead of developing and disseminating messages to an audience, we wanted to empower ordinary rural people to tell their own stories of what they connect with in the watershed, what they worry about, and what they are doing about it. What better way to counteract feelings of hopelessness and helplessness that oppress people in so many walks of life?

Realizing that the love of nature is what brings most people to environmental action, we took people into our local watershed on a variety of field trips. These experiences had a teaching component of course, but aimed primarily to encourage participants to notice what moves and engages them. Discussion followed to elicit ideas on what might threaten these elements and how human behaviour needs to change in order to protect them. We asked each participant to commit in writing to a realistic personal behaviour change (Ecoprint pledge).

A variety of mentored opportunities encouraged them to convey their experience and message to others in their own words, coming from their own perspective and heart. Some of the resulting stories are being shared with our community through an Earth Day supplement in our local newspaper (tentative), and at our AGM.

We feel other rural communities will find this process exciting and valuable. To help them, we are preparing a digital package describing the process, discussing what was most successful and what we would do differently, and sharing selected stories and Ecoprint pledges. They can download the package from our website or we can supply it on CD.

We've come to view this as a pilot project and will be using what we've learned to build story-making into future education programs at the Nature Centre.

OPTIONAL Please give a short statement (up to 100 words) of the most compelling activity or outcome from your project.

Exploring the river valley with 10 young women in Grade 8-9, we were delighted by their eagerness to wade right into the water to help Roy from DFO spread his nets, to let a garter snake twine around their wrists, to follow an ant back to its nest. Most touching, though, was their genuine distress at the human-caused damage they could see even amid the beauty they perceived. They decided then and there to tell an honest story, portraying the bleak future they feel is a very real possibility. Though their dramatization piece never came to fruition, they wrote a script of great integrity and impact. (See marketing package on cd sent separately)

3. Final Project Results and Effectiveness

3.1 Copy EXPECTED OUTCOMES from your detailed proposal and insert into this section. Add additional rows as needed. Then please list the FINAL OUTCOMES (the tangible end products resulting from this work) associated with expected outcome.

If FINAL OUTCOMES differ from the original EXPECTED OUTCOMES please describe why, and the implications for the project.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	FINAL OUTCOMES
1. To guide participants into the wonders and mysteries of nature and educate them about their role in this natural community through fieldtrips that engage mind, emotions and spirit.	May 2009 – <u>Drama Group field trip to River Valley</u> : Ten Grade 8-9 drama students dipped for aquatic invertebrates, released fish into the river, and did nature exercises in the forest. They were led by Sue and Roy Argue (DFO). Then their drama teacher Sidone Boll led a discussion of what was important to them about nature and how they would portray their concerns and experiences. (see script in marketing

	<p>package)</p> <p>May-June 2009 and Jan-March 2010 – <u>Class programs at Scout Island Nature Centre</u> Six high school and eight elementary classes comprising 225 students spent 3-4 hours at Scout Island. After guided walks and nature games (see marketing package for outline), they returned to the Nature House for story-writing exercises that helped them develop stories related to their experiences.</p> <p>July 2009 – <u>Family excursion to the River Valley</u> Guy Scharf (DFO) taught 21 enthusiastic people how to net fish. Along the way, he pointed out what makes a healthy watershed and how the ecosystem can be protected. Participants were invited to the writing and song workshops.</p> <p>July 2009 – <u>Elders' Gathering with Xeni Gwet'in (Nemiah Band) at Big Onion Lake</u> Eight adults, including coordinator Jenny Noble, attended the 3-day multi-generational teaching camp where skills of the nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle were celebrated and taught. The web of life in the watershed was honoured in all the proceedings, and the native people's intimate knowledge of the landscape inspired several who attended the writing and song-writing workshops. We especially appreciated this immersion in First Nations' culture, as the mentor we had planned to work with, Lois Williams, was unavailable at the times we needed her.</p> <p>Sept 5-15, 2009 – <u>Riverside Walks at Horsefly River Salmon Festival</u> -- Walks for all ages were held on the 2 days of Weekend Festival (53 people). In addition, 1000 students took part in walks and other activities as part of the four-day Festival School program. Ideas of how humans fit in the watershed and the effects of their Eco Print on the watershed were woven into the walks. This was especially poignant considering the low number of salmon.</p> <p>Sept 22-23 – <u>Students Learning and Working in Watersheds</u> -- This 2-day program of hands-on experience brought 21 grade 9-12 students into the watershed. They helped with salmon research at the Horsefly Spawning Channel, caught Chinook to harvest gametes (Quesnel River), and learned to identify aquatic invertebrates. They were shown the Eagle Eye DVD to engage them in discussion of their role in watersheds and to lead them into the telling their own stories. Eco Print concepts were introduced the discussions and two of the stories they developed are included in the marketing package.</p>
<p>2. To empower participants to be part of the change by committing in writing to reduce their Ecological Footprint on the natural community through lifestyle changes inspired by field trip awareness</p>	<p>Eco Print ideas were integrated into each field trip and illustrated in the specific setting. A total of 1230 pledges were collected. Most checked off simple ideas related to conserving water, not polluting, and picking up garbage. Please see the marketing package for the various pledge forms and a summary of most original pledges.</p>

3. To mentor participants who want to celebrate nature through original stories in various media portraying human appreciation of the natural community and acting responsibly in the family of creation

September 4-5 – Songwriting Workshop with Pharis Patenaude --Our first public workshop engaged 8 aspiring song-writers who had taken part in the Horsefly Salmon Festival. Following a succinct introduction to the process of song-writing, Pharis led a series of exercises to guide participants in developing the central concept/feeling their experiences at the festival had inspired. The process of brainstorming peripheral details then sequencing them to tell a story was started, and participants continued on their own afterward. Several students contacted Pharis for subsequent mentoring on their songs. The two songs in the marketing package resulted.

October 24 – Writing Workshop with Barbara Bearman -- Thirteen writers at varying levels of experience spent an afternoon at Scout Island, both in and outside the Nature House. Barbara took participants outdoors and directed them to observe a plant or animal and describe the scene from that organism's point of view. Stimulating the imagination in that way led to consideration of the organism's needs and strategies for fulfilling them.

Fifteen school groups and one youth group (250 students total) were mentored by their teachers/leaders and our environmental educators. Two of these classes were First Nations, so Shuswap Elder Cecilia deRose modeled story-telling for them with stories from her tradition. Please see marketing package for outlines of lessons used to engage students in creating stories

Our model for mentoring expanded as the project developed. The drama teacher mentored her group of volunteer students to develop their script, and we hired Jessica Knoedel to mentor the Boys' and Girls' Club participants. One of our teacher-naturalists worked with school classes to build their stories.

4. To present the products of Objective 3 at the Stewardship Festivals and create a marketing package for distribution to other rural organizations for use as a social marketing tool.

Timing was difficult throughout this project. The school year ended shortly after funding was received, and our mentors were not available during summer holidays, so we did not have time to offer any presentations at Rivers Day or the Salmon Festival. The Raven Fire People play was presented at the Williams Lake Field Naturalists' AGM in March, and we especially hope to stage it again at a larger venue. It will be given to classes to view and it will become part of our High School Eco Print program, beginning in Fall of 2010. The primary purpose of the project was to enable rural people to embrace and advocate for their own watersheds. The social marketing package (attached) will build that capacity. It will be widely available through our website. A CD will be available to those who cannot download from the website. The cd included in our final report is the draft. The website will have the materials in a series of pdf files for easier downloading. Our web designer is just working on this and we hope to have the files available by June 2010

3.2 Please evaluate the EFFECTIVENESS of your project in achieving Project Objectives. Please identify the indicators you have used to measure the effectiveness of your project. Please include any notable successes or challenges.

Overall, we feel Spawning Stories, Hatching Change has connected a significant number of people in our community with their watershed in a new way. We are quite pleased with the numbers of students who took part, the variety of field trips we were able to offer and the volume of work produced. That said, some aspects of the project have turned out differently than anticipated.

We originally intended to involve more sectors of the community, but the response was disappointing. To compensate, we commissioned work from people who live rurally, showed an appreciation of nature, and understood the impacts of humans on the ecosystems they are part of. In retrospect, the project would have been more successful if we had been able to find or assemble a group who were interested in investing more time in developing their stories, and who shared our primary intention to motivate behaviour change.

The most satisfactory outcomes were achieved when we were able to implement the total process: field trip closely followed by mentoring workshop, then individual consultation with the mentors to bring stories to fruition. We found working with teachers and students to be more productive. While not all those stories fit the paradigm of social marketing tools, specifically lacking action messages, most reflect an awakened awareness of the plight of creatures struggling to survive in a human-altered world. We know that empathy is an important first step in developing stewardship.

We are encouraged by the following comment from the teacher of the Grade 8 class that read their stories for the dvd: "The kids still talk about this, so I think it was a very worthwhile exercise... I took into account their work ethic/behaviour at Scout Island, the time we spent working on it during class...On the actual assignments I marked them whether they effectively incorporated elements of the animals habitat, behaviour etc....(If they were to do it again, I would give them a rubric in advance outlining exactly what my expectations are (hindsight). I think the kids benefited from the field trip and the process...it truly did cement the images in their mind."

Melinda MacKinnon – Grade 8 English teacher, Williams Lake Secondary School

In retrospect, we would focus on grades 5-12, and find teachers who were willing to involve their classes in a longer-term project, in order to achieve a higher quality of writing.

The filmed episode called "The Trail" (Boys' and Girls' Club) is especially interesting. We will use it to encourage people to stay on trails at the Nature Centre

3.3 REQUIRED: attach all DOCUMENTATION of Final Outcomes, and LIST attachments here. These may include technical reports, maps, photos, evidence of communications, lists of

meeting participants, etc.

Inclusions:

Poster and pamphlet advertising workshops to the public and teachers—these are in the package sent under separate cover

Pamphlet describing project, field trips and workshops —these are in the package sent under separate cover
photo page

workshop participant lists

article from WLFN newsletter, Muskrat Express, June 09

photocopies of articles in Williams Lake Tribune (to follow)

Categories and numbers of school classes participating (to follow)

3.4 Please describe how the benefits of this project will be sustained and/or be built upon into the future. What are the planned next steps, or recommendations for further work, if applicable?

The social marketing template we have developed will be available through our website, so other rural communities can replicate and build upon this pilot project. We will also be happy to advise other groups from what we've learned.

In our own programs at Scout Island Nature Centre, we will continue to use story-making as a way to deepen students' emotional bond with the natural world. Our experience with this project has convinced us that engaging the creative mind is a superb way to help people understand how they are inseparable from their watersheds. In addition, the Eco Print materials we developed will be integrated into our future natural history programs.

Next steps: finalize social marketing package; publicize to other rural nature centres, post on website, and carry on with story writing /natural history field trips as part of our fall and winter offerings.

We sincerely hope other communities will take this process forward and share their experiences with us

3.5 What are the top three lessons learned from this project that could be useful to communicate to others doing similar work in the Basin?

1. The field trips need to be tailored to elicit participants' strong feelings about how humans impact the watershed, so participants begin the story-making process with their goal clearly in mind. There are suggestions in the package on ways to do this.

2. Mentors are key to the process, and it's important to plan the workshops together with them. Mentors should share in the field trip experiences, and workshops follow field trips within one day. Exercises should be adapted to the specific objectives of the project, with each building toward conveying the message that the participant has chosen to convey. See project package for methods developed so far. A mentor versed in story-telling performance would be helpful for those presenting their stories to live audiences or on visual media.

3. Appropriate timelines are essential. Planning with schools should start in late winter, with field trips scheduled far in advance so teachers can integrate them into other curriculum elements. For community groups, it would be helpful to target specific interest groups and work with them on a longer-term basis.