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SEP 9&10 2014

EXPLORING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH UNDER WESTERN SKIES CONFERENCE

Mount Royal University, Calgary, AB
www.rockies.ca/citizenscience

Draft Agenda

Day 1 – September 9, 2014

8:30am

Welcome & Session on the PPSR Landscape

This session will provide an overview of the field of practice of PPSR which includes forms of research where the public is engaged in the scientific process such as citizen science, community-based monitoring, volunteer monitoring and participatory action research. PPSR is an emerging field of practice where a diversity of disciplines are engaging the public in science to improve knowledge of the world around us, enhance the public's understanding of scientific process and inform policy and management decisions. The session will provide a global overview of the practice of PPSR, including why a bi-directional model for doing science is important, examples of PPSR approaches achieving programmatic outcomes and challenges facing PPSR. In addition, regional case studies of successful programs will be presented.

- Welcome - conference organizers
- PPSR Overview – Jennifer Shirk, Cornell University
- Can spring bloom times in Alberta save the government millions of dollars in fire fighting costs? – Dr. Elisabeth Beaubien, University of Alberta
- Whose knowledge? Whose values? Citizen science, scientific citizenship and democratic engagement – Dr. Gwendolyn Blue, University of Calgary

10:00am

Break & Networking

10:30am

Program Design Session

This session will focus on considerations for planning, implementing and evaluating PPSR programs. PPSR programs may have multiple programmatic goals, including generating scientific information, fostering stewardship/conservation, shaping policy and/or educational learning. Depending on the program goals, practitioners need to consider the program's model for citizen engagement, mechanisms to engage and maintain volunteers, volunteer training protocols, use of technology in data collection and dissemination, and methods to measure outcomes and programmatic impacts. A number of regional case studies will be presented that outline program frameworks for achieving specific goals, such as meeting a stated scientific goal, influencing policy decisions and/or promoting transformative learning.

- Developing better analytical metrics for data collected by citizen scientists – Dr. Greg Breed, University of Alberta
- The Wolverine Project - Bill Abercrobie, Alberta Trappers Association, and Doug Manzer, Alberta Conservation Association
- [Speaker to be confirmed]

12:00pm

Lunch

1:00pm

Evaluation

As PPSR programming continues to dramatically grow each year, there is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives. Not only do we need to understand methods to measure the outcomes and effectiveness of individual PPSR programs, there is a growing need to assess the PPSR programmatic landscape using similar techniques so we can compare successes across PPSR programs. In this session Tina Philips (Cornell University) will provide an overview of evaluation methods from an individual program perspective and introduce efforts to develop a survey instrument to evaluate the education goals of multiple PPSR projects.

- Articulating Conservation Outcomes for Citizen Science: Emerging practices for the 21st Century - Tina Phillips, Cornell University

2:00pm

Break & Networking

2:30pm

Policy & Citizen Science

One of the potential outcomes of a PPSR approach is its ability to influence policy and decisions. A PPSR approach can generate critical data to support a policy or decision. It can also cultivate a group of knowledgeable citizens who advocate for a policy or decision. This session features a number of case studies where PPSR can be or has been linked to policy and decision-making.

- Road Watch & Highway Mitigation - Tracy Lee, Miistakis Institute, Mount Royal University
- Digital Fishers: Science-oriented Crowdsourcing and Participatory Public Policy – Dr. Rod Dobell, University of Victoria
- [Talk title to be confirmed] - Julie Vastine, Alliance for Aquatic Resources Monitoring (ALLARM), Dickinson College

4:00pm

Day 1 Wrap-up

5-6:30

Poster Session & Reception

8:30am

Parks and Protected Areas and PPSR

In Western Canada, parks and protected areas at federal, provincial and municipal scales are developing PPSR programs to help monitor ecosystem health and meet visitor experience programmatic goals. Presentations of PPSR programs from a diversity of parks and protected areas will be presented to share experiences and lessons learned.

- Visitor Experience & PPSR – Tina Barzo & Bill Hunt - Parks Canada Agency
- Designing a Citizen Science Program for Monitoring Long Term Ecological Change in BC Parks - Pamela Wright, University of Northern British Columbia
- The Role of PPSR in Implementation of Biodiversity Strategies – Chris Manderson, City of Calgary Parks

10:00am

Break & Networking

10:30am

Data Management and Technology in PPSR

The recent proliferation of PPSR programs can be partially attributed to new and emerging technology making communication, data collection and dissemination of information more fluid and accessible. Data management involves databases and backups but also issues around data quality, policies, sharing, integration, and stewardship. An overview of data management will be provided along with case studies where technology has played a prominent role in the PPSR program.

- The Zooniverse, the challenges of building an online platform for citizen science - Dr. Stuart Lynn, Adler Planetarium, Chicago, IL
- Citizen Science and Technology: a Corporate Application - Ariane Bourassa, Cenovus Energy
- Validating citizen science data: how accurately can citizens document wildlife activity along highways? – Dr. Mike Quinn, Mount Royal University

12pm

Closing Address

- Dr. Mike Quinn, Institute for Environmental Sustainability, Mount Royal University

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