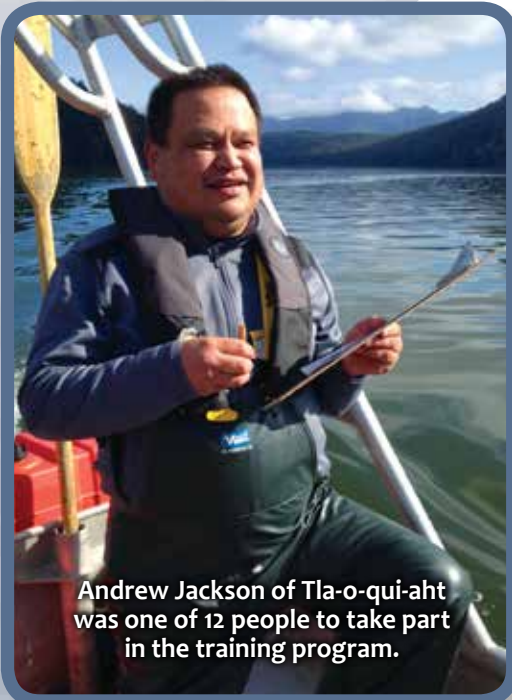


From Crabs to Computers: Fisheries Workers Participate in Diverse Training



Andrew Jackson of Tla-o-qui-aht was one of 12 people to take part in the training program.

Crabbing on Nitinat Lake may not be the most common way to conduct job training, but it was one activity enjoyed by fisheries workers who attended a recent training program hosted by Uu-a-thluk. Led by Uu-a-thluk biologist Jim Lane and Ditidaht Fisheries Manager Phillip Edgar, the field trip shared methods for conducting crab and groundfish longline surveys with other Nuuchahnulth fisheries departments.

In total, twelve staff members from a variety of Nuuchahnulth Nations took part in the round of fisheries training sponsored by Uu-a-thluk. The goal of the training was to enhance the job skills required to run First Nations fisheries programs. The training

took place over three weeks during January, February, and March.

During the time in Ditidaht territory, fisheries staff learned how to set up and conduct surveys. They also gathered real field data, which they brought back to North Island College and entered into Microsoft Excel as part of their computer training.

“It was useful for the participants to collect data in the field and then use it during the computer lab session to generate catch and assessment reports that they could present to their Nations,” said Jim Lane. “The activity helps connect data collection with communicating information externally.”

Also part of the third week of training was a presentation to fisheries staff on DFO’s work on improving catch monitoring in recreational fisheries from David O’Brien from DFO.

Other segments of the fisheries staff training included time spent with computer trainer, Joanne Martell-Brubaker. In January, the first week of training, participants improved computer skills by learning programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, and the general use of email. This helped fisheries staff prepare for inputting their field data into Excel soon after.

Somass Toastmasters of Port Alberni was also

involved with the fisheries staff training. Toastmaster Shirley Maxwell spent one day working with the participants on public speaking and a variety of presentation skills. Throughout this week of training in February, fisheries staff had the chance to practise speeches and presentations, learn tools for organizing efficient and productive meetings, and learn more about modern communication tools such as digital stories and videos.

“We all want to preserve and protect the resources around us... and continue to learn how to take care of these resources for future generations.”

—Stephenie Charleson, Uu-a-thluk Intern & Training Participant

Many of the participants found the training important for a number of reasons. First, the responsibilities of fisheries managers and technicians are changing because of increased catch monitoring and other management requirements. Workers need new or improved skills to meet this demand. Second, Nations learn from one another when working together. Everyone has something to share.

“[The training] brought First Nations together. We learned the similar challenges that each other are facing and were able to work together to share solutions. It was clear we had a stronger connection at the end of the training,” said Kim Nookemus, a participant from Ditidaht.

Stephenie Charleson, an Uu-a-thluk intern and training participant, also found the training useful. “We all want to preserve and protect the resources around us ... and continue to learn how to take care of these resources for future generations.”

Special thanks to the BC Capacity Initiative for funding these training sessions. Thanks also to Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Ditidaht First Nation for contributing to the training.

To provide feedback or ask questions about the training opportunities Uu-a-thluk provides, contact Michelle Colyn at 250-724-5757 or michelle.colyn@nuuchahnulth.org



Phillip Edgar shows participants how crabs do not always get it right when regenerating lost limbs.

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Setting up and conducting crab surveys was one of the activities that took place during the participants' third week of training.