

# New Projects in 2012!

## Canada and South Africa



**During this year, when we haven't only been managing and planning our 2011 Projects, we've also been looking forwards to 2012 and beyond**

### Canada

At the end of May, Liz travelled to British Columbia in Western Canada to meet with a couple of potential Project partners looking to set up an more environmental Project for RSIS teams from July 2012 onwards. We had very interesting meetings with Thom Henley, and also with Parks Canada in Jasper National Park and have had to make some difficult decisions between two very fine Projects.

In the end, we have decided to work with Thom Henley's Soaring Spirits Camp in northern BC doing trail work in the Seven Sisters Provincial Park, where they will be developing a trail through the Boulder Creek Canyon to the base of the glaciers. The team will be working alongside local First Nations youth from the Gitksan communities of Kitwanga, Kitwankool and Kispiox on this Project, and for 4-5 days in the second week, our team will be going to their communities to help with some basic work such as constructing a smokehouse for youth to cure salmon, and building a playground for younger children. As the local First Nations people run the Soaring Spirits camp, the team would also be doing art and drum-making with their cultural teachers; will go on a 3-day canoe adventure on the Skeena and Kispiox Rivers; go fishing for their own supper, watch the grizzly bears at a salmon-leap on the Alaska border, see some of the glaciers and see many, many totem poles!

This will be a truly amazing new Project. Thom Henley not only fully appreciates what Round Square does, but also has such close and rare connections with the communities here that students are promised an experience that they would never receive as a tourist. The communities are very excited already about the possibilities of international youth coming to their area and we really hope that we get a team not only from overseas, but also students from Canada too.



### South Africa

At the beginning of September, Liz returned from a 10-day trip to South Africa to look at new potential Projects for teams going there in July 2012. Liz and Brian (Dawson) travelled together down to White River, a town which borders the southern end of Kruger National Park, and after a bit of essential weekend R&R viewing the wildlife, Liz and Brian then went to look at a number of potential Projects with our Project Manager - Liz Mackintosh. The potential Projects were all extremely interesting and worthy, but in the end we decided to help the Masoyi Special Care Centre. This is a one-room centre for disabled children to come to every day. Having a disabled child is a huge stigma in this area, and often they are abandoned, abused or locked away their entire lives. A local lady has taken it on herself to help them, and break down the stigma and our team in 2012 will be building a classroom so that the children can have lessons, learn music and have more stimulation during their day. Their needs



could not be greater, so it'll be a real privilege to help them. Brian and Liz also went to see a few wildlife rehabilitation and conservation projects, and we are hoping that the group can spend time at the end of the trip doing a small safari, then go off to learn animal identification and tracking techniques, sleep out in the wilderness and learn more about the conservation issues affecting the wildlife there. A really great trip, and we now have plenty of ideas to keep us going!

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**"What really made my experience so unique was playing with the local kids, teaching them, loving them, changing their lives but knowing they change yours as well. I have a completely different way of thinking now and I can value certain things better than before. The balance between labour, free time and cultural experience was perfect!"**

*(Student who went to South Africa)*

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