

Newsletter

Hello members of the Cariboo Mining Association,

Thank you for helping us explore the Cariboo region, and sharing your time and work with us. We had an amazing trip, and a wonderful introduction to placer mining; it has been an experience we won't soon forget. As students in a field research course for the University of British Columbia, we have spent several months corresponding with Rick and Jackie to produce research that will benefit the CMA and its members, and we would like to share the results of that research with you. Along with the survey that was distributed via email, we have conducted several interviews with members and government workers during our tour of the claims, and have created a database of placer titles and the corresponding contact information for each miner from Mineral Titles Online so that the CMA can connect with miners across the region. Thanks again to everyone who participated for taking the time to assist us, and special thanks to Rick and Jackie for all the support and hard work for our project!

Questions we asked in our interviews:

How did you hear about the Cariboo Mining Association, and why did you decide to join?

What does it mean to you to be a small-scale placer miner in the Cariboo region?

What does the future of placer mining look like to you?

Many survey participants mentioned government advocacy as a concern, do you have anything you would like to add to that?

The independence and freedom this lifestyle offers was often mentioned as one of the most attractive aspects of placer mining, in particular that it allows miners to "be their own boss". Many also mentioned that they enjoy the solitude of the work, and that it allows them to connect with the land while earning a livelihood. While few miners are able to make their entire living from gold, there is always the hope that, as one participant said, you might "strike the big one." Clearly, the CMA fills many roles in maintaining different aspects of the placer mining lifestyle, from economic to social to environmental, and each miner spoke to which parts of this work they felt were important. Organizing the gold show and yearly events gave miners a place to celebrate their mining identity and history with the public, and several survey responses highlighted this as beneficial. Government workers who were not miners themselves shared the importance of gold mining to the culture and reputation of Quesnel and the Cariboo, and we had the opportunity to meet Rick and Jackie at the largest gold pan in the world.



One of the most frequently mentioned roles of the CMA is its work educating new miners on government regulation, and updating existing members on changes in these regulations; the government employees also identified this as an important function. Some miners said that government regulation is important because it helps preserve the gold and environment that miners depend on, while others felt frustrated by restrictions. Though many members enjoy their solitude, changing

regulations and conditions are creating the need for members to be connected through the CMA in order to advocate for the concerns of placer miners to the government and other organizations. Leadership in the association has made building a working relationship with

the government a priority, and the increased level of communication and understanding between government and miners was observed by both government workers and miners. As one interviewee put it, the most effective path for communication with government bodies may be to make "requests", rather than "demands." A frustration expressed by some miners was that lack of experience government workers have with placer mines and miners, even those that deal with mining policy regularly, and the necessity for the government to understand the industry they regulate. Interviewees enjoyed the opportunity to show the realities of placer mining to the government employees who accompanied us on the tour, and shared a hope that this could help increase the awareness of the government in their dealings with placer mining.

Some miners worried that few young people are attracted to placer mining, and that few people will be as interested in the lifestyle in the future. Many also expressed frustration with the rise of online speculators who drive up the prices of claim titles, and the CMA is currently talking with the government about this issue. However, many felt optimistic about the longevity of placer mining, and explained that the rising value of gold, increased efficiency of



modern mining techniques, and the decline of the timber industry could all draw more people to mining and help sustain the industry for years to come. Through the survey and our interviews, we have seen the importance of the CMA for supporting miners now and in the future, and ensuring that placer mining in the Cariboo remains economically and environmentally sustainable. The work that goes into pursuing these interests is considerable, and the CMA is always looking for additional help. With the annual general meeting (AGM) coming up in September, this is a great time to pitch in and help build the future of the CMA! Below are the available roles for getting involved.

**Membership committee:** this position involves thinking of new ideas for recruiting members and keeping track of membership levels. This is great for anyone who is social and enjoys connecting with new miners and members of the community.

**Public relations committee:** public relations includes advertising on social networks, community events calendars, and updating the website on new regulations and CMA events. If you have experience with technology or business, this would be the role for you.

**Budget committee:** working with the budget committee involves communicating with other committees about their needs, and working alongside the treasurer. This job is more behind-the-scenes and is crucial for the success of the CMA.

**Newsletter committee:** If you have experience editing or enjoy writing, this is the position for you. The newsletter committee researches articles, proofreads the newsletter, monitors costs, and oversees distribution of the newsletter.

**Gold Show Committee:** The gold show is the biggest event in the CMA calendar and takes a lots of hands to make it successful. This position involves helping to acquire vendors, do presentations, research and implement advertising, create budgets for the event, recruit donations for door prizes, circulate posters and brochures, event timings, ticketing and

organizing volunteers. You would not need to do all of this by yourself and any help that can be given is invaluable. This role will be hugely rewarding, with your hard work being evident in the show itself.

**Society Act Committee:** If you have an eye for detail then this role could suit you. It involves creating policies and procedures and updating them when needed.

**Training Sessions Committee:** This role is working with government and other agencies to do training sessions, as well as booking and organizing meeting rooms to facilitate this. This would be a great position to volunteer for if you have good organizational skills and have had experience or good relations with government officials previously.

**Meeting/Goody Committee:** This position involves informing members of meetings, organising tea, coffee and snacks for committee meetings and training sessions. If you make a good cup of coffee then this is the role for you!

**Corporate Sponsorship Committee:** This position aims to increase levels of corporate sponsorship through liaising with sponsors on advertising and finding research avenues for membership benefits. This role would suit someone who has business acumen, has worked with local businesses before or would like some experience.

Biographies:



My name is Mielle, and I'm a UBC student from Seattle interested in human geography. I was particularly excited to work with the CMA because I come from a mining family, both placer and coal, and I was keen to see what mining looks like firsthand. Conducting interviews while we were here has been really enjoyable, and I have had a great time getting to know everyone and hearing what they have to say. Although the results of our survey gave us an idea of what to expect, getting to explore in person truly made my trip-- thanks to the CMA for going above and beyond!



My name is Eleanor and I am an exchange student from Oxford in the UK, studying at UBC for just one year. I chose to work with the Cariboo Mining Association so I could learn about a local economy that we don't have at home, away from the bubble of Vancouver. Working with Rick, Jackie and other members of the association has been an invaluable experience; researching communities by working directly with them, and visiting the mining sites was important to me. Rather than studying communities from an academic institution so far removed from the daily lives of the miners in the Cariboo region, I have learnt about the real concerns and celebrations of placer mining. I am almost tempted to become a miner! I

hope to use the experiences I had with the CMA to continue to research within communities rather than from a distance.





My name is Emily and I'm an exchange student from London in the UK and like Eleanor, studying at UBC for just one year. I chose to work with the Cariboo Mining association as it offers a rare chance to expand my cultural and academic horizons, giving me the chance to work with people I would otherwise be unlikely to encounter. Engaging directly with the association and working along with Rick and Jackie has been an experience I will never forget and given me the chance to glimpse into the daily lives and practices of placer miners, as well as the highs and lows that come with the occupation. It has been such a valuable experience and one I will never forget!



Hello, Adrian is the name and Geography is the game! Currently being a 3rd year Geography student studying at the University of British Columbia, I was very excited to be able to participate in this class. With a growing awareness of the interconnectedness and importance of sustainability on this earth, I wanted to see how sustainable mining and human well-being should balance out in real life. To this end, I learned so much about placer mines and what miners experience and hope for in the future of placer mines. Issues are hardly

ever black and white, and speaking to miners firsthand when carrying out academic work and government policies is essential to create a more wholesome understanding of current concerns and issues. I am really thankful for the Cariboo mining association and all our community partners for giving me the opportunity to expand my insights and knowledge about mining.