

ForestEDWest 2008

A Conference Dedicated To Forest Education In Western Canada

THANK YOU SPONSORS & SPEAKERS

On behalf of the ForestEDWEST volunteer organizing committee and delegates, we would like to thank all our speakers and sponsors for making ForestEDWEST III an outstanding success. The feedback we received from our evaluation forms was heart warming, and clearly told us that this was an event that provided something positive to everyone in attendance.

We kicked off the conference with an informal get together Thursday evening. More than sixty delegates and speakers joined us in the Manteo Resort Club House for drinks and snacks. The evening was a reunion for some, an introduction to new friends and colleagues for others, and a welcome opportunity for us to thank everyone for coming.

Opening the conference Friday morning we were pleased to be joined by local Kelowna City Councilor Michele Rule who welcomed participants to her city and wished us every success in our event. Two very special letters of welcome and best wishes were shared with delegates, from our British Columbia provincial government sponsors, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Forests and Range. Following the opening, our keynote panelists were introduced. Andrew Casey, Vice President of Government Relations and

Communications, Forest Products Association of Canada was the first speaker, providing a national overview of Canadian forestry and sustainable management, with an emphasis on our success stories, some new FPAC initiatives and climate change opportunities.

ForestEDWEST is about forested landscapes, but it is also about education, and bringing the focus back to the classroom, the final panelists on Friday morning talked about “The Dark Ages and the Renaissance” of Forest Education in Canada. Alex Drummond and Steve Baumber shared the podium in a dance of history and good news stories for the future. The overarching theme being that forest education is important – first and foremost – not to keep schools running or to create jobs, but to ensure that our forested ecosystems are sustainably managed by professionals with the knowledge to keep them healthy and growing into the future.

After the morning gathering, delegates spent the remainder of the day moving between concurrent sessions listening to a wide variety of speakers and gathering important take-home materials for their schools. The day finished with a trip to Silver Lake Forest Education Camp where delegates and speakers were treated to a gourmet home-cooked meal and country music performed by local performing artist Lee Dinwoody.

We commenced day two of our event with another opening panel session themed Forests and Climate Change. Kicking off the morning, the inaugural FEW Co-Chairs, Alex Drummond and Steve McIsaac told the history of how ForestEDWEST was created. They were followed by three expert and entertaining panelists who discussed the topic from varying perspectives. Richard Hebda gave his predictions and discussed

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“Thank-you for all your hard work! I have enjoyed this immensely, learned lots and been made passionate about my job again. I really like the idea of all meals together. This certainly helps networking and learning in general.”

“The keynote speakers did a great job for setting the stage for the breakout session! The highlight of the conference for me.”

“I have been so impressed with this conference as a whole. Organizationally, the schedule ran smoothly, and was technology reliable. The speakers and sessions were incredibly informative and obviously standouts in the field. I have learned so much.”

models of climate change and how BC's ecosystems could be impacted in the short and long term. Alan Carroll added to the climate change story by telling it from the mountain pine beetle perspective, including a very good overview of the beetle life cycle. To wrap up the panel, Kelly McCloskey told wood's good story – the green building and carbon sequestration aspects of using wood.

Inigorated from the morning presentations, delegates headed off for a second day of workshops and concurrent sessions. And at the end of the session they were treated to a dinner and dance at the Manteo Resort, and danced the evening away to the music of The Young'uns, another local music group.

The highlight of Saturday night's festivities was the presentation of the Jim Martin Award for Life Time Achievement in Forest Education. Steve McIsaac, Executive Director of InSide Education announced the 2008 recipient of the award that was created to honour his predecessor, Jim Martin. Without giving out the winning name, Steve told the story of the recipient's career history; it didn't take us long to realize that he was talking about our very own Co-Chair, Debbie Sluggett. Everyone was thrilled to support Debbie as she received her award and said a few words to the audience.

Concluding ForestEDWEST III was a Sunday morning presentation about the Kelowna 2003 forest fire experience, told first hand by the fire boss himself, Dennis Gaudry. Dennis told a personal and heart wrenching story that drew the delegates along in the events that unfolded that summer in Kelowna.

Finally, it was time for wrap-up and goodbye. Parker Hogan of the Alberta Forest Products Association facilitated a discussion about the success of this year's event, and lead the group into a brainstorming session about FEW IV, which is scheduled to be hosted in Kananaskis Park in Alberta in 2010.

Saying goodbye to old friends, good friends and new friends, FEW delegates departed at noon, already looking forward to networking and sharing their experiences with their colleagues back home.

Sincerely,

Conference Co-Chairs

Debbie Sluggett

Sandy McKellar

“Thank-you so much for your wonderful energy at spreading information in forestry education to teachers. I really appreciated attending ForesEDWest 2008 in Kelowna.”

“Thank-you for the teacher sponsors. I would not have enough PD money to have come. This is an excellent time of year for the conference.”

“Well done! Thank-you for hosting it in BC.! I learned a lot about the province, it's forest industry and the great education programs that are going on. You can be very proud of this conference, it was a great success in my view and I really enjoyed myself.”



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