



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness



The BC Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network

'The eyes, ears and voice of environmental change'

The Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network was designed by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) to communicate environmental changes detected by local and traditional people. The purpose of the Network is to increase understanding about environmental change and to help identify healthy and effective ways to adapt to those changes. Observers connect with indigenous and scientific experts, thereby integrating traditional, local, and scientific forms of knowledge. The LEO Network is being expanded to British Columbia (BC) through partnership of the Ocean Integrity Research and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) as a way to better understand the environmental changes that communities are observing.

WEBSITE AND MOBILE APP

Observations of unusual environmental changes are posted on an online map-based database with descriptions, photos, video, and audio information. A scientific and/or indigenous expert then reviews each observation and responds with additional information and links. Over time, observations can provide important information to identify potential changes that may be happening within the environment. In Alaska, LEO Network has grown to include hundreds of participants, communities, and institutions, and is already helping illuminate climate change effects and how to respond and adapt. Communities may decide what information to post and share with the network.

LEO Network features a global map and data interface accessible through the website (www.leonetwork.org), or through the mobile app 'LEO Reporter' on both iPhone and Android. It allows viewers to read refined stories that include initial observations, input of experts, photos and even video. The interface includes interactive maps, a search engine to explore the LEO observation database, and updates from the network. Anyone can be a LEO observer and engage other observers and experts, and help grow the observer community in BC.



Observations can be posted from anywhere in the world, but expert consults and technical support is available only in regions supported by LEO Network Hubs, such as in Alaska, British Columbia, and Baha California. To participate, the first step is to sign up and create a member profile. Many members are simply interested in reading the observations of others in order to stay informed about new events or to analyze trends, local impacts and responses.

COMMUNITY AND SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS

When an observation is posted, community experts provide valuable local and indigenous knowledge, thereby ground-truthing observations. They monitor LEO observations locally and regionally, provide consults, and act as local points-of-contact. First Nation environmental managers, other natural resource staff, and other

observers can participate as community experts, observers, and scientific experts. Scientific experts provide the science component of a consult. They are usually located in government agencies, academic institutions, or organizations with topic expertise.

IMPLEMENTING LEO NETWORK IN BC

ANTHC is leading a one-day workshop in mid-November 2016 in Victoria, BC to familiarize regional champions with the LEO Network. Regional First Nation champions, identified through your local FNHA Regions, are invited to participate in the LEO Network workshop and will be trained on the LEO Network, enabling them to support other regional communities. The BC LEO Hub will provide leadership in identifying community and scientific experts based on topic expertise and the interest and capacity of these organizations to participate. Consultations provided by community and scientific experts complete the map postings.

The BC LEO Hub will host regional webinars, publish an e-journal, and provide updates to members and other organizations.

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Financial support for the implementation of LEO Network in BC is provided by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) and FNHA. The ANTHC is providing technical support in the establishment of the BC LEO Network Hub.

There is growing interest in implementing the LEO Network in Canada and the US. The LEO Network has been accepted as an Arctic Council project under the Arctic Contaminants Action Program Working Group to help implement the Circumpolar LEO Network. The White House Council on Native American Affairs is championing LEO Network in a partnership to expand the initiative to Native youth, with a goal of using the platform to integrate Native youth voices into the U.S. national dialogue on climate change.

Learn more about the LEO Network online at: www.leonetwork.org/en/learn

View the interactive LEO Network map here: www.leonetwork.org

CONTACTS:

If you have questions or are interested in the BC LEO Network, please contact:

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