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FRIDAY FEATURE

Larson discusses fire history research on WTIP Radio

PLATTEVILLE, Wis. – Dr. Evan Larson, associate professor of geography at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, was recently interviewed on WTIP North Shore Community Radio (Grand Marais, Minnesota) about his research on the history of fire in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in northern Minnesota.

In the radio program, “Community Conversations: Stories of Travel and Wilderness,” WTIP’s Joe Friedrichs spoke with Larson about his ongoing research on the history of fire in the forests of the Upper Great Lakes region, what role people may have played in forming the forests encountered by early European explorers and settlers, and the implications for this work for forest managers and conservationists across the region.

The goal of Larson’s project, “Documenting Ojibwe Land Use Through Tree-Ring Analysis of Culturally Modified Trees in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness,” is to advance understanding about the interplay between people and the natural environment to further understand what factors led to the development of current landscape patterns.

Through this work, Larson and his research team are helping to transform the working definition of wilderness and deepen the understanding of the geographic, social and ecological underpinnings of the environment and environmental change to more completely integrate the influences of people in what are often considered “pristine” environments.

Larson's research on the historical role of fire in the region has provided hands-on research experience for numerous UW-Platteville students and has leveraged nearly \$400,000 of support through two grants from the Geography and Spatial Sciences Program of the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia, a research contract with Quetico Provincial Park in Canada, and the Pioneer Academic Center for Community Engagement.

Listen to Larson's interview online at: wtip.org/community-conversations-stories-travel-and-wilderness.

For more information about Larson and his team's research, view:
www.uwplatt.edu/news/larson-receives-76000-research-grant,
www.uwplatt.edu/news/larson-collaborates-310000-research-grant-nsf.

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