



Vancouver Island University: Environmental Professional Certificate Program



Darren Hebert photo

NREP students conducting electrofishing surveys.

The Environmental Professional Certificate Program (EPCP) is a 6-month professional-level certificate program offered by the Natural Resources Extension Program (NREP), Vancouver Island University. The EPCP will provide environmental practitioners with leading-edge, practical environmental,

fisheries, aquatic, safety, and communication skills. The EPCP is highly applied, focusing on field skills training and applications.

The EPCP target audience includes:

- Graduates of natural resource-related diploma and degree programs
- Current environmental practitioners wishing to upgrade/expand skills and abilities
- Individuals desiring a career in environmental assessment, monitoring and rehabilitation, fish and wildlife biology, and aquatic and terrestrial biology

The EPCP is comprised of five topical streams:

1. Fisheries inventory, assessment, and rehabilitation: 25 days of classroom/field
2. Aquatic inventory and monitoring: 11 days of classroom/field
3. Environmental assessment, monitoring, and rehabilitation: 70 days of classroom/field
4. Safety awareness, planning, and certification: 15 days of classroom/field
5. Communications skills: 15 days of classroom training

The EPCP consists of approximately 134 days of instruction to be delivered over a 6-month period. The EPCP will consist of training that is highly relevant and applicable in industry, and will include in-depth classroom lectures, demonstrations, case studies, and field training sessions. Approximately half of the program will be field-based, and will provide focused, realistic field scenarios and skills training. The EPCP is designed to be completed as a full-time student.


To maximize student development, class size is limited to 16 full-time students with one full-time classroom instructor and two full-time field

instructors. The initial intake for this program will be September 2009. To begin with, the EPCP will be delivered in Nanaimo, BC. Future plans include deliveries in communities throughout western Canada.

EPCP graduates will be capable of designing, managing, and implementing diverse and multi-faceted environmental initiatives and projects, including:

- Fish, fish habitat, wildlife, vegetation assessment and restoration projects
- Qualitative and quantitative fish population estimation
- Water quality sampling programs
- Aquatic (invertebrates, water quality, aquatic plants) sampling and monitoring
- Mapping/GPS/GIS and orienteering
- Plant, fish, and wildlife identification
- Stream-crossing design, installation, assessment, and restoration
- Erosion and sediment control (introductory to advanced)
- Environmental monitoring, including field techniques and site assessment
- Impact assessment
- Site restoration
- Safety initiatives (ATV, Swift Water Rescue, Wilderness First Aid, boat safety)
- Communications (report writing, reporting, statistics, and field communications).

This accredited post-secondary certification program will serve as credit towards completion of further education at select post-secondary institutes in Canada. Further, NREP is currently negotiating EPCP certification with several professional associations, and will announce those agreements as they are finalized.

The EPCP is available for delivery in any community in North America. The EPCP will require lead time of one year, and prospective hosting organizations will need to contact us well in advance of any proposed delivery timeframe. Community groups or organizations are advised to contact the NREP Manager, Darren Hebert, for more information. 

For more information, including costs, pre-requisites, registration, schedules, personal equipment requirements etc, please visit: www.mala.ca/nrep/EnvironmentalProfessionalCertificateProgram.asp

Contact

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www.viu.ca/nrep/