

BCLA Climate Action Committee Updates and Idea Sharing

20 April 2023 at the BCLA Conference

Description:

Join the BCLA Climate Action Committee to hear brief updates about current work and learn more about how you can participate in Climate Action Week (Nov 4-10 2023), and then stay and join an open discussion about what libraries are currently doing, resources and opportunities, and ideas and creative approaches for the future!

Notes from the meeting:

Present: Helen Brown, McKelle Hansen, Caitlin McRae, Diana Marshall, Brandon Monahan, Lisa Nathan, Elizabeth Shaffer, David Waddell, Deanna Walker, Jennifer Wilson.

Updates

- Canadian Federation of Library Associations – [Call for nominations for Chair](#) (Diana)
 - Call for chair closes April 30th
 - Call for committee members will follow
- Navigating Uncertainty: Libraries and the Climate Crisis (McKelle)
 - [Briefing document](#) available on by Document page, BCLA Climate Action Committee website
- BC Climate Emergency Campaign and Progress Report (Helen)
 - The Climate Emergency Campaign advocates for the Government of BC to confront the climate emergency and commit to [ten climate actions](#).
 - December 2022 report can be found here: [Confront the Climate Emergency: An Urgent Call to the BC Government Progress Report](#)
 - Currently has more than 530 signatories, including the BC Library Association, the Archives Association of BC, and a wide range of other organizations and unions.
- Climate Action Week (David)
 - [Website](#) includes lists of ideas and participating libraries
 - 2023 event scheduled for Sat Nov 4 to Fri Nov 10 (and libraries can adjust as needed to fit their own needs)
 - Currently reaching out to those who expressed interest in the past to see if support is needed. Please reach out to have similar conversations with interested colleagues.
- BCLA Climate Action Committee upcoming meetings:
 - Friday April 21 at 12pm
 - Friday May 19 at 12pm – Annual General Meeting. Announcements will come out soon. There are a number of executive positions available so if you are interested please reach out to Helen or Diana.
- [BCLA Branches Forum](#) – BCLA Climate Action Committee

Discussion

We talked about the conference sessions, climate emergencies and the impacts libraries and communities are facing, what libraries are doing, and ideas for what we could do! The following notes are focused on the ideas that came up during the discussion.

- Learning and projects that could include Library Tech/MLIS/MAS students to build knowledge and capacity but also to support this work through experiential learning, directed studies, etc.
- Assemble ideas and resources that bridge the gap between aspirations and what we know we need to do and the actual, concrete steps we need to take.
- Library Trustees – work on how to bring climate justice into the mandates of libraries.
- Curriculum support material (offered by potentially public or academic librarians) to address gaps in the new BC curriculum, which has little about climate/sustainability, and support teachers.
- Climate literacy is a topic that keeps coming up and libraries can play a significant role here.
- Libraries involved in crisis response during climate emergencies:
 - Active climate emergency declarations and work being done to mitigate, and adapt and prepare in many places. Libraries can support this work and partner with governments and emergency services.
 - Build connections with emergency response planners and teams.
 - Opportunity for library to get noticed as people come to the library for help and resources.
 - Highlights the need for libraries to prepare for the increasing likelihood of having crises that they will need to respond to.
 - Challenges of having libraries open on short notice and difficulties faced by smaller libraries and teams.
 - Using existing library services and buildings and expanding open hours or adding resources is significantly less expensive than creating new services and buildings.
 - Be involved in emergency debriefs.
- Collecting stories, impact statements/testimonials:
 - Could be an oral history project, or something similar to the narratives collected about the impact of Summer Reading Club or the stories that illuminated the Working Together Project: Community Led Libraries Toolkit.
 - Look to the work done by archivists to document responses to COVID.
 - Document the reflections and experiences of library workers and/or those visiting libraries during climate emergencies, or those who would have gone to the library but they were not able to (pets, accessibility, etc.)
 - Possible outputs: oral history project, archival project, art, exhibition, reports, education.
 - Could document library worker experiences, which could then be used in planning, analysis, and the prioritizing of climate justice actions in the library sector.
 - Could document the value of libraries, the ways libraries could be of use during an emergency, community experiences, bringing people together, and expanding peoples' imagination around what libraries do.
 - Could be used in funding requests.
 - Consider the power of hearing the stories (videos, podcasts).