

Introducing Campbell River's new observatory!

Submitted by Virginia Keast Mon, 2016-03-21 13:08

Campbell River - Kwakwaka'wakw / Coast Salish Territory Community Observatory: a first for Smart Ocean? Systems

by Mercedes McLean, Maia Hoeberechts and Jessica Brown

Despite the gale force winds, our Learning team braved the weather and drove up to Campbell River to host an information session and celebrate the installation of the Campbell River - Kwakwaka'wakw / Coast Salish Territory Community Observatory in the new Discovery Passage Explorer Lab at Discovery Pier. As we passed Nanaimo and the winds picked up, we opened the new Campbell River website portal from our car to monitor the deteriorating weather conditions ? [check out the weather station data](#) from March 4th around 16:00 UTC (about 8 a.m.)



This event was an exciting opportunity to share information about the different components of this observatory (shore station, underwater platform, AIS antenna, and WaMoS radar system) with the community of Campbell River. We ventured outside to show attendees the already installed instruments on the pier and at the [Maritime Heritage Centre](#).



The centre hosts the community observatory servers which receive the data from the shore station and underwater instruments, and then relay them back to UVIC. We were thrilled to have such a variety of attendees from ocean enthusiasts?city councilors and local volunteers, to educators and students?all in attendance for a fun day of learning about this new ocean instrumentation. A big shout-out and thanks to Mark Wunsch and the SeaLife Society for hosting us in their great new space.



Josh Chernov from [Ocean Dynamics](#) enthusiastically explained the specifics of the community observatory deployment using a small, remotely operated vehicle (ROV) and also what it?s like to be an ROV pilot. Thank you, Josh, for bringing the ROV for everyone to see!

Grade 11 biology students from Timberline High School had the opportunity to see firsthand what some of the observatory instruments look like, how they work, and why they are important. They explored how to sample ocean water with a combined conductivity, temperature, and depth (CTD) instrument. Then they learned how these ocean parameters can contribute to a better understanding of local ocean environments, and even global ocean circulation.



Community members were keen to learn how this new instrumentation will benefit the community of Campbell River and complement existing ocean monitoring in the region. The newly installed sensors will support smart decisions, based on sound science, about local management of marine resources and use of the ocean. The data being collected are available to anyone who wants to better understand the Campbell River marine environment and are freely accessible over the internet.

This event was just the beginning of ocean data exploration through ONC's Ocean Sense program and the first community observatory in a series of new installations along the British Columbia coast. We're looking forward to participating in upcoming community events, collaborating with other organizations interested in ocean monitoring, and continuing to share ocean science with everyone in Campbell River.

For more information about ONC's community observatories: contact Maia Hoeberechts, Associate Director, User Services.

[Visit the Campbell River Community Observatory page.](#)

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