

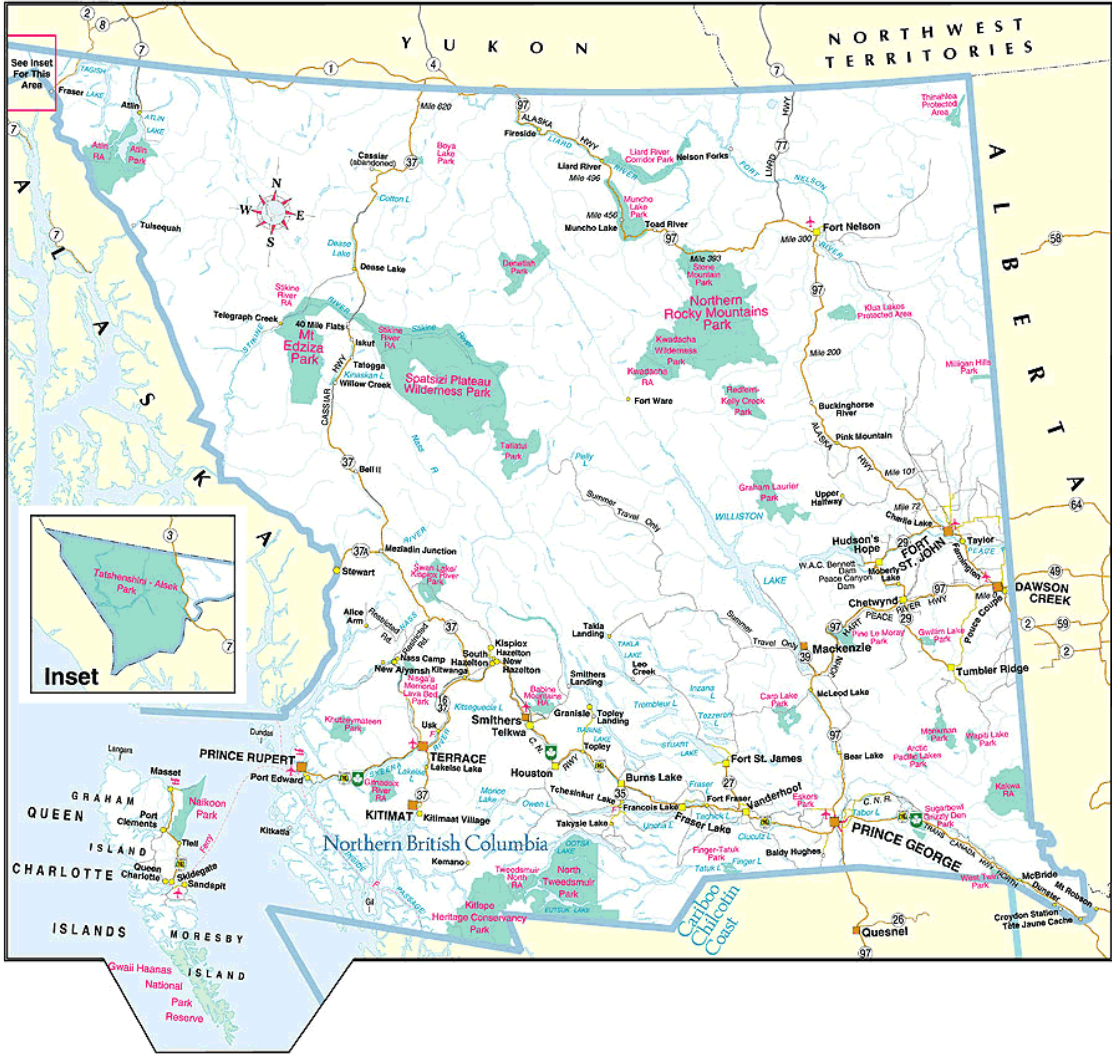
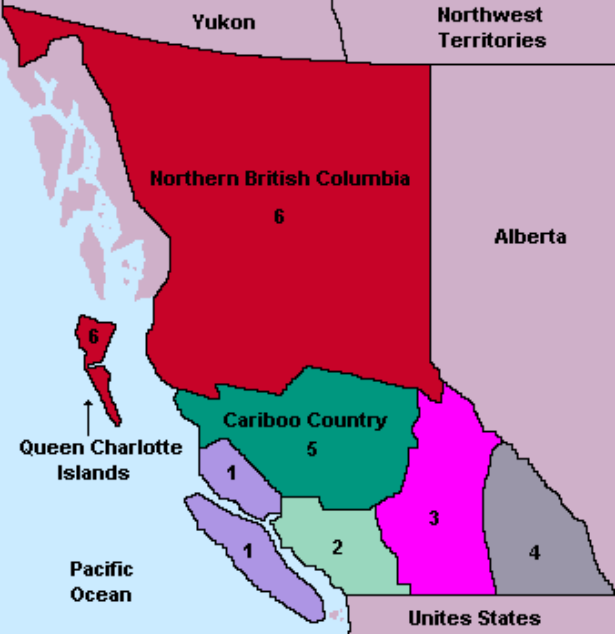
Reaching Out:

Science Outreach in the North

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The context:

- northern B.C
can be defined as
the upper third of
the province



- it has a population base of around 300,000 located in a variety of small communities scattered in stunningly wilderness



- hence, it is virtually impossible to service this area from a single site
- many programs are offered in smaller communities but are in need of support
- several major changes in the past decade have lead to some improvements in science outreach, including:
 - UNBC
 - Exploration Place in Prince George
 - PromoScience
 - Genome BC

My contribution has been in many different venues and forms:

- weekly newspaper column
- weekly radio column (CBC)
- television appearances
- Quizme!
- teacher's camps
- science fairs
- chemistry magic shows
- Pro-D Day presentations
- University Open Houses
- Girl Guides/Boy Scouts
- school presentations
- classroom visits
- "Festival of Science and Technology"
- "Science Alliance" (SAL)
- "Science University for Northern Youth" (SUNY)
- "Scientists and Innovators in the Schools"

Organizing these activities:

	Active	Passive
Presenter	- Chem Magic Show	- radio column
Participant	- Science Camps	- Chem Magic Show - radio column

- different activities have different roles within the broad range of outreach or "Public Understanding of Science"
- two successes and one not so successful program
 - Science Alliance
 - Quizme!
 - Teacher Camps

Science Alliance

- summer science camp for kids
- hosted by Exploration Place (unusual)
- started in 1995
 - initially funded by Partners In Science Awareness Grant (\$25k)
- number of participants has steadily increased (100 in first year; well over 300 now)
- former member of Actua

Why is it successful?

- features a wide range of activities
- age appropriate activities
- very "hands on" oriented
- young staff
- excellent venue
- well integrated into community
- well integrated into science museum
- and, only show in town!

Measuring success:

- through feedback during the week given to instructors (parents, kids, observers)
- through questionnaires
- through feedback from teachers

Quizme!

- elementary school quiz show featured on local television (PGTV)
- a partnership of School District #57, PGTV, and UNBC
- started in 2004 (sort of)
 - was created in response to NSERC!
(indirectly)
- presently has a dedicated viewership of around 1,000 (does really well in the 10 -12 demographic!)

Why is it successful?

- a school competition - emphasizes the "team" aspect
- allows the "smarter" students a venue to shine and represent their school
- changes a little each year
- and it allows kids to be on T.V.!

Measuring success:

- ratings are one measure

Teacher Camps

- summer science camps targeted at teachers
- took place over one weekend at a remote camp (modeled on "Loon Lake")
- started in 1997 - lasted only two summers
 - funded with \$10k grants from ministry
- open to teachers from all over the north

Why was it not so successful...?

- poorly attended...?
- too much to do...?
- bad time of year....?
- too many distractions....?

Measuring "success":

- through questionnaires and follow up interviews
- through direct feedback during camps

Conclusion?

There are lots of different models for doing "science outreach" but:

- must be tailored to the community in which they are to be presented
- better to be "hands on" than hands off
- just because it didn't work once doesn't mean that it won't work a second time
- partnerships are critical.

All of the different types of efforts are important.