

Kristy Franks
M.A., Special Individualized Program, Concordia University

Abstract

Water ethics and water education for urban biodiversity

Sustainable biodiversity depends largely on sustainable water practices which are guided by our cultural water worldviews. In July 2014, using a community-based participatory research approach, I will accompany a group of 30 Cree youth on an annual canoe expedition down the Old Factory River of the Wemindji territory, James Bay. The group will participate in the development of a curriculum geared for urban youth that reflects and reinforces their understanding of, and aspirations for, a sustainable water worldview. Research questions include: 1) What underlying water worldview needs to inform and guide water education curricula in order to promote sustainable biodiversity and water practices? 2) What curriculum content and methods regarding water education meet the cultural needs of rural Cree learners as well as those of urban Western science-centric learners? 4) How does one's bioregion and the surrounding biodiversity influence one's water worldview?

Bio

Kristy's environmental interest began at 12 years old when she founded a children's group called the HOME (Help Our Mother Earth) Club. A decade later she graduated from the McGill School of Environment and then years later co-founded a community group called Canal Bleu who regularly cleans up Montreal's Lachine Canal. Several people call her "the Smoothie girl", a reputation that stems from her energy-awareness project involving bikes that are connected to blenders which offer people the chance to use pedal power to mix Smoothies. She worked at Canada World Youth for seven and a half years coordinating their sustainable development projects including their Green Miles carbon responsibility project and their Rio+20 Earth Summit initiative. Kristy's passions are currently being channeled into a Masters degree focused on Water Ethics through Concordia's Individualized Program.

