

Annual report
Cape Bounty Arctic Hydrological Observatory (CBAWO)



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Landscape and water processes at Cape Bounty, Melville Island

Our work is intended to determine how climate change affects the land and water quality. Our work involves obtaining sediment and water samples from the lakes and streams at Cape Bounty. We have chosen these lakes because the rivers appear to supply abundant sediment and deep lakes are needed to preserve the sediments for our research. We have been doing this work since 2003 and hope to continue for several more years.

In 2013, we had a small camp at Cape Bounty from July 16 to August 2 with up to seven people, including Debbie Iqaluk from Resolute. We sampled the rivers and lakes, and collected fish samples to measure the mercury in them. We also collected soil samples, and added more soil temperature stations.

In 2014, we will establish a camp at Cape Bounty in late May and be there until mid-August. In the spring, we will measure and sample the snow and collect water samples from the lake through holes in the ice. All travel during this early period will be with a skidoo and sled. To measure weather and stream flow during the summer, we will place instruments in the lake and on the rivers to tell us how the rivers respond to weather. Additionally, we will measure the water quality by sampling the water and measuring sediment, salts, carbon and nutrients in the samples. This work is important for understanding how water and the land will change as climate changes, and the potential effects on wildlife vegetation.

We will also measure the vegetation growth and continue to study the changes to the permafrost at Cape Bounty. This work is important because this area was affected by very warm temperatures from 2007-12 and this disturbed and changed the permafrost. We are trying to determine how this affects the environment and water.