

North American Mountain Forum

Project Updates

Bow Valley Mountain Forum

The North American Mountain Forum office is located in a region whose communities face some significant sustainability challenges, a dearth of information about these challenges, and both transient and growing populations. In 2004 the North American node began asking local organisations how we could better serve the needs of the regional community.

Using their suggestions, the North American node began planning a “mini-network” to promote community engagement and information exchange about local sustainability and conservation issues. If successful, technology templates created for the project could be shared with other North American mountain communities for similar purposes.

In spring 2005, the North American node of the Mountain Forum began seeking funds for the project in earnest. By building on the resources and expertise at The Banff Centre, Mountain Forum’s regional host institution, the initial costs of the project have been significantly reduced.

We look forward to seeing the new *Bow Valley Mountain Forum* pilot project take shape over the coming months.

North American Mountain Forum Newsletter

Late in 2004, the North American Mountain Forum News became a regular feature on the regional email list. This simple, text-based newsletter summarises mountain news and issues that have appeared frequently in North American news outlets over the previous month. The stories chosen for each newsletter come from an archive of 200 articles collected monthly and are organised by theme. We look forward to seeing the newsletter grow over time as we make changes based on reader requests and feedback.

Consortium for Integrated Climate Research in Western Mountains (CIRMOUNT)

The Consortium for Integrated Climate Research in Western Mountains (CIRMOUNT) was created several years ago to facilitate communication, improved observations and better integration of research on western mountain resources and their vulnerability to climate variability and change.

The consortium was created by a cross-section of physical and ecological scientists researching mountain climate and ecosystems in the temperate regions of Western North America. They felt there was a need for a forum that would be responsive to North American society as it grapples with the effects of climate change in mountain ecosystems.

CIRMOUNT now aims to support improved observation, research, communication, and decision-making by:

- Implementing coordinated high-elevation climate and ecosystem monitoring (observation)
- Catalysing integrated research within and among mountain regions (research)
- Providing sound science for effective land-use planning and management (communication and decision-support)
- Promoting the development of long-term, policy-relevant mountain climate and ecosystem databases (research, observation, communication, and decision-support)

Six task-oriented CIRMOUNT Working Groups have been initiated with the intent of achieving concrete and ongoing progress toward CIRMOUNT goals. Current Working Groups include the following:

- Mountain-Based Hydrologic Observatories and Observations for the 21st Century
- North American GLORIA (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments)
- Paleoclimatology and Water Resources Management: Time for an Integrated Paleo-Resource?
- CIRMOUNT, MRI and Mountain Climate Research Worldwide
- Mountain Climate Monitoring Network
- Mountain Ecosystem Responses to Climate in the North American West and CIRMOUNT Goals

CIRMOUNT also hosts a biennial science conference called MTNCLIM, to help improve communication between disciplines and among scientists, managers and policy-makers, and to provide a forum for making concrete progress toward CIRMOUNT’s goals. MTNCLIM 2005 was a success and more information can be found online at <<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/mtnclim/>>. MTNCLIM 2006 will be held in September of that year.

CIRMOUNT aligns with the goals of the U.S. Federal Climate Change Science Program <<http://www.climatechange.gov/>>



Photo: Ron Mader

Rural Tourism Fair, Oaxaca, Mexico

Mountain Forum News

and has been endorsed as a pilot regional project of the international Mountain Research Initiative <<http://mri.scnatweb.ch>>.

All interested in mountain climate research are welcome to participate. Contact Connie Millar <cmillar@fs.fed.us> to be added to the mailing lists or for information on projects and meetings.

On the Web

MTNCLIM 2005 Conference Proceedings

<<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/mtnclim/talks.html>>
We applaud The Consortium for Integrated Climate Research in Western Mountains (CIRMOUNT) for placing the proceedings of its conference - MTNCLIM 2005 - on the web. Visit the website for abstracts and complete PDF files of virtually all conference posters, contributed talks, and invited presentations.

One Tonne Challenge

<<http://www.climatechange.gc.ca/onetonne/english/index.asp>>

One Less Tonne

<<http://www.onelesstonne.ca>>

Both sites offer 'greenhouse gas calculators' to help site visitors easily calculate a rough estimate of their annual greenhouse gas production - and potential reductions. One Tonne Challenge was created by the Government of Canada as part of its campaign to help Canadians reduce and adapt to the impacts of climate change. One LessTonne is a project of the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development and it is interesting, fun and practical.

PeakBagger Mountain Range Classification System (PEMRACS)

<<http://www.peakbagger.com/rangindx.aspx>>
Although *Peakbagger.com* was created for recreational mountaineers, its mountain atlas is one of the most extensive on the web. The site has created its own arbitrary "Mountain Range Classification System" that divides most of the earth's land surfaces into a six level hierarchy of ranges and subranges. The author admits that the system is not perfect and has many errors but the effort is significant and worth a look.

Contact

Amy Krause, Leslie Taylor
Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre
107 Tunnel Mountain Drive
Box 1020, Banff Alberta Canada T1L 1H5
Tel: +1-403-762 6477 Fax: +1-403-762 6277
Email: northamerica@mtnforum.org
Web: <<http://www.banffcentre.ca/mountainculture/mtnforum>>

Secretariat

This new phase at the Mountain Forum Secretariat (MFS) has been very exciting, with many initiatives and activities taking place. Some highlights of this period were:

As part of MF's efforts to strategise for the medium to long-term, MFS carried out a global multilingual survey to assess the quality and value of the services currently offered by the Mountain Forum and to garner user feedback on MF strategies for the future. The survey results constituted an integral part of the reflections on the Mountain Forum's future orientation in order to ensure its success in the coming years.

Together with Radio Sagarmatha (the oldest independent community broadcasting station in South Asia) and Asia-Pacific Mountain Forum, MFS recently concluded a pilot community radio project aimed at linking communities at the grassroots with online community, through community radio and the internet.

In preparation for the Second Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership (Cusco, Peru, October 28th and 29th, 2004), the Mountain Forum moderated an electronic conference (30 August - 17 September 2004) with the objective of providing an open and participatory platform for members to air their views and define the Mountain Partnership's Plan of Action. <http://www.mountainpartnership.org/files/pdf/e-consultation_en_2210.pdf>
Mountain Forum representatives also participated in this global meeting of the Mountain Partnership and contributed significantly to the development of Mountain Partnership's Plan of Action.

MFS consolidated its ties with the Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences to collaborate on the Institute's Eurasia Mountain Newsletter.



Potato Park Center, Cusco, Peru

Photo: Agustina Barros