

British Columbia Libraries Association - Climate Action Committee

Annual Report

2021 – 2022

CAC EXECUTIVE TEAM FOR 2021 – 2022

- Co-chairs: Helen Brown and Lisa Nathan
- Recording Secretary: Diana Marshall
- Directors at Large: Jenna Thomson and David Waddell
- Student Representatives: positions vacant

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY

In December 2019, 50 library leaders from a variety of small and large organizations in public, academic, and other sectors, met at Simon Fraser University to discuss library action to address climate change. The British Columbia Library Association created the [Climate Crisis Discussion Listserv](#) to help maintain momentum and extend the discussion beyond the event. In response to the issues raised in this discussion, BCLA planned climate-oriented conference sessions and keynotes for the 2020 BC Library Conference: Libraries, Democracy, and Action. This in-person conference was cancelled due to COVID-19, but some sessions were recorded and made available online, including [Navigating the Climate Crisis: Creating Hope in a Time of Uncertainty](#). One of the keynote speakers, Seth Klein, was rescheduled to speak as part of the [Libraries in the Global Arena Series](#) in summer 2021. This series included two presentations, *The Climate Crisis and Libraries: Mobilizing for the Climate Emergency* by Seth Klein and *The Climate Emergency and Mental Wellness* by Rachel Malena-Chan. The 2020 summer conference session and the December 2019 meeting at Simon Fraser University also led to a resolution presented at the 2020 BCLA Annual General Meeting to approve a [Climate Emergency Declaration](#), which included establishing a BCLA committee that would report directly to the BCLA Board to facilitate significant climate advocacy work. The resolution passed. During this time, BCLA also supported the City of Vancouver's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

In April 2021, the BCLA Board approved the [BCLA Climate Action Committee Terms of Reference](#). Co-chair positions were assigned by the BCLA Executive and the committee launched in August 2021 using the existing [Climate Crisis Discussion Listserv](#) to communicate committee announcements and facilitate discussion.

Since that time, the Climate Action Committee has focused on consultation, advocacy, and projects led by working groups. This work guides and sustains BCLA's responses to the ongoing climate crisis, and it is our hope that it will help inspire justice-based action and resilience throughout the library and information management community.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was a significant focus for 2021-2022. Conversations, facilitated discussions, asynchronous submissions, and survey results detailed the importance of climate action for library and information workers and institutions, impacts on libraries and communities, current initiatives, and ideas for the future. Summaries of the feedback will be added [here](#) as they become available. This feedback comes from the following meetings and survey:

- Brainstorming meeting and asynchronous activity (4 August 2021)
- Survey to inform a BCLA Climate Action Position Statement (March 2022)
- BCLA Climate Action Committee Open Meeting to Collaborate on BC-wide Climate Emergency Initiatives (19 April 2022)

RELATIONSHIPS

Information sharing and relationship building between library information organizations who are working on climate education and action was another important way that we gathered information. Priorities that were raised include education and professional development, supporting both library employees and communities, scaling up efforts and making rapid transformational changes, and of course, working together. Through working together in future we have the potential to learn from each other and increase the impact of our work.

- **Ontario Library Association:** OLA has undertaken similar consultation and information gathering as BCLA CAC including conference meetings and a benchmarking survey, as well as an environmental scan of library engagement in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. CAC executive team members attended the information gathering meetings.
- **BC Libraries Co-operative and Public Library InterLINK:** The *Libraries and the Climate Crisis: A Collective Response* discussion facilitated by the Executive Directors (21 April 2022) resulted in ideas and feedback that were shared with BCLA CAC.
- **California Library Association Climate Justice Interest Group:** We have connected and are interested in following up and sharing information and approaches.

PROJECTS & WORKING GROUPS

In the first few months, the Climate Action Committee has completed or initiated the following projects. Each project involved a volunteer or working group who moved it forward.

- [**BCLA Submission to the Government of British Columbia Consultation on the Draft Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy \(complete\)**](#). This submission was in response to a request for feedback on the draft strategy and takes into account issues central to libraries and communities in British Columbia, the *BC Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment* report, the *Managing Climate Change Risks: An Independent*

Audit report from the BC Office of the Auditor General, and the reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

- **Position statement (ongoing).** The position statement working group seeks to fulfill one of the main goals of the committee by providing a statement and advocacy resource for BCLA and library and information workers and organizations in BC.
- **Climate Emergency Week (initiated).** This project was initiated based on consultation as well as the example of other libraries and organizations. It was discussed during the BCLA Conference Climate Action Committee meeting on April 19th and will likely move ahead depending on the formation of a working group.
- **Resource Collections (ongoing).** This work is part of the work of the website manager but can also be expanded to include facilitating or encouraging resource sharing. It was discussed during the BCLA Conference Climate Action Committee meeting on April 19th.

WEBSITE

The Climate Action Committee's website includes the documentation produced by the committee, as well as core resources and briefing materials to provide context and reliable information on the climate emergency.

The committee also used Basecamp and Google Docs and Sheets. These are used for routine work like managing agendas, providing presentations, and most notably, for enabling asynchronous work and collaboration.

MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

Regular monthly meetings were held on the 3rd Friday of every month at 12:00pm. In order to make the meetings accessible for members from different libraries and positions, all meetings were held on Zoom and the date and time were determined based on surveys and feedback.

The BCLA Climate Crisis Discussion listserv has 126 subscribers. Communication about upcoming meetings and initiatives takes place via the listserv. The listserv is also available for subscribers to connect with others about their initiatives, resources, and questions.

GETTING INVOLVED

New members are always welcome! You do not have to be a member of BCLA to join! Communication about upcoming meetings and initiatives take place via the listserv.

- Join the BCLA Climate Crisis Discussion listserv [here](#)
- Join Climate Action Committee meetings (date, time, and link shared via the listserv)
- Get involved in a working group
- Visit the Climate Action Committee website [here](#)
- Contact us at climateaction@bcla.bc.ca