

Abstract Submission for 5th Canadian River Heritage Conference

Title of Presentation:
GIS Community Mapping, getting involved

Category: Community Engagement

Presenter:

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Abstract

Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre has initiated a GIS (Geographic Information System) community mapping project with GPS (Geographic Positioning System) data collection. This program began in 2005 with the assistance of the Department of Canadian Heritage Museums Assistance Program. The overall goal of the Watershed Legacy Project is to promote awareness and knowledge of the water-related resources within the various watersheds of Canada as a key component of Canada's natural and cultural heritage through the establishment of a watershed database (an interactive, on-line map) that can be expanded and used for a variety of purposes.

This project requires a working partnership between communities, students, schools, and the Interpretive Centre. The Interpretive Centre provides the watershed database, the equipment and supplies needed to collect information for the database, as well as expertise and training to students and schools. The students and schools in return provide the data that is necessary to make the database a useful and interesting tool.

All data is entered on our interactive, on-line map server. The main goal of the map server is to help students and other community members to understand their watershed (i.e cultural, historical and natural features as well as water quality data). This map is also used as a teaching tool to help students better understand the technology used in its development.

In this presentation, the project will be explained as well as a demonstration of the interactive GIS map and a GPS activity (time permitting).

Biographical sketch:

Tabitha Martens is a graduate of the University of Winnipeg's Environmental Studies Program (B.Sc.). She is currently employed as the Aboriginal Programming Coordinator for Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre (OHMIC). As a Coordinator, she is responsible for the development of Aboriginal programs, ensuring they are consistent with Aboriginal culture and beliefs. She also acts as a liaison between OHMIC and Aboriginal communities and organizations. In 2005, Tabitha helped develop a Community Mapping Project, using GPS and GIS technology, designed to raise awareness of watersheds across the prairies. Tabitha is currently working with First Nations communities in mapping their watersheds.