

A Great Day at Deep Bay

Under brilliant sunshine and bathed in warm ocean breezes Wednesday September 8, 2010 will long be remembered by the staff of the Centre for Shellfish Research and Vancouver Island University as Prime Minister Stephen Harper made a surprise visit to the Deep Bay Field Station. A six car cavalcade of black SUV's and limousines, imposing security detail and RCMP officers marked his arrival. Dr. James Lunney Nanaimo-Alberni MP, Dr. Ralph Nilson VIU President and Vice Chancellor and Mike Brown, VIU Board Chair were on hand to greet the Prime Minister along with Don Tillapaugh and Brian Kingzett from the CSR.

Dr. Nilson thanked the Prime Minister for taking the time to visit the Deep Bay Field Station which is a flagship of VIU and demonstrates VIU's leadership in supporting economic development of coastal communities along Vancouver Island throughout coastal British Columbia. Prime Minister Harper was interested to learn the history of Vancouver Island University and its uniqueness as an educational institution that supports both trades and academic training. The recent construction of the 40 ft aluminum catamaran MV Chetlo by the VIU aluminum boatbuilding program students using Canada Foundation for Innovation funding received for the Field Station highlighted this point for the Prime Minister.

Looking out onto beautiful Baynes Sound and the working waterfront of shellfish farming activity that can be viewed from all points in the Field Station Brian Kingzett explained the importance of the area to the shellfish industry, the \$20million in annual economic value and the associated jobs.

Throughout his conversations with the Prime Minister Don Tillapaugh emphasized the importance of federal science and technology programs to the development of the CSR and the Deep Bay Field Station as well as all of the research activities conducted in support of the shellfish aquaculture industry. (See list below). Tillapaugh went on to explain the strategic importance of the public education and engagement programming that will be undertaken at the Field Station. The Prime Minister was very interested in the culinary theme (beach to bistro) and marine science.

Helen Gurney-Smith fielded the Prime Minister's questions about the shellfish displayed in a small aquarium, and explained her research on genomics and new species development.

Field Station architect John Hemsforth discussed the wood components of the building as well as ocean geothermal technology that will heat the building.

Prime Minister Harper took the time to meet and shake hands with both the VIU representatives at the event as well as the Field Station construction crew and insisted on group pictures to mark the event for everyone. The smiling faces shown in the accompanying pictures tell the real story of the day.

Background

The Deep Bay Field Station is one of 200 research infrastructure projects funded as part of the Knowledge Infrastructure Program rolled out under the federal economic stimulus package in 2009. The Field Station is unique in Canada due to its clam shell shape, LEED Platinum design and multipurpose function. Click this link www.viudeepbay.com for more pictures and information on the Deep Bay Field Station.

Federal programs supporting the Centre for Shellfish Research and the Deep Bay Field Station

- Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP)
- Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)
- Genome Canada (through Genome BC)
- Western Economic Diversification (WED)
- National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
- DFO Aquaculture Research and Development Program (DFO- ACRDP)
- DFO Aquaculture Innovation and Market Access Program (DFO- AIMAP)



Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Nanaimo-Alberni MP Dr. James Lunney, VIU President Dr. Ralph Nilson, Centre for Shellfish Research Director Don Tillapaugh and Centre for Shellfish Research Shellfish Health and Husbandry Research Program Manager Dr. Helen Gurney-Smith discuss shellfish aquaculture in one of the labs at the new field station.



Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Dr. Helen Gurney-Smith discussing Helen's research. He is holding a cockle from the touch tank.