

## Avalanche techs to the rescue

# Pair rescue family in distress

by Paul Kim, communications officer

When it comes to protecting travelling motorists, the ministry's avalanche specialists usually contend with the fluffy white version of H<sub>2</sub>O. However, on December 21, avalanche technician Chris Link and avalanche aid Kirk Illingworth heroically rescued a family of four from the water.

"Chris and I were on Highway 3, heading up to Allison Pass," recalls Illingworth. "We both spotted these tracks indicating a car had slid off the road. We decided to take a look and saw a car on its side in the Sumallo River. While Chris called for an ambulance and the RCMP, I saw a lady's head pop out of the driver's side window."

The woman yelled to Illingworth and Link that her husband and two young boys were also inside the car.

"The family could get out of the car," says Illingworth. "But they couldn't make over to land in safety. The water was a metre deep and fast flowing. So Chris got a ladder we had from the back of the truck. Chris and I extended it out to the car and held it for the family to crawl over. The kids came over first, followed by their parents. We put them in the truck to warm them up and then the RCMP arrived."

The two heroes handed the family over to the authorities and modestly went on their way.

"I honestly don't remember the name of the family," says Illingworth. "They just needed to be helped."

Regional director Keith Bessflug praised the actions of the avalanche specialists, saying, "Their quick action helped prevent a very serious situation and demonstrated true service to the public."



Chris Link and Kirk Illingworth

## **Bridges and books: building our future**

by Glen Plummer, A/media relations coordinator



Sharlie Huffman

Sharlie Huffman is not the first person to go back to school in the middle of her career. What is unique about Sharlie's situation is that furthering her education will also benefit our ministry.

Recently, the ministry's bridge engineering section found itself without a bridge seismic rehabilitation standards engineer when

Brock Radloff went to work in the private sector. Suddenly, someone was needed to fill this important position. Chief bridge engineer Peter Brett took the matter to assistant deputy minister Dan Doyle.

"Dan told us that we had to look within the ministry to fill the position," said Brett. "Unfortunately, no one within the ministry fulfilled all of the qualifications."

Given this situation, Peter and Dan discussed the problem and decided on a course of action.

"We agreed to post the position and select the most qualified candidate," said Brett. "It was decided that this candidate would then be given the opportunity to complete the required upgrading and the ministry would cover the expense."

This is not something new within the ministry. Barry Wilton, director of Human Resources, says that there have been a number of occasions when the ministry has taken this route to fill a position.

*Continued on Page 2*

# In the right light, it's not pollution

by Glen Plummer, A/media relations coordinator

Water pollution. Noise pollution. Air pollution. Light Pollution?...

"Light pollution is unwanted, unshielded light that causes more problems than it solves," says Royal Astronomical Society member Bill Almond.

Believe it or not, light pollution is a serious problem around the world. However, steps are being taken to deal with light pollution and MoTH is doing its part.

Electrical co-ordinator Brian Day accepted the Greater Victoria Light Pollution Abatement Award on November 18, on behalf of the ministry. The award, presented by the Victoria office of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, is for the ministry's work in reducing light pollution. Work on the Trans-Canada Highway's Victoria approaches and Millstream interchange attracted the attention of the astronomical society.

"We are very pleased with the new lighting on the Trans-Canada at the Victoria and Millstream locations," said Almond. "We hope to see more of this kind of lighting."

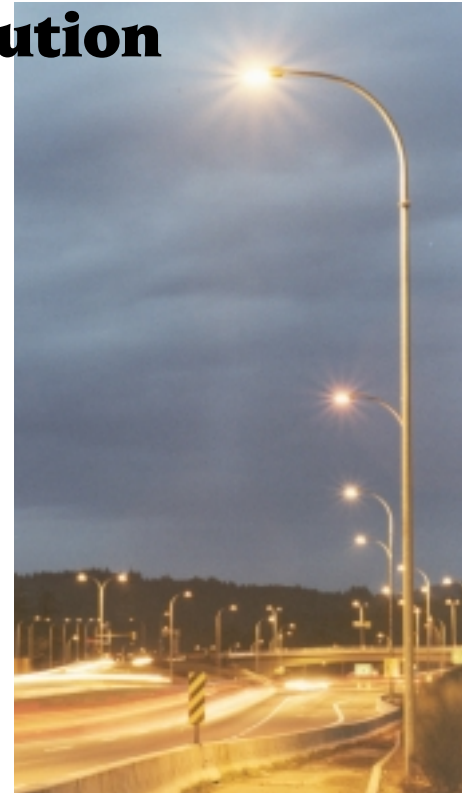
The new lighting uses flat glass luminaires. Unlike previous drop glass style lights, the flat glass lights use a flat hous-

ing rather than the older bubble style. The result is that light from flat glass luminaires is focused more directly onto the road surface, reducing glare and making the roads safer for drivers. The flat glass luminaires are also easier to maintain than the older style. The ministry has adopted flat glass lights as its standard for new lights and, as old lights wear out, they too will be replaced with the flat glass style where design permits. This type of luminaire can be seen elsewhere on the Vancouver Island Highway Project as well as the Ironworkers Memorial Second Narrows Bridge, the Trans-Canada Highway HOV Project and on Highway 91 in Richmond.

The use of new lighting technology will likely become more widespread, with municipalities such as the District of Saanich having adopted outdoor lighting standards to meet growing sensitivity concerning the control of light pollution.

Light pollution may not seem like a big deal when compared to other forms of pollution but the problems that it causes can be costly.

"Light pollution means that astronomical observatories have to be built as far away from light sources as possible," says Almond. "This can mean having to build observatories on expensive platforms on the Pacific Ocean."



Light from flat glass luminaires is focused more directly onto the road surface, reducing glare and making the roads safer for drivers

The amount of pollution caused by inefficient forms of lighting can be seen from space. Photos show bright, glowing skies over large city centres. If you want more information on light pollution, check out the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada web site: <http://www.rasc.ca/>

## Road Runner

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Sam Brand, Garth Coward, Dan Mayberry, Glen Plummer, Kathie Miller and Barry Wilton sit on the editorial committee.

Story ideas, submissions and letters are always welcome and may be submitted to your regional communications coordinator or by e-mail to:

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or sent c/o Road Runner, 5-B 940 Blanshard St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 9T5

The next deadline for submissions to the Road Runner is April 7.

## Bridges and Books (Cont'd from Page 1)

"We must use the resources that we've got," said Wilton. "We want to grow from within. The advantages to this type of employee development are many. It capitalizes on resources that we already have and demonstrates a solid commitment to people within the ministry."

The successful applicant for the position, Sharlie Huffman, is taking on a big challenge at a time in her life when others probably wouldn't consider it. Sharlie has approximately 20 years experience with the ministry in bridges. Now, she is commuting back and forth between her job here in

Victoria and taking courses at UBC.

Over the years, the ministry has gone through many changes and, Dan Doyle says that change is part of what the ministry is about.

"In our ministry, we have to look at the best way of doing our jobs," said Doyle. "This means using the experience and talents of the people we have. Training our people to improve their performance and growing from within are ways to meet the challenges of the future. We have to anticipate change and meet challenges head-on."

## The last of the Marine Engineer Apprentices

If the provincial government ever develops a trivia game, Doug Whalley is a sure bet to be included in the MoTH category. Doug has the distinction of being the last marine engineer apprentice in the MoTH Marine Branch.

After completing the four-year apprenticeship program, Doug is now a marine engineer and plans to continue working for the Marine Branch in his new role.

The former marine apprenticeship program has been replaced by a National Cadet Program, making Doug the last of his kind.

During his apprenticeship, Doug served on the Francois Lake and Kootenay Lake ferries.



Doug Whalley (left) and Derek Sinclair, senior marine engineer

## Safety update

The Worker's Compensation Amendment Act of October 1, 1999 has increased the emphasis on the specific responsibilities of ministry executives, managers and employees for the health and safety of all workers.

To this end, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways Health and Safety section is updating existing and creating new policy and procedure manuals in terms of core requirements, general field operations and specific field operations or work areas.

## Lauren and Neil's Exciting Adventures in MoTH

by Dave Duncan, district engineer

The East Kootenay District was very fortunate to have acquired the talents of two young engineering graduates: Lauren Baldwin and Neil Wood. Hired last spring, Neil and Lauren are working as engineering assistants.

Being new to the ministry has been an exciting experience and has exposed them to a wide range of projects, assignments and interesting people.

Lauren was hired as an engineering intern following the completion of her degree in water resources engineering at the University of Guelph, Ontario. An outdoor enthusiast, she has really enjoyed living in Cranbrook and working for MoTH.

Neil was hired as a youth employment program student in the summer of 1999. He returned as an engineering assistant after completing his diploma in civil engineering design technology at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.



Engineering graduates Neil Wood and Laren Baldwin

Living in his hometown of Cranbrook, Neil enjoys the endless outdoor activities of the East Kootenays.

Working on a variety of assignments, Neil and Lauren have developed a good appreciation for district highways operations. Their work has included culvert installations, development approvals, writing reports, engineering design, mapping, research, surveying and construction supervision. These projects have provided them with valuable experience and will undoubtedly provide them with some really valuable skills for their future professional careers.

Lauren and Neil would like to say a big thanks! to the district and regional staff for making their ministry experience exciting and extremely enjoyable... but they're wondering... where have all those survey pins gone?

Good work, Lauren and Neil!

On the Road to Success:

# MoTH Special Events Coordinators Help Fuel the Growth of Hollywood North

by Paul Kim, communications officer

British Columbia's film and television production industry has become a billion-dollar industry employing 35,000 British Columbians. The growth of the industry can be directly measured by the amount of work being undertaken by MoTH's special events coordinators for the Lower Mainland - Howe Sound District. In 1993, Howe Sound District processed only six permits for filming. In 1999, the number of filming permits issued totalled 85.

The role of the ministry's special events coordinators is to work with various production companies to satisfy filming needs while minimizing traffic disruption and safeguarding the ministry's interests. According to Wayne Keiser, district highways manager, the growth of the film industry has translated into a new position for the ministry. "The growth of the position has been driven by industry need. Film and events permits used to be just one of a number of issues dealt with by district staff. As the volume of permit requests increased it became clear that it was something that could no longer be done off the side of someone's desk," says Keiser.

"It's a lot of responsibility," said Lorna Leslie, special events coordinator. "We must ensure the regular users of the highway are accommodated safely, as well as participants in the event. Of course, we can't authorize these events during peak traffic periods, such as statutory holiday weekends, or the a.m./p.m. rush hour periods."

Mirroring the industry they support, the busiest times for special events coordinators are in the spring and summer months. Film scheduling is complicated by requests to hold other special events on highways such as fun runs, bicycle races and community events.

"It's a delicate balancing act meeting the ministry's mission of moving the public

Operations coordinator Holly Adems poses with actor Robert Ito ("Sam" on Quincy) on the set of *The Immortal*.



Special events coordinator Lorna Leslie with actress Heather Medway ("Detective Cameron Westlake") on the set of *Viper*.



safely and efficiently, support for community events and the needs of the film industry," acknowledged Holly Adems, operations coordinator. "Sometimes we need to say 'No' to the requests if the proposal is unsafe, too inconvenient to the public or just impractical. For example, I have had a request to close the Lions Gate Bridge entirely for a set created with a table and a candlelight dinner for two actors. We had to deny this one."

When a film permit is approved the film coordinator then works with other ministry representatives and stakeholders to ensure that filming can take place with a minimum of fuss. "Almost every film permit involves extensive communication with the local area manager, traffic technician, RCMP, maintenance contractor and the Provincial Highways Conditions Centre. Communication is the key to ensure the public is informed, and safety is assured for everyone," says Adems.

Safety is always uppermost in the minds of the film coordinators as many scenes

shot on ministry roads involve dangerous stunts and special effects. Lorna Leslie recalls being on a film site where the stunt involved a semi-trailer flipping in the air, saying, "It barely missed our overhead street light." Holly Adems once arranged the closure of the Ironworkers Memorial Second Narrows Crossing for five minutes to film the explosion of the old Coach House Inn. "The traffic control logistics for this shoot were complex and required extensive planning and coordination to ensure a safe explosion," she said.

"The work of film coordinators such as Adems and Leslie are part of the reason B.C.'s film industry has grown so much," said Gordon Hardwick, community relations manager for the B.C. Film Commission. "To attract filming we compete on a global scale and rely on our ability to provide solutions to the film industry with access to crews and locations. Transportation and Highways has done a lot to promote the film industry here by creating the role of the film coordinator. I have often heard back from productions, saying that, when presented with an issue, the Highways' film coordinators were able to provide solutions to get filming done. As a result of efforts like this, we don't see any drop-off in the level of film production in B.C."

South Coast Region Movers and Shakers

## Retirement of a True Character

South Coast Region held a retirement luncheon for Sylvia Foyle, secretary, highway engineering on October 12, 2000.



Sylvia Foyle in a vintage ministry work coat that was presented to her by the employees of South Coast Region for her retirement.

Sylvia served with the ministry for 10 years. She came to highways after serving with the Vancouver Police as a civilian employee, Woodward and Montgomery Elevator. At highways she quickly established a reputation as a character of quirky wit and non-nonsense action.

At her luncheon, Sylvia thanked the numerous people who attended from across South Coast Region. "For the

love, generosity and consideration you have shown me, I thank you all so much."

## Region 1 Staff Changes – to December 12, 2000

### Other Retirements

**Shirley Watson**, Receptionist, Geotechnical Branch

**Kathleen Johnson**, Financial Clerk

### Competitions Won

**Danny Locke**, Warehouseman, Delta Electrical District

**Keith Kazakoff**, Project Supervisor, Bridge Operations

### Left the Ministry

**Brenda Jones**, Regional Communications Coordinator

**Barry Sullivan**, Project Management Technician

**James Fam**, Engineer in Training

**Mark Walters**, Provincial Highways Condition Centre Supervisor



Stu Maynes, Senior Traffic Projects Engineer.

## Traffic Management Specialist Retires

Stu Maynes, senior traffic projects engineer, retired in January 2001 after 14 years with the ministry. Stu came to the ministry after serving with the City of Vancouver and City of Surrey.

Looking back on his years with the ministry, Stu reflected, "The great thing about this job was that it was a hands-on, action oriented position. It allowed me to get from behind my desk onto the roads and I learned the highway system in South Coast Region like the back of my hand."

At highways, Stu worked on traffic management projects such as timing over 100 signal lights. "I guess the one thing I will take away from me into retirement is a respect for our field staff who are both solid managers and engineers," said Stu.

## CO receives Peacekeeping Medal

Paul Kim, communications officer, Region 1, received the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal on November 25 for service in the former Yugoslavian republic of Croatia in 1993. Kim was previously awarded the United Nations Former Yugoslavia Peacekeeping Service Medal.

## The Smallest Bridge Expansion

The Port Mann Improvement Project will benefit the thousands of people who commute through or live in the Cape Horn interchange area. The most visible part of the project is the expansion of the bridge to accommodate a fifth lane for eastbound HOV traffic. Yet the bridge expansion won't just benefit commuters. A pair of Peregrine falcons have taken up residence on the bridge for the last several years. Their nest is located at the top of the bridge arch. However, the falcons have not been able to successfully raise their young on the bridge.

Greg Czernick, environmental coordinator, explains, "Nesting success on bridges is generally low." To help improve the odds, the widening of the Port Mann Bridge will include the expansion of a nesting platform so the young falcons can strengthen their wings before they take their first flight. "It appears that the chicks are falling off the bridge before they can fly," says Czernick.

If the addition of the platform for the falcons is a success it will benefit the environment and the bridge itself. Czernick says, "Falcons eat pigeons, and pigeons make a mess of the bridge, so we have a vested interest in supporting the falcons."

Laying It On The Line

# Pavement Marking Operations Celebrates Banner Year

by Paul Kim, communications coordinator

Pavement marking operations ended its season in November with a celebratory presentation of awards by South Coast Regional Director Keith Bospflug.

"It was a fantastic year for the crews," says Bospflug. "The crews marked over 30,000 kilometres in just seven months."

Pavement Marking Manager Mark Pratt adds, "This is the highest volume of lines marked by seven crews. The previous high for seven crews was 27,000 kilometres. It represents a 10% increase in productivity compared to the average of the last two years."

Pratt attributed the increased performance to the flexibility and good sense of his shift supervisors. "The shift supervisors were allowed to direct their crews as they saw fit to meet local conditions. The crews responded well to this direction."

Pavement marking crews this year averaged 60 hours of work over six days, marking as much as 50 to 60 kms in a day. "They pack a year's worth of work into seven months," Pratt says. "Now that the season is over, most of the crews are taking a well deserved rest while a skeleton crew performs maintenance on the trucks."



(Top) South Coast Region Director Keith Bospflug (second from left) presents the trophy for the Greatest Increase in Kilometres Marked from the Previous Year to (left to right) Dan Diebert, Mike Pighim, Rob Kemp and Rich Abbott

(Above left) Machine operator Rob Kemp, prepares a road for painting in the East Kootenays (Region 3).

(Above right) Pavement marking crew members Brian Steadman, Rob Kemp, and Jack Vandenburg prepare Highway 97 in Vernon for painting.

## Thank you from Kelowna & District Safety Council

The Kelowna & District Safety Council, sponsors of The Little Travellers Safety Village, extend our most sincere thanks to Ed Sanders, his crew and Scott Lain of Argo Road Maintenance for replacing all of our outdated road signs, some of which were more than 20 years old and many hand-painted.

Our instructors are particularly pleased with the bright new street signs that have now replaced the homemade wooden ones.

Your contribution will go a long way to helping point the way to safety for almost 4,000 children each year in the Okanagan.

Lian Couper, Public Relations  
Kelowna & District Safety Council  
<http://www.kdsc.bc.ca>



Bright new signs replace old in The Little Travellers Safety Village

# Innovation Leads to Rehabilitation

by Bruce Methven, media relations coordinator

A deteriorating timber bridge near Churn Creek has been rehabilitated thanks to some innovative thinking from ministry staff.

The 1912 suspension bridge, located about 80 kilometres west of 100 Mile House, was one of three virtually identical bridges built across the Fraser River in the early years of the last century. Although the other two bridges, near Williams Lake and Lillooet, were replaced several decades ago, the Churn Creek Bridge remained in deteriorating condition.

About 15 years ago, a proposal was considered to replace the bridge, but the plans were shelved due to the unacceptably high price tag for such a relatively lightly-used route in remote ranching country.

The question of what to do about the bridge was put on the table again about two years ago when local DHM Tracy Cooper, ADM Dan Doyle and other staff from headquarters, region and district visited the site to consider whether there were alternatives to replacing the structure. The bridge now served as an access point for the province's new 36,000-hectare Churn Creek Protected Area, which incorporates the former Empire Valley Ranch. In addition, local First Nations



Churn Creek Bridge, before and after.



rely on the structure to gain access to their traditional territories as do visitors to the historic Gang Ranch.

After assessing the bridge, the group agreed that it was a good candidate for rehabilitation and bridge evaluation engineer Ian Sturrock was made project manager.

Over eight months, workers replaced aging timber trusses under the bridge deck with new steel components, installed a new steel

bridge deck, and built new approach spans. Virtually every remaining element of the bridge made of timber was replaced with components made of steel.

The existing steel towers and original foundations were also reinforced and brought up to current standards.

The success of the project was heightened by the participation of the Canoe Creek Band who provided essential right-of-way for the bridge approaches, participated to some extent in the construction and consulted over access and archeological issues.

When the project was completed, the shiny "new" span still bore its classic suspension-bridge profile – but was now safer, stronger and ready for a brand new century!

# There's Something Fishy Here

By Derek Nolan, regional environmental coordinator

This past year saw the Central/North East Region partnering with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on a fish habitat restoration project in the Hixon area. The origins of the partnership date back to 1996 when, under the emergency provisions of the Highways Act, one bank of Naver Creek was armored with rock to stop a meander of the creek from eroding away a portion of Highway 97 during the spring freshet.

While the riprap effectively protected the highway fill, fish habitat was lost as the treatment removed riparian vegetation and modified stream hydrology. As the

Fisheries Act mandates DFO to ensure that a proponent's work results in no-net loss of fish habitat, the ministry was asked to contribute to the creation of compensatory habitat.

The North Cariboo Highways District committed up to \$8,000 of funding to DFO in 2000, while the regional environmental coordinator assisted DFO with re-vegetation aspects of the work. DFO's habitat and enhancement branch provided the expertise to identify, survey, design, layout, and supervise the restoration project: a 450-metre long



Judy Hillaby, restoration biologist, DFO & Daryl Nolan, A/regional environmental coordinator, MoTH

Continued on Page 10

# Nicola District Dispels "Dull and Boring" Myth

by John Philip, district office manager

The staff of the Nicola District has been very stable over the past couple of years. That does not mean that everyone is leading very dull and boring lives. In fact, the following should definitely dispel that myth.

**DOUG KIRK** has become the grandfather of his older son's son. In addition, #2 son joined the military and Doug and wife Millie flew to Montreal for his graduation in December (Montreal in December in a raging snowstorm - what a warped sense of masochistic pleasure).

**JURGEN LUTTER** has just finished working on a replacement of the main cables on our own "Queen of Lytton" (the Lytton Ferry), which took longer than anticipated but is now complete and should keep the ferry running for several more years. Jurgen has had fun in the Thompson River recently with the work on the bridge at Spences Bridge.

**DAVE FROESE** is still "enjoying" his unofficial position as captain of the Queen of Lytton and the many perks that go along with that (like free rides across the river with or without vehicle at any time he chooses). Dave escapes to Merritt often on weekends where his plane is tethered and he relaxes in the wild blue yonder from time to time. Dave is into hiking, sometimes with the local club, and Dave likes his cross-country skiing as well.

**DAN LONG** has worked long hours all summer so has been basically on ETO time since late October until into the new year. Highland Valley was his big project this year, but he came in off ETO to get the Monck Park Road job started. After we had to replace practically every camera in the office last year, including Dan's when it was stolen, he has been particularly enjoying his new disposable camera that is no great cost if it gets lost or stolen!

**GERRY SANFORD** really DOES know where everything is in his office, despite rumours to the contrary! As district operations assistant, Gerry accumulates reams of information that takes a lot of managing and archiving. He and wife Jill had a trip to Victoria a while back, on business yet, which both enjoyed. Between Jill's and Gerry's work, they get to have "get aways" every now and again.



Regional director Jon Buckle presents Earl Nygaard, area manager, Nicola District, with a Suggestion Award cheque of \$200 and certificate for his Winter Storm Maintenance chart that he, Jon Jensen and Rob Struthers developed.



Jon Jensen, district technician, peers over the chaos on his desk while his office has been stripped of everything else during the late summer re-carpeting and painting at the Nicola District office.



(Right) Where there's a will, there's a way! Jurgen Lutter, bridge area manager, reads his e-mail at a computer that was still connected during the re-carpeting and painting.

# High Tech + Explosions = A Safer Kootenay Pass

by John Tweedy, avalanche technician

Last July, construction began on the third and final phase of upgrading the avalanche control systems on Kootenay Pass on Highway 3. The project consisted of installing another seven GAZ.EX exploders, two communication/gas storage shelters and over 1,500 metres of double pipeline connecting the exploders to the shelters.

GAZ.EX is an avalanche control system built in France. The system consists of exploder devices that are large pipes located in the starting zones of a given avalanche path(s). To create an explosion, the exploders are fed a mixture of oxygen and propane through a connecting pipeline from a gas storage shelter. Explosions are triggered with a laptop computer using an assigned radio frequency that sends the signal to the exploder. The resulting explosion in the exploder creates a pressure wave 100 metres in all directions that is the equivalent of hanging 50 kilograms of explosives in the air. The pressure wave crushes the instability within the snowpack and an avalanche starts.

With the completion of this phase (phase 1 - Sept 93; phase 2 - Sept 97) of the GAZ.EX project, the total exploder array on Kootenay Pass is now 19, serviced by five shelters on three different mountains. Cost of this last phase was \$1.6 million (purchase of equipment and construction).

The efficiency of the GAZ.EX system is evident when you consider that it took at least one hour to do avalanche control on the eastside avalanche area (North Fork) with the 105mm recoilless rifle and now it takes less than 20 minutes to shoot 10 exploders accomplishing the same work. Highway closure times have been shortened with this type of equipment. In Europe, Japan, Chile, USA and Canada, GAZ.EX is a popular alternative to conventional avalanche control with explosives. With the latest technology in this final phase, the MoTH snow avalanche



A helicopter lowers part of a Gaz.Ex system into place.

program at Kootenay Pass is one of the most hi-tech avalanche hazard management programs in North America.

## Northern Region Up and Running

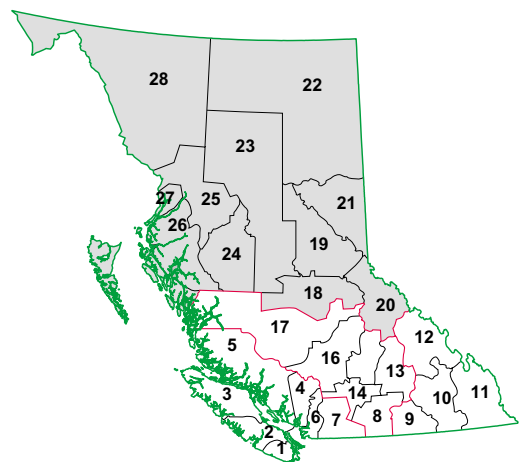
by Ron Wiebe, regional communications coordinator

The name has changed and the team has gotten larger, but the majority of the players remain the same in the new Northern Region of the ministry, which officially came into being with the onset of the new year. The former Northwest and Central/North East regions have merged and a fresh page in highways history has been started.

Friends and colleagues offer their best wishes to former regional director Dirk Nyland who, by now, should be happily ensconced at headquarters in his new role as chief engineer. Meanwhile, Kathie Miller has taken the reins of the expanded Northern Region.

While radical changes in our way of doing business are not anticipated, we all realize there's more to integration than simply redrawing some lines and changing our name. New working relationships are now being formulated and everyone is working in earnest to wrap up the separate regional obligations undertaken at the beginning of the year.

With the onset of a new fiscal in April, it is then that we can expect to see further evidence of our coming together. In keeping with tradition, we will continue to extend our renowned northern hospitality and an exceptional level of service to our customers.



Gray area denotes new Northern Region.

Hail to the Chief :

# Dirk Nyland, Chief Engineer

by David Belford, regional communications coordinator



Dirk Nyland,  
chief engineer

Dirk Nyland, former regional director for the Northwest Region is starting a new chapter in his career with the ministry. On January 2, 2001 Dirk began his new role as the ministry's chief engineer.

Dirk has spent over 27 years with the ministry. In February 1981, Dirk came to the Northwest Region to take the position of regional geotech and materials engineer.

"Actually my first visit to the Northwest was in October of '80 to have a look at what I was getting into," said Dirk. "At that time Highway 16 between Terrace and Prince Rupert was being re-constructed. Significant portions of the highway were little better than a narrow one and a half lanes wedged between the Skeena River and the CNR tracks. At one point the highway narrowed to one lane as transport trucks and other vehicles squeezed between the supports of a transmission line tower. There was going to be a lot of interesting and challenging work. A further indication of how interesting things were going to be came in early March 1981 when Dave St. Thomas, then a head field and inspection technician with geo-tech got us lost in a swamp on a trip up the Nass to Greenville."

Dirk came to the Northwest from the Kamloops area where he had been doing geotechnical engineering for natural hazards, such as the silt bluffs in the Okanagan, and on the new Coquihalla Highway. He found a much different environment and road conditions in the Northwest.

"At that time Highway 37N was paved and under construction from Kitwanga to the old camp at 30 mile (Tsugwinselda Creek) and loosely connected old gravel forest service roads to north of Cranberry Junction. There were mud holes in the Cranberry Junction area, with the old road being little more than a wagon road."

recalled Dirk, "Up at the summit north of Meziadin Junction there were snowbanks 15 feet high at the edge of the road."

Dan Doyle was the regional director for the Northwest region in those years and assigned Dirk the task of stabilizing the rock slopes along Highway 16 east and west of Terrace.

"I was pretty proud of the fact that our rock crew did such a great job," said Dirk. "Rock falls on Highway 16 were virtually eliminated."

The fact that Highway 37N has gone from 230 kilometres of hard surface to 667 kilometers on the 747-kilometre long highway is a major achievement that Dirk has seen during his 20 years in the Northwest.

"Personally, one of the most satisfying projects that I've been involved in is the Nisga'a negotiations, the friends I made in the Nass and how much I learned by being involved in the treaty negotiation process," said Nyland.

The biggest challenge Dirk found in the Northwest wasn't the weather or the mountainous terrain, but the need to justify projects not on traffic volumes but economic development demands and the need for reliable transportation links for resources.

"I have also taken great pride in seeing my staff progress up the ranks," said Dirk. "People like John Bodnarchuk, now a DHM on the Island, Dave Byng, DHM in Cranbrook, and Kevin Higgins, general manager of Yellowhead Road & Bridge Ltd. in Prince George. Last but by no means the least, Dave St. Thomas, who finally found Greenville and is now the project manager for the Kincolith Extension Project. The most difficult period for me was the deaths of avalanche technicians Al Evenchick and Al Munro in 1999."

Dirk has some advice for those working in the Northern Region. "Listen. Get to

## Something Fishy

(cont'd from Page 7)

groundwater-fed channel within the Naver Creek floodplain designed to provide rearing habitat for juvenile chinook salmon.

The sinuous channel was laid out to connect a series of four small ponds and was excavated to groundwater depth with a gradient down to an existing natural channel leading to the creek mainstem. These design features will prevent fish from becoming isolated from the mainstem when creek levels drop and will provide the flowing water stimulus that juvenile chinook need before they will move into an off-channel area.

Channel excavation and placement of large organic debris was carried out over five days in the latter part of October under the supervision of an Engineering Technician and Restoration Biologist from DFO. A temporary sandbag dam and a series of geotextile sediment control structures were installed at the terminus of the excavated channel to prevent sediment movement into Naver Creek. The work wrapped up with the application of seed, straw mulch and the planting of live stakes of red osier dogwood, willow and cottonwood. During 2001, the newly created channel will be kept isolated from the mainstem in order to allow time for a vegetative cover to establish and thereby minimize sediment transport into Naver Creek following dam removal. The channel is expected to be available next year for juvenile chinook looking for a refuge area where they can conserve energy and avoid being flushed downstream by high flows in Naver Creek.



Terminus of groundwater channel showing the temporary dam.

Continued on page 12

Region 6

# Welcome to "The Rock". A.K.A. Region 6

by Debra Crozier-Smith, senior communications coordinator

The last four months have been typically busy ones for the Vancouver Island Region. Besides the windup of the construction season and the onset of cold weather, the regional team has been putting time into some other tasks. One of these involved providing a ministry presence at a Nov. 2 career fair in School District 68, reaching youth in the area from Ladysmith to Nanaimo.

The morning session of the fair was open to grade seven students and 1,400 students attended. The afternoon session was open to all secondary level students and 800 students attended. Regional staff answered questions and helped students browse through a display that included a combination of videos, pictures and a PowerPoint presentation. The same materials were also used in the Visions For the Future Conference (a career development program for First Nations youth on Vancouver Island) where they were also well received.

Kudos go to the region's Harold Boyden, who spearheaded this effort and pulled together a display package that the ministry can be proud of.

The PowerPoint presentation is of particular interest as it talks about the various types of careers available to people who want to work with or on behalf of the ministry. If other ministry staff have an interest in viewing it, please contact Sandy Hickox at [Sandy.Hickox@gems7.gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sandy.Hickox@gems7.gov.bc.ca) or by telephone at (250) 390-6120.

Another noteworthy event in the region's life was the presentation of a certificate of appreciation from Regional Director Neville Hope to the region's survey and design groups. The certificate expresses thanks for the dedication and excellent service these two groups have given in meeting project demands over the past few years. The results of their work have improved traffic safety and driving conditions for travellers throughout the island.

Both groups have done an outstanding job over the past decade in meeting both regional and Vancouver Island Highway project challenges. The Mount Washington Roadway and the Duke Point Highway are two projects worth mentioning. Collectively, team members have successfully completed nearly 200 Contract for Service assignments, while also dedicating a cumulative total of 28 person-years of work for the Vancouver Island Highway project. Achieving this level of excellence consistently over such a long period of time is a tribute to good teamwork and dedication to detail. Congratulations for a job well done!



(Above) Students check out MoTH display at School District 68 career fair.



(Left) Regional survey team from left to right, Barry Fisk, Dave Purvis, Norm Urquhart, Ken Mackenzie, Bob Reading, Bill Quinn and George Der.



Regional design team from left to right, Tom Wight, Carol Hirst, Paula Young, Bob Wylie, Don Starke and Wayne Jentsch.

## New Places, New Faces

The following individuals have been confirmed in their new positions to January 11.

EMPLOYEE	LOCATION	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Darin Barnabe	Kootenays Region	Financial Officer	December 4
Lauren Boucher	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Pay Leave Management Clerk	October 18
Clara Conti	South Coast Region	Administrative Assistant	January 11
Garth Coward	HQ Communications Branch	Director, Communications	January 8
Patricia Dixon	South Coast Region	District Clerk	December 4
Jamie Duncan	HQ Systems Planning & Policy Branch	GIS Technician	December 4
Tim Dyer	Kootenays Region	Senior Instrument Person	November 20
Russell Fuller	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Senior Manager Financial Planning	December 12
Maureen Glenn	HQ Freedom Of Information Branch	Requests Clerk	December 8
Randy Grelson	Lower Mainland-Howe Sound District	Area Manager, Roads	November 1
Brad Grunberg	Lower Mainland-Howe Sound District	Area Manager, Roads	November 17
Perry Grunenberg	South Coast Region	Site Investigations Technician	December 4
John Hand	Kootenays Region	Engineering Assistant Projects	January 2
Michelle Hebert	Central/North East Region	Weed Control Program Coordinator	October 30
Andrew Hind	South Coast Region	Senior Transportation Planning Engineer	January 2
Sharlie Huffman	HQ Engineering Branch	Bridge Seismic Rehabilitation Engineer	January 2
Michele Ihas	Kootenays Region	Regional Financial Clerk	October 26
Vicki Ilkka	HQ Systems Planning & Policy Branch	Secretary	November 6
Susan Ingram	Thompson-Okanagan Region	Regional Management Coord	October 30
Brian Jepsen	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Assistant Manager Coquihalla Toll Plaza	December 20
Tamara Lawes	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Budget Analyst	January 2
Patrick Livolsi	South Coast Region	Manager Traffic & Electrical Engineering	October 23
Elfi Marsh	South Coast Region	Secretary, Highway Engineering	October 20
Rick Merkel	South Coast Region	Senior Instrument Person	October 24
David Mintak	South Coast Region	Project Management Technician	January 8
Dirk Nyland	HQ Engineering Branch	Chief Engineer	January 2
April Paxton	HQ Office Of The Superintendent	Team Leader Intake Services	December 4
Joe Peterson	Lower Mainland-Howe Sound District	District Development Technician	January 2
April Poffenroth	HQ Office of Superintendent	Adjudicator	January 8
Catherine Porter	HQ Planning & Major Projects	Manager, Support Services	October 23
Shirley Pshyk	Okanagan-Shuswap District	District Clerk	October 24
Daniel Purcell	Bulkley Lakes District	Snow Avalanche Aide	November 6
Janai Smith	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Assistant Secretary to Director	December 19
Lori Smith	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Pay Leave Management Clerk	October 18
Dianne Stevens	Thompson-Okanagan Region	Planning Administrative Assistant	November 6
Victoria Stevenson	HQ Office Of The Superintendent	Finance Clerk	January 8
Matthew Tremble	HQ Finance and Administration Branch	Pay Leave Management Clerk	October 23

### Dirk Nyland (Cont'd from page 10)

know your staff, aboriginal and non-aboriginal community leaders on a face-to-face basis. Understand where they are coming from and empathize with their needs."

"What I will miss most leaving the Northwest is the people...the team spirit we have in the region." Dirk reflected, "I won't have the same

sort of "hands on" operational challenges which took me down the highway through the most beautiful scenery in the world. But then, I'll be able to garden year round and only have to shovel my driveway every leap year"