

CLIMATE ACTION DIALOGUES – REGIONAL CLIMATE RESILIENCE SPRING 2025

MEET THE GUEST MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS

GUEST MODERATOR



Dr. Simon Donner, Co-chair of Canada's Net-Zero Advisory Body, Professor, UBC

Attending the Vancouver and Webinar Sessions

Dr. Simon Donner is an interdisciplinary climate scientist and professor at the University of British Columbia, where he teaches and conducts research at the intersection of climate science, marine science, and policy. Dr. Donner holds appointments in UBC's Geography Department, its Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, and Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries. He is a member of Canada's Net-Zero Advisory Body, which advises the federal government on pathways to eliminate climate-warming emissions. He regularly volunteers to translate climate change science for the public and policymakers via government hearings, community events, and radio and television appearances

PANEL SPEAKERS



Qudsia Ahmed, Assistant Vice President, Co-operators

Attending the Vancouver and Webinar Sessions

Qudsia Ahmed is currently the AVP, Underwriting at Co-operators overseeing the home, automobile, commercial and farm underwriting teams across the country. Prior to Co-operators, Qudsia spent over a decade in the life and health insurance industry leading several operational teams including underwriting, claims, operations, client service, and IT.

Qudsia holds a BBA from Simon Fraser University, her PMP designation through the Project Management Institute (PMI) and designations through the Life Office Management Association. Qudsia is a current board member of the Project Management Volunteers (PM-Volunteers) organization as well as the past President of the PMI Vancouver chapter.



Harvy S. Takhar, Manager of Drainage & Natural Hazards, City of Delta

Attending the Vancouver and Webinar Sessions

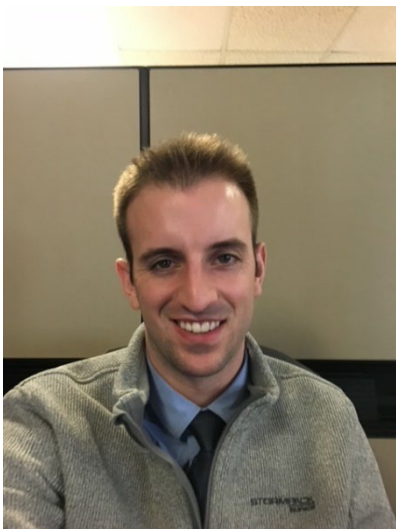
Harvy Takhar was born and raised in Delta, BC where he played hockey, soccer, and attended school. Harvy completed his undergraduate studies at the University of British Columbia in the department of Mechanical Engineering. After graduation, Harvy worked with Omni Engineering for municipal and port-related projects. Now, Harvy has been with City of Delta's Engineering Utilities Division for 7 years. His work involves designs and planning for water, sanitary, drainage, and flood protection projects. Harvy's passion for green infrastructure was ignited with his internationally acclaimed master's research on 'connected blue-green roofs.'



Dr. Andréanne Doyon, Associate Dean Undergraduate, Faculty of Environmental, Associate Professor in the School of Environmental Management, SFU

Attending the Vancouver Session

Andréanne Doyon is the Associate Dean Undergraduate, Faculty of Environment, and an Associate Professor in the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University. She is also a Registered Professional Planner and a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners. Her field of study primarily revolves around planning, climate change, and resilience. Her research focuses on how cities and regions can adapt and transform to respond to environmental and social challenges. Recently this includes planning for extreme heat, alternative approaches to coastal adaptation, and natural infrastructure in rural and Indigenous communities.



David Harrison, Senior Manager Emergency Planning and Response, Squamish First Nation

Attending the Vancouver Session

David Harrison is the Senior Manager of Emergency Planning and Response for the Squamish Nation, where he leads initiatives to build community resilience in the face of climate driven emergencies. Much of this work is embedded within the Squamish Nation's Climate Legacy Strategy, which aims to protect the community from the growing impacts of climate change, including wildfires, floods, extreme heat, and sea-level rise.

David oversees the development and implementation of emergency response plans, climate adaptation initiatives like FireSmart, flood mitigation, and community alert systems. With a background in emergency management, he brings expertise in crisis coordination, interagency collaboration, and community safety. His leadership ensures that climate resilience is not only a long-term goal, but a daily practice embedded in how the Nation prepares for and responds to emergencies.



Julia Stafford, Climate Action Manager, Squamish Nation

Attending the Webinar Session

Julia works as the Climate Action Manager for the Squamish Nation, managing implementation of the newly released Climate Legacy Strategy. Julia is passionate about supporting indigenous stewardship and bringing systemic positive change to the complex root causes of climate change. As a settler working for an indigenous government, she continues to learn how to act from a two-eyed seeing lens and practice decolonization. Over the last 10 years, Julia's work has taken a winding journey starting in geological and water resources engineering then moving to climate resilience planning and climate strategy development supporting local governments.



Kelly Sims, Director, Flood Policy - Water Management Branch Water, Fisheries and Coast Division Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship

Attending the Webinar Session

Kelly was born and raised in Lheidli T'enneh territory (Prince George, B.C.) and now lives in Victoria on the traditional lands of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations with her family. She is the Director of Flood Policy with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and brings experience in land use planning, community development, and flood resilience. Kelly leads the implementation of key actions under the B.C. Flood Strategy, advancing climate adaptation through policy, planning, and intergovernmental collaboration. She is known for fostering strong partnerships, particularly with First Nations, and building collaborative processes at all levels of government.