Northern Field Studies
University of Manitoba and Trier University, 2010
This book is a testament to the places visited and the new ideas learned on the Northern Field Studies Seminar. The course is offered through the University of Manitoba, Canada and Trier University, Germany. The trip was funded in large part by Dr. Norman Halden, Dean, through the Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources Endowment Fund at the University of Manitoba.
"Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to see northern Manitoba! Your financial assistance made this trip affordable for us and I hope that future graduate students will also have this chance to experience the north."
~Melanie Burt, University of Manitoba

"This excursion was an incredible experience, especially since I was able to share this opportunity with my fellow students. I would have to say that being able to witness and partake in a researcher’s way of life at the research station in Churchill was the most unforgettable part of the trip. I was able to see the Northern Lights during this part of the excursion. The Northern Field Seminar was such an exceptional program that it will be hard to forget. I would like to express my gratitude to all those people who made this trip possible and to all those kind and merry people who accompanied us throughout the trip."
~Benjamin Braun, Trier University

"I loved the opportunity to go on this trip and to see Churchill was a once in a lifetime experience. If the trip had been much more expensive I couldn't have afforded to go. Seeing the remoter areas of Manitoba and getting to meet locals and learn about their perspectives is a really valuable opportunity (especially for future natural resource managers), one that everyone should have a chance to take advantage of."
~Alexis Richardson, University of Manitoba

"This trip taught me a lot about the diversity of Canada. The different projects we heard presentations about were very interesting and gave me new ideas for my professional development. The highlight of the trip was Churchill. To see the landscape with a flora and fauna I have never seen before was an unforgettable experience. Additionally, the groups from Canada and Germany grew together in this short period of time, which deepened the exchange of the different cultures and ways of life. Thank you very much for supporting this trip!"
~Laura Lichter, Trier University
Delta Marsh

Topics

Wildlife research

History of Delta Marsh

Bird banding

Getting to know each other
Whitemud Watershed Conservation District

Topics

Soil conservation

Water conservation

Land restoration

Agriculture and Forestry
Touring the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District and the Rosedale Soil and Water Conservation Demonstration Farm taught us about sustainable forestry and farming, and how the land can be restored after it has been degraded by poor land practices.
Riding Mountain National Park

Topics

Parks Management

Agriculture and Wildlife Interactions

Park Policy

Ecological Integrity

Land-use Conflicts
Good eats and comfortable accommodations helped us stay happy and healthy on the trip, which allowed for rich learning opportunities. Here we are just arriving at Riding Mountain National park, where we learned about park/public interactions and fire management strategies.
We saw a beautiful sunset at Riding Mountain National Park, along with plains bison, elk, and boreal chickadees.

Bison grazing in their paddock at Riding Mountain.
Park staff taught us how to "bugle" for elk. We saw some on our way to call them, but were not successful at bringing them back out of the woods.
Duck Mountains

Topics

Forestry

Resource Management

Environmental Certifications

Archeological Resources
The Duck Mountains and the presentations about forestry, industry certifications, and impacts on the archeological resources in an area were eye opening. Dinner with local Envirothon participants was also a fun opportunity to see how young people are learning to appreciate and protect the environment.
Dr. Schneider, a geologist, was able to teach about how the Canadian North was formed, and what the different soils and rock mean. One stop to dig in the dirt was in the middle of nowhere, and there were huge power lines nearby.
Tolko Plant Tour and Meeting with First Nations' Leaders

Topics

Forest Industry

International Economics

Aboriginal Self-government
The Tolko tour showed us how some of the wood that is chopped down in Canadian forests is used. Right now, the plant has shut down half of its operations due to the housing slump in the United States and is currently only making industrial strength paper bags.
Pisew Falls and Paint Lake

Topics

Mining and the Environment

History

Natural Environment

Being in Pristine Northern Manitoba
The tour guide at Pisew Falls taught us about the plants in the forests and also had us sit quietly in the trees to hear the forest.

This cut was likely made by someone searching for minerals, illegally (it’s in a provincial park, after all!).
"Pisew Falls was a great day after traveling many hours on the bus for a lot of the trip." —Megan Bob, University of Manitoba

Tree-hugging was encouraged on this part of the trip.
ABSOLUTELY NO RUNNING OR PLAYING HOCKEY IN THE HALLWAYS
Wuskwatim Generation Project and Notigi Diversion

Topics

Hydro-electric Development

Industry/Aboriginal Partnerships--Manitoba Hydro has partnered with the Nelson House First Nation to build a hydro dam that respects First Nations wishes.
The Notigi Diversion takes water from the Rat River and puts it into the Nelson River for increased power generation.

The project was done without consulting First Nations and resulted in distrust on the part of First Nations elders towards MB Hydro.
Churchill

Topics

Transitions in Landscape
Parks and Heritage
Belguas and Wildlife
Regional Development
Ecotourism and Impact Management
Northern Endangered Species
The Churchill Northern Studies Centre provided us with delicious meals and very comfortable accommodations. They were very careful about our safety, and the big white dog was around to scare away polar bears.
"Seeing this wonderful place was enhanced by the fun we had with our wonderful group." ~Karina Friedrichs, Trier University
Polar bears are just one of the threatened species in Northern Canada.
When polar bears come near town, they are sometimes caught in these traps and then held in the "jail" until they can be safely moved north of the town.
The Tundra Buggy excursion got us out into the tundra, up close and personal. We saw tundra swans, willow ptarmigan, pacific loons, and beautiful landscapes.

A lucky few got to drive the tundra buggies!
The Wier Project in Churchill was built to partially mitigate the impacts of the Churchill River Diversion for hydropower development upstream.
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Mya Wheeler Wiens, University of Manitoba
Joanne Moyer, University of Manitoba
Tonya Lwiwski, University of Manitoba
Dr. Raimund Schneider, Trier University
Melanie Burt, University of Manitoba
Laura Lichter, Trier University
Eva Alten, Trier University
Alexis Richardson, University of Manitoba
"I would like to express my gratitude for your generous funding of the 2010 University of Manitoba/Trier University Northern Field Seminar partnership. Without the subsidy the common field trip could not have been held in the proposed way or maybe even not at all. This was my third field trip in cooperation with Professor Thomas Henley and Dr. John Sinclair since 1999. When I came for the first time it was primarily to see the country and to continue the work of my colleague, Dr. Hellmut Schroeder-Lanz. Now I come to keep the cooperation and friendship going and to give students from Trier University (originating from Germany, Luxemburg, Spain, Russia, and Kazakhstan) the chance to meet University of Manitoba students (originating from Canada, United States, India, and Nepal, Britian) on a joint trip around Manitoba and learn about Canada, Manitoba, and sustainable land use. I am convinced that this partnership will continue and we will find a way to welcome a group of Canadian students on a German field trip in the near future. The friendliness and hospitality of so many Canadians is always my most lasting memory." ~Dr. Raimund Schneider, Trier University
"The NFS allowed me to explore and experience places and people of Manitoba that I had not even imagined. I gained a deep respect for the issues facing communities in the North and, with the insight of having been there, I will be able to integrate that into my own research. This trip also increased my network of people working in Manitoba on a variety of natural resource issues - a network that I believe will continue to aid me throughout my career." ~Mya Wheeler Wiens, University of Manitoba