

## BCIA KBB Branch President's Report

November 2020

Greetings to the Kootenay Boundary Branch membership of BCIA from my home office on Sinixt and Ktunaxa territory!

I'd like to start by expressing my sincerest gratitude to the 2020 Branch Executive who have been steadfast in their roles in this unprecedented year of uncertainty and confusion. Did you know that the Executive Committee for the Kootenay Boundary Branch had ten members this year, including four (4!) professional development coordinators? We needed a big team because we had big plans for 2020.

The field trips that we had planned were ambitious and included a drug-themed field trip with a visit to a marijuana grow-op, a brewery and a meth lab waste reclamation site. We had lined-up a FortisBC dam tour with a Columbia River Treaty focus. We were gearing-up for Indigenous cultural training with the Ktunaxa at the former residential school near Cranbrook. We were planning social gatherings for mentors and mentees and we had the objective to attend tradeshow and educate the public about all the great things agrologists do. Those were our best laid plans for 2020.

But I won't dwell on what could have been. Suffice it to say that the seeds for those amazing field trips have been sowed and lay dormant, waiting for a time when the growing conditions are optimal and when the words "in-person", "social" and "public" are no longer whispered behind a mask.

Each of us have our own pandemic story to tell. Some of us have been more affected than others, but Agrologists are a hardy bunch and many of us have thrived in this new paradigm. With so many people stuck indoors and behind their computers, there are fewer people to share the road with as we pedal our bikes, fewer weekend warriors in the backcountry and less visitors crowding our favourite parks and beaches. Isolation for many of us meant more time to tend our gardens and backyard bee meadows. It inspired us to go mushroom picking, canning or experiment with new recipes in the kitchen.

When the news broke that the world was experiencing reduced global seismic noise, that there were sightings of never-before-seen creatures in the ocean, that listed species were mating in the quiet zoos and that the canal waters of Venice and the air of Hong Kong had visibly cleared, Agrologists were listening. When the restaurants and public arenas shut down all at once and the food supply chain crashed causing devastating impacts on the farming community, Agrologists were called upon to help solve these problems.

If there is one thing that 2020 has shown me its that when the proverbial scat hits the fan, those of us who maintain a connection with the earth, value the components of a healthy ecosystems, know the true impact of exponential human population growth and rally for a secure local food economy; its those of us who will be called upon to serve.

As we move into 2021 and we see changes to our professional development requirements, mandatory Indigenous cultural training and a more defined commitment to our specialization, I encourage all of us to lean into it, find worth in its purpose, explore and uphold your values and never stop learning because Agrologists have a very important role to play on this planet and I am very proud to be among you.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this amazing community.

Sheila Street, 2020 KBB President.



**Kootenay Boundary Branch**

## 2020 Articling Report

Kootenay Boundary BCIA Branch AGM – November 2020

2020 has been an interesting year for members of the BCIA with the Covid 19 response and transition of branch activities to an online format. There have been both challenges and successes and we have all learned from the experience thus far. The Kootenay-Boundary Branch welcomed seven new articling Agrologists and had six existing A.Ags complete the final requirements of the program and advance to P.Ag status. At present there are 20 A.Ags and 3 student members in the Kootenay Branch.

There have been some challenges with providing opportunities for A.Ag's to their Articling requirements in 2020. The BCIA adapted to the Covid 19 response by providing an online platform for the Articling training, ethics workshop and updated the Articling program journal to align with new bylaws with inclusion of the updated technologist category. Although there have been few volunteer opportunities, several A.Ag's have been able to join executive calls which hopefully will foster an interest in volunteering for future executive positions.

Cheers,

Ben Foulger

## 2020 Professional Development Report

Kootenay Boundary Branch AGM  
Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 1-3pm PST

The Professional Development (PD) Coordinators from the 2020 Kootenay Boundary (KB) Branch, were: Jessica Lowey, Rachel Pennell, Audrey Ehman and Jazmine Lowther. Amid Covid-19, organizing PD was an interesting experience that required creativity, flexibility, and technological innovation. The KB executive adapted to the pandemic by transitioning to virtual events as in-person events were cancelled. Two webinars were successfully organized and hosted, and an online workshop is planned this winter.

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, speaker Conrad Berube P.Ag, MSc and beekeeper hobbyist provided the alarming, but fascinating webinar "*Giant Asian Hornets*". With 96 registrants, this event captured the interest of many members. The second webinar, "*Restoration for Pollination: The Pollinator Pathway to Climate Adaptation*" occurred October 8<sup>th</sup>, and was hosted by Valerie Huff MSc, and Brenda Beckwith PhD from the Kootenay Native Plant Society. This presentation touched on numerous areas of practise within agrology and had 37 attendees. Both events garnered great turn out, included meaningful post-webinar discussions, and built new professional connections. This December 9<sup>th</sup>, KB and 3 other BCIA branches worked together to offer "*Roberts Rules and How to Solve Boardroom Problems*", this workshop will teach key principles of facilitating effective meetings.

Throughout the year, several A.Ags attended the KB Branch Executive meetings as part of their articling process, and a registrant read the Code of Ethics as the final step in attaining their P.Ag status. We hope to continue to see registrants join the meetings.

On the horizon for 2021, there will be further accountability and obligatory upkeep for professional development reports. Head office is now managing all virtual PD events to ease administration, and any event not on the BCIA calendar can be directly emailed to the BCIA head office. Additionally, with the newly adopted Indigenous Awareness Training Requirement, the KB Branch Executive strive to supplement this by providing learning opportunities with local First Nations.

This years' PD Coordinators are stepping down from the Executive but welcome all newcomers to their roles. The KB Branch Exec look forward to 2021, and endeavor to continue to provide professional development opportunities safely to the Kootenay Boundary.

All the Best,

Kootenay Boundary Branch, Professional Development Coordinators