



Internal use 296973

Application for a Grant

Identification		
This page will be made available to selection committee members and external assessors.		
Program name Strategic Knowledge Clusters		
Grant type (Strategic Grants only) Strategic Research Network		
Application title Canadian Rural Research Network		
Applicant family name Reimer	Applicant given name William	Initials C.
Org. code 1240911	Full name of administrative organization Concordia University	
Department/Division name Sociology & Anthropology		
Does your proposal involve human beings as research subjects? If "Yes", consult the <i>Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans</i> and submit your proposal to your organization's Research Ethics Board. Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>		
Does your proposal involve activity that requires a permit, licence, or approval under any federal statute; or physical interaction with the environment? If 'Yes', complete Appendices A and B. Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>		
RTS requested from SSHRC (from page 7)		Total <u>12,500</u>
Total funds requested from SSHRC (from page 8)		<u>2,100,000</u>
Signatures		
The undersigned accept the terms and conditions as outlined in the corresponding program description; the instructions provided with this form; and any conditions applied to a grant pursuant to this application.		
Applicant name (print) William Reimer	Signature	Date
For department, institute, school		
Name (print)	Signature	Date
For university		
Name (print)	Signature	Date

1. Summary of Planned Activity

This proposal is to establish a national network of researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, and citizens with a common interest in the well-being of rural Canada. The Canadian Rural Research Network (CRRN) would support and build high quality rural research capacity; bridge cutting-edge research into the policy, practitioner, and public spheres; and establish a self-sustaining structure for research and knowledge mobilization.

To accomplish these objectives we will make use of the many research, government, NGO, and citizen networks and Centres that are currently focused on rural-related issues. We are fortunate to have many such organizations throughout the country with strengths in various rural issues – from research on economic, health, services, environment, and resource management to practical experience with community development, volunteer organization, co-operatives, and entrepreneurship. The primary objective of CRRN is to maximize the synergy from these networks and organizations on behalf of all Canadians.

The CRRN will organize knowledge mobilization through the following activities.

- *Conferences and Workshops* will be supported that bring partners together in traditional and non-traditional venues. This will involve contributing to existing meetings as well as initiating new ones.
- A *Rural Information Internet Gateway* will be established to link rural web sites and serve as an inquiry portal for academic and non-academic users.
- A *Data Repository and Archive* for rural-related data and information will be maintained.
- *Research Stimulation and Guidance* will be supported through initiatives for publications, events, and solicitation of materials.
- *Knowledge Mobilization Best Practices* will be identified and made available via the Internet.
- *Capacity-building Internships* for students, local government employees, volunteers, and other people will be established with university, government, and NGO groups.
- *Liaison and Network Opportunities* will be identified and developed for both well-established and low-capacity groups.
- A *Rural Research Clearinghouse* will be established to ‘translate’ academic research products to users and to identify key research needs of those users.
- *The Rural ‘Voice’ in Research and Policy* will be supported through ‘broker’ services between researchers and policy or public groups requesting input.
- *Receptor Capacity* will be increased through strategic alliances with groups that are currently relatively isolated from rural research networks. These include municipal organizations, provincial governments, Aboriginal Peoples, voluntary groups, and the private sector.
- *International Partnerships* will be expanded, building on the networks established by CRRN Partners.
- A *Rural Research Endowment Fund* will be explored and implemented if possible.

CRRN will be organized in a distributed manner. It will have its administrative centre at Concordia University, with most of the network activities taken on by research Centres in various parts of the country. Each Centre will be responsible for activities in which it already excels – thus creating conditions in which the strengths of each are contributed to the whole network. The value of this model has already been demonstrated by the 9-year success of the New Rural Economy Project in which many of the CRRN members participated (<http://nre.concordia.ca>).

CRRN will make a significant contribution to our understanding of rural Canada and ensure that the insights gained by rural research will be relevant and useful to decision-makers at all levels. By ensuring that these decisions are evidence-based and multi-disciplinary it will benefit all Canadians. Its extensive international contacts will ensure collaboration with other countries and continue our extensive record of contributions to debates and innovations regarding rural issues.

2. Detailed Description (Note: Attachment 8.1 includes a Glossary of Acronyms)

Cluster activities and impacts

Despite the economic, environmental, and social importance of rural Canada, its people are facing major challenges from chronic out-migration and economic restructuring, to declining local services, and environmental stresses. High quality, comprehensive research is essential if we are to develop evidence-based policies to address these challenges. Such research can be found in many of our education and government institutions, however, it needs to be communicated and integrated with local, provincial, and federal decision-makers to make it understandable and useful.

Our proposal for a Canadian Rural Research Network (CRRN) is designed to build and share such research. Specifically, CRRN is organized to:

- support and build high quality rural research capacity;
- bridge cutting-edge research into the policy, practitioner, and public spheres; and
- establish a self-sustaining structure for research and knowledge mobilization.

To build **research capacity** we will:

- establish and support stronger links among the university and government-based rural research Centres through shared information and activities;
- enhance existing networks as they organize exchanges, workshops, and conferences;
- facilitate the sharing of data and information among researchers through a Rural Information Gateway and Archives;
- support junior researchers and students working on rural-related issues through internship, ‘Researcher in Residence’, and training programs;
- extend the multidisciplinary base by the inclusion of disciplines usually underrepresented in rural research; and
- integrate international research and policy insights through exchanges and collaboration with foreign networks and Centres.

To advance **knowledge mobilization** we will:

- enhance existing networks as they organize workshops and conferences;
- facilitate additional linkages, networking, and information exchange through newsletters, chat rooms, webcasts, podcasts, the rural media, and other venues;
- facilitate the transfer of research insights through a Rural Research Clearinghouse;
- build on the New Rural Economy (NRE) project website (<http://nre.concordia.ca>) to achieve a Rural Information Gateway linking rural research, policy, and practitioner communities;
- identify and evaluate knowledge mobilization best practices and communicate them through web-based and traditional venues;
- extend research capacity through rural studies Internship and ‘Researcher in Residence’ programs to allow students, local government representatives, and volunteers to participate in rural information and data management training as delivered by such agencies as Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research;
- extend the rural ‘voice’ in research and policy debates by supporting speaking and media opportunities by CRRN members; and
- build the receptor capacity of rural-related groups currently underrepresented in rural research networks including provincial governments, Aboriginal Peoples, volunteer groups, and the private sector through targeted partnerships and collaboration.

To build a **self-sustaining structure** we will:

- extend our partnerships with government, NGO, and private groups with interests in rural issues;
- seek funding opportunities via partner research and KM activities; and
- explore and implement if possible, an Endowment Fund for the support of rural research and its knowledge mobilization over the long term.

Knowledge mobilization

As a result of extensive experience within the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) and the New Rural Economy Project (NRE) (cf. Attachments 8.2 and 8.3), we have identified the following principles for effective knowledge mobilization (KM). CRRN will be organized to implement these principles in the manner indicated below.

- *Clearly identify the target audiences with which you wish to engage.* In the case of CRRN, these will be researchers (including students), policy-makers (at all levels of government), community activists (including public and private entrepreneurs), and citizens (primarily rural-based but extending to urban citizens in strategic ways).
- *Ensure early, extensive, and continual engagement with these target groups.* CRRN will build on the extensive collaboration established by CRRF and the NRE. This means that many of the key players are already involved and contributing to the project design.
- *Equalize relations of power and maximize mutual respect as much as possible.* Our practice of holding meetings in rural places has done much to convince our partners of our interest, provide support for the local economy, and create a valuable opportunity for policy-makers to meet directly with local citizens. CRRN will continue this practice wherever possible, seeking innovative ways to include groups and individuals with limited resources.
- *Use existing organizations and networks.* In keeping with this principle, CRRN builds on many networks and organizations which in turn have extensive links regionally, nationally, and internationally (cf. Attachment 8.4).
- *Identify and organize collaboration across disciplines and spheres but with respect to common, strategic foci.* The field sites provided the NRE with common objects of research – thereby encouraging collaboration among multi-discipline based interests (cf. Attachment 8.5). CRRN will continue this approach through the selection of research, workshop, and conference sites.
- *Provide the means whereby junior faculty and researchers can meet institutional demands for their careers, while contributing to KM.* This principle arises because of the reluctance of our educational institutions to recognize KM contributions in the awarding of merit, promotion, and tenure. This jeopardizes the renewal process within our research community and often makes the extra demands of KM unattainable. CRRN will deal with this institutional challenge by organizing training and publishing opportunities for junior faculty, shifting most of the administrative and KM demands to senior faculty members, mentoring junior members in KM practices, and developing guidelines for evaluating the quality of KM activities.
- *Organize for flexibility and adaptation.* The distributive nature of the CRRN governance structure provides the flexibility for new partners, issues, and objectives to meet changing conditions. New people, organizations, and ideas will continue to be welcomed with interest and openness within flexible governance structures.
- *Provide the means whereby organizational structures that are inclusive are closely allied to those that are exclusive (to meet professional criteria for quality and credibility).* The relationship between CRRF and the NRE Project has demonstrated how this can work to the benefit of all. CRRF and more recently, the *National Rural Research Network* (NRRN) provide the open, public venues and our research Centres will provide the more exclusive projects required for academic research (cf. CRRF letter of support).

- *Prepare for future recruitment and support.* Since KM requires a long-term investment, it is critical to plan for new participants to support CRRN during periods of high demand, to contribute new ideas, and to replace key personnel as the need arises. Since participation in such networks is essentially voluntary, the principles for mentoring and supporting all participants apply. CRRN will seek to provide the extra support required for volunteers in our activities.

Our KM plans for CRRN are constructed to follow all these principles and to build on the experience they reflect. This means getting rural issues and research discussed within existing channels where the need exists (e.g. community newspapers and newsletters, websites, policy journals and documents) as well as creating and filling KM channels where they do not exist (e.g. teleforums, online conferences, podcasts, chat rooms) (Emke and Woodrow, 2003).

The following **activities** will move us toward our objectives. Responsibility for them will be assigned to particular Centres according to their strengths and resources.

Conferences and Workshops

CRRN will use the conference and workshop experience of our partners to reach a wide audience for research development and KM. The CRRF Annual Conference, for example, has a 19-year tradition which has been augmented by the participation of NRRN over the last 2 years (cf. Attachment 8.6). We will also attend and report on other partner workshops and conferences to identify and disseminate their key issues, recraft those issues as research questions, and then put them to the cluster members as potential research projects. Innovations in conference organization will be explored – such as ‘reverse research fairs’ (where users of research present issues and propose questions to the researchers), and ‘matchmaking’ activities among researchers, policy-makers, and activists. CRRF and NRRN have accepted primary responsibility for the conference activities while the Rural and Small Town Programme at Mt. Allison University and the Community Development Institute at UNBC will serve as key Centres for advancing our workshop activities.

Rural Information Gateway

CRRN will create and manage a Rural Information Gateway website as a focal point for those interested in rural topics. Experience has shown that maintenance of a single ‘all encompassing’ website is logistically and financially impossible to sustain over the long term. Instead, the approach will be to provide links to the existing array of websites being maintained in Canada and internationally and to ‘populate’ those web sites with material generated from among our research network. These websites will include public, private, and educational sectors.

A second component of the Rural Information Gateway will be an inquiry page. This will allow those interested in rural issues to submit a query to CRRN. In turn, CRRN will disseminate the query to the partners. As with the other components of CRRN, the approach to the Gateway is not to replicate existing work but to bring some focus and synergy to the collective of groups and organizations already doing valuable research and policy work around rural interests.

Data Repository and Archive

Closely associated with the Gateway will be the maintenance of a data repository and archives for rural-related data and information. This is a response to three primary needs of the research community. First, the Repository will provide information on data available for rural research. In many cases, this will simply mean the provision of brief descriptions and links to those sources since the conditions for access to the data will vary considerably. Second, the Repository will provide data and documentary materials directly if it is made available by our partners. The NRE Project, for example, has created a wealth of research data, information, and reports (<http://nre.concordia.ca>) that may be made available under certain conditions. Third, the Repository will act as an archiving site for data generated by various projects – thereby making it available to future generations of researchers.

Concordia University will lead both the Gateway and Repository activities – building on the server and support infrastructure established by the NRE Project.

Research Stimulation and Guidance

CRRN's activities depend on a vibrant and productive research community that can address the issues raised by its target groups and contribute to the insights that will drive many of the KM activities. These research activities will be supported by the conference, workshop, and exchange activities, but they will also need more proactive attention. To this end, CRRN will establish a Research Sub-Committee to discover and reflect on emerging issues, identify strategic opportunities, seek research results, encourage research support, and initiate communication. This will include support for conferences, workshops, journals, and theses as well as more innovative forms of solicitation and dissemination such as media surveys, bibliographic scans, internet chat rooms, podcasts, webcasts, and other multimedia activities. We will also continue to encourage the publication of research insights through special issues or guest editorships of relevant journals, support travel to conferences, establish partnerships with organizations such as Statistics Canada or Health Canada to sponsor events where academic papers are required, and solicit material for venues such as the Rural and Small Town Analysis Bulletins of Statistics Canada. These activities will be organized and developed by the Community Development Institute at UNBC with backup from the Rural Development Institute at Brandon and Statistics Canada.

KM Best Practices

We will establish an ongoing program to identify, organize, evaluate, and communicate examples and insights of KM activities both within and outside CRRN. They will be integrated into the Gateway and Clearinghouse activities to ensure wide distribution by web and traditional media. Part of this work will be to identify criteria for high quality KM activities and practices to serve as a basis for encouraging universities, granting agencies, and other organizations to recognize and support KM via hiring, promotion, funding, and other decisions. The Harris Centre at MUN will champion these activities with Concordia University providing backup.

Capacity-Building Internships

CRRN will facilitate a range of individual capacity-building activities for students, local government employees, volunteers, and other people interested in rural studies. These capacity-building exercises will include exchanges, internships, and 'Researcher in Residence' opportunities with organizations in the university, federal, and provincial government arenas. For example, Statistics Canada, like many federal departments, has the capacity to host intern and co-op work placements where individuals have an opportunity for first-hand experience with rural information databases and information processing. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research have created a series of research training symposiums that also bring opportunities for training and capacity building. CRRN will be a mechanism by which partner organizations (such as the Rural Secretariat's Canada Youth Forum, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Rural Caucus, and the rural studies Centres at Canadian universities) can nominate individuals for these capacity-building internships. The Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence will lead these activities with support from the Rural Secretariat.

Rural Research Clearinghouse

CRRN will manage a clearinghouse for rural and small town policy materials in collaboration with our policy and practitioner partners such as the Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, CIEL, the Harris Centre, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Rural Development Institute (RDI), and the Rural and Small Town Programme (RSTP). RSTP will act as the primary Centre for these activities, backed up by the RDI.

The Clearinghouse will serve as a focus for bridging the gap between the academic products required of our faculty researchers and the more accessible materials necessary for a non-academic audience. Rather than require this 'translation' to be part of the researcher's responsibility, we will provide writers and venues to reorganize the academic materials and make them more accessible.

The Clearinghouse will also provide a venue for dialogue among researchers and local governments. We will work with such organizations as the FCM to identify core needs for research,

opportunities for ‘ground-truthing’ the results, and mechanisms to ensure that the research and policy partners in CRRN receive the information. The clearinghouse will be integrated with the Rural Information Gateway website.

The Rural ‘Voice’ in Research and Policy

One of the key lessons from the NRE Project is that there is considerable demand for researcher and practitioner participation in conferences, workshops, dialogue sessions, consultations, popular media, and other venues where a rural voice or interest is desired. Providing such connections to the range of academic, policy, and general interest forums will be an important part of CRRN’s activities. These are often last-minute requests and relate to specific issues with which CRRN participants and partners have expertise. Because of the demand for such participation, the budget will include allocations to support member’s participation in KM-focused events. CRRF will be the primary partner for these activities – brokering relations with its extensive networks.

Liaison and Network Opportunities

CRRN begins with an extensive network of well-organized groups and organizations but there are many others which may benefit and contribute to its objectives. CRRN will, therefore, continue to seek and identify those with common interests to explore further KM opportunities with them. As the network grows, the demands for regular and frequent communication will also grow, requiring more attention to communication and nurturing activities. CRRN will establish a Liaison Officer to ensure that these activities are maintained and emerging challenges and opportunities are identified. These activities will be led by Concordia University with support from the Centre de recherche sur le développement territoriale at UQAR.

Building Receptor capacity

Not all rural groups are currently integrated into active networks. For them, KM often includes capacity building as well as linking them into research networks. We have identified five such groups at this point: municipal organizations, provincial governments (including regional colleges), Aboriginal Peoples, volunteer groups, and the private sector.

Municipal organizations are the first to respond to local opportunity and crisis. They are often characterized as having qualified individuals who are well-connected in their local communities, but who lack a depth of capacity to respond when challenges arise. They often lack ready access to key information from the research and policy arenas that can inform their local decision-making (Hagens et al., 2006). Our activities will respond to these challenges through the translation of findings from research and the preparation of training modules developed from those findings.

CRRN will work to develop receptor communities within provincial governments as well. We will seek opportunities for collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and their associated organizations such as community and regional colleges wherever possible. In this regard our partnerships with the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, the FCM, the Centre de recherche sur le développement territoriale, and the Rural Secretariat will provide leadership through their substantial linkages across provincial governments.

Aboriginal Peoples have strong connections with rural issues. For this reason, it is critical that CRRN develop relationships with Aboriginal groups – to guide the research agenda, structure the KM activities, and build local capacity in research and action. We will work through our partners who have already established such relationships. Thompson Rivers University, the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, and the Coastal Communities projects, for example, will provide leadership in this regard – both through their existing networks and their guidance for future expansion.

A fourth area of interest to explore is the voluntary and service sectors. These sectors act as front-line delivery agents coping with the challenges and opportunities of change in rural places (Halseth et al., 2004). However, they have little capacity to translate academic research into a form that might assist them in the delivery of their services – and they lack the time and organizational structure to influence the research agenda. The communications and liaison function of CRRN will be directed

to incorporate additional participation by these sectors, and will work with existing networks and representatives (such as those established under the SSHRC CURA programs) to identify possibilities for critical knowledge exchange. UNBC's Community Development Institute has a strong record of research and action relating to rural services as a result of their NRE Theme work on services. The Institute will serve as the primary Centre to mobilize this part of the cluster.

By drawing upon existing networks of researchers, policy-makers, voluntary sector interests, and others, it is expected that a broad range of involvement from the private sector will develop. For example, the recent expansion of oil and gas activities across northern Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia has been limited by the availability of rural and small town services to meet the needs of workers, especially management, staff, and their families. Rural research also reinforces the value of collaboration among the private, public, and civic sectors for governance and the economic viability of rural communities and regions (Jean and Épenda Muteba Wa, 2004). CRRN will enhance such connections with the private sector to disseminate research findings on rural change, identify strategic foci for research, and jointly create frameworks which support not only rural and small town viability but also rural economic development. The Canadian Rural Economy Research Lab and Canadian Forest Service partners will provide the leadership to these ends.

International Partnerships

CRRF and the NRE Project have developed a large number of international connections with research and policy-based organizations. At the moment, these are mostly focused on OECD countries such as Scotland, England, Ireland, France, Sweden, the USA, Japan, and Australia (cf. Attachment 8.4). CRRN will extend these networks to maximize the opportunities for knowledge transfer, exchanges, and collaboration wherever they occur. Our partnerships with such organizations as The International Rural Network, the Scottish Academy of Rural Policy Project in Scotland, the Rural Policy Research Institute in the USA, and the Victorian Universities Regional Research Network in Australia provide a strong basis for international collaboration and expansion.

Rural Research Endowment Fund

To ensure the continuation of CRRN we will explore possibilities in two major directions. The first will be to consider opportunities for institutional funding via research and KM partnerships with government, NGO, and private sector organizations. The CRRF-NRRN partnership is an example of this type of arrangement. Second, we will investigate the establishment of an Endowment Fund to support KM and research activities related to rural issues. Concordia University has agreed to assist us with such explorations and contribute its experience and resources to this end. The objective is to create a fund that will support both the administration of CRRN and a program of rural research.

Knowledge impacts

The 19 years of experience within CRRF and 9 years experience with the NRE provide well-grounded examples of the likely outcomes for CRRN. These impacts will be felt within all our target groups: academics, policy-makers, practitioners, and citizens.

Academics

CRRN partners have a strong and consistent track record in their impacts within the academic sphere. Over the 9 years of the NRE Project, for example, they have contributed to the production of 8 books, over 100 refereed articles in academic journals, over 200 book chapters, reports, and other documents, given more than 200 presentations to academic audiences, and been invited to numerous meetings and consultations. In the process, project members have become recognized leaders in generating knowledge on the transformation of rural Canada, capacity development, social capital, governance, service delivery, gender, communications, resource dependency, the informal economy, environmental impacts, and rural-urban relations (cf. Participant CVs). This type of contribution is likely to be expanded as the collaboration continues and grows under this new program.

It will be significantly augmented by the participation of the other network members. In Canada, this includes expertise in coastal and resource-based communities, climate, health, child development, and Aboriginal issues. The effects of this collaboration promise to be felt, not only in the dissemination of a wider variety of knowledge, but in the increased sophistication of the research questions and analysis conducted.

These types of impact are felt on the international level as well. The NRE Rural Observatory, for example, is recognized internationally as a unique and useful innovation in methodology and analysis of community-related issues. This is evident in the Japanese replication of the NRE design (<http://cse.naro.affrc.go.jp/mamoda/cj-p/index.htm>), similar replication in Australia (<http://www.vurn.com/>), and the American proposal for a ‘Sentinel Communities Project’ using the key principles from our Observatory (<http://www.rupri.org/default.asp>). CRRN will continue to provide leadership on data-sharing and knowledge development as these types of opportunities continue and are expanded.

CRRN will also have a significant impact on student interest, learning, and careers. The NRE Project, for example, integrated students into all aspects of its work – from problem formulation and research design to field work, data analysis, administration, communication, and collaboration. Students have developed the ability to function in professional settings: collaborating with peers and superiors, and managing research and analysis in a comprehensive manner. The value of these skills is reflected in the types of activities our ‘NRE alumni’ have taken on subsequent to their time with us. It includes working for NGO’s in England and Sierra Leone, for NATO in Sarajevo, doing research and teaching at US and Canadian universities, working as Analysts for Health Canada, Statistics Canada, and Heritage Canada and completing MAs and PhDs at institutions across the country (cf. Attachment 8.7). CRRN will continue to champion and support student integration at all levels so that as it grows, the pool of competent and highly motivated researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners will expand.

Policy-Makers

From CRRF’s beginning, we have formed alliances with government workers at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. They have frequently sought our research insights on specific policy issues and individuals within our network have been invited to participate in workshops, meetings, and consultations on policy issues from rural development, health, housing, Aboriginal peoples, and community development to rural-urban relations. In the recent Senate Hearings on rural poverty, for example, 7 of the 16 invited witnesses were from the NRE network (most others were government or political presenters). You will see from the CVs of CRRN members that we serve as an important pool of personnel, resources, and expertise that is used by policy-makers as they face the challenges of their positions. This will continue and expand under CRRN.

The CRRF annual conferences provide a key venue for KM with policy-makers (cf. Attachment 8.6). Since we always meet in rural areas, we have a direct and significant impact on the municipal decision-makers and the local economy. Several of our host sites, for example, have subsequently marketed themselves as conference venues as a result of their experience with us. We also influence provincial and federal policy-makers through the content of the material discussed and by bringing them to the rural locations. This has meant significant additional expense on our part, but it means that the awareness of the policy-makers is improved and the opportunities for dialogue with local citizens are increased – both valuable objectives of KM.

Community Activists and Entrepreneurs

Community activists and entrepreneurs will also benefit from CRRN activities. As with policy-makers, the CRRF annual conferences have been key venues for KM related to these target groups and they have been supplemented by alliances with networks that are well connected to these constituents. The alliance between CRRF and the Federation of Municipalities and the participation of community development Centres such as the Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership, the Rural

Development Institute, and the Rural and Small Town Programme are examples of these connections. One of the key objectives of CRRN will be to expand and integrate more of these linkages.

Citizens

Finally, we will have impacts on citizens, both rural and urban, through the development of CRRN. The relations already established with the field sites in the NRE Rural Observatory provide examples of one form this may take. Each year we have brought about 15 rural citizens from our field sites to participate in the annual conference and in 2001 and 2003 we organized an exchange of rural leaders between Canada and Japan. Over the 9 years of the project we have heard many anecdotes from them as testaments to the way in which the experience has changed their view and approach to local challenges and opportunities (cf. Attachment 8.8). They also reveal how the production of popular media materials, the web, and media commentaries have all helped them to understand the insights we have gained from our research. It has also been impressive to see how much they contribute to our research and policy agendas – providing valuable critiques and suggestions that have served to guide our focus of attention over the years. This will continue with CRRN.

Cluster participants, governance and budget

Director

The PI has a strong record of intellectual leadership and project management built over a 20-year period. He has served as President on two National Organizations (CSAA and CRRF) and has been Research Director for the NRE Project from its inception. He has been a key contributor to the design and implementation of the NRE Project, building it from a modest research initiative to a \$4 million collaborative program involving researchers from across Canada and around the world. This program involves more than 20 academic researchers from a wide variety of disciplines, more than 13 institutions, and numerous students, policy-makers, rural activists, community leaders, and rural citizens – all working in a multi-faceted and collaborative manner (cf. Attachments 8.2 to 8.8).

Participants

Many of the core participants in CRRN have an 18-year record of working together within CRRF and a 9-year record of collaborative research, creating innovative, influential, and useful materials and stimulating research and learning capacity within the NRE Project.

As summarized in Attachment 8.4 the participants demonstrate a remarkable breadth of experience, substantive knowledge, collaboration, and accomplishments. Over the last 10 years, for example, the NRE team alone has produced more than 200 documents and trained more than 130 students. They have held annual workshops and conferences, met with policy-makers from Federal Cabinet Ministers to Municipal Councilors, and produced public materials for distribution through academic, policy, practitioner, and popular media venues.

Most of the participants are also well-connected within their research and education networks – thereby greatly expanding the added value of CRRN. This includes links within and among both English and French-language networks.

To date, most of the participants have training in the social sciences. One of the objectives of CRRN will be to expand these linkages – to the health, natural, developmental, and environmental sciences. We have already established connections with these groups and will treat the development of closer relationships as an important objective for CRRN.

Partnerships

The list of partners represents many organizations and groups which are already integrated within the CRRF, NRRN, and NRE projects. We have been working with government agencies at federal, provincial, and municipal levels, research Centres and institutes from across the country and

around the world, and NGOs at national, regional, and local levels. These relationships will in turn provide us with the contacts and credibility that ensure further expansion.

Governments and NGOs have benefited from the pool of research and researchers built by CRRF and the NRE. As shown in the participant's CVs, we have served the needs of these groups by sitting on advisory boards, preparing special reports, presenting materials to working groups and organizations, consulting on special issues, and commenting on current topics and issues. The establishment of NRRN by the Rural Secretariat, for example, is a response to the need they felt for such a pool, and a demonstration of their commitment to a network such as the one we are proposing.

Our record also reflects the extensive international collaboration that is part of our networking activities. Individually and collectively we have working relationships with groups or institutions in more than eight countries and are in the process of developing additional ties with several more. CRRN resources will provide an opportunity and the means to expand this list considerably.

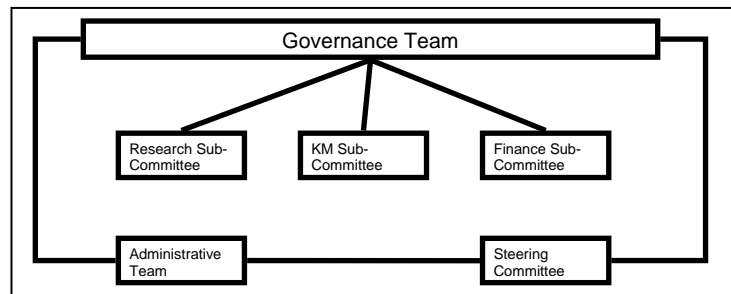
In spite of these rather extensive collaborations, there is still much to be done. We have identified the five groups mentioned above as priority directions for the expansion of CRRN and will continue to target new groups as they arise. We have already begun developing strategies for such expansion in collaboration with several of our partner organizations and have invited collaboration with partners who can facilitate our connections in these respects.

Students and new researchers

Over the years of the NRE we have paid particular attention to the mentoring and development of students and junior members of our network. To date, this has included more than 130 students. As indicated previously, this has paid off through their career successes and desire to continue participation in our activities (cf. Attachment 8.7). CRRN will continue this approach and expand it through our internship, community college, and exchange programs as outlined above. One of the key elements of our plans for international expansion will be to develop opportunities for student exchanges and joint programs as reflected in the International Comparative Rural Policy Program organized among 9 universities in 7 countries by CRRF members (<http://www.brandonu.ca/Academic/RuralDevelopment/ICRPS/ICRPS2.HTM#program>).

Governance

CRRN will be coordinated out of Concordia University but will have many of the tasks and activities distributed to appropriate Centres in other locations. In some cases, additional financing for specific activities will be generated and managed by the various Centres. Distributing the activities in this manner will permit us to take advantage of local strengths, build the



capacity of multiple Centres, and increase the flexibility of CRRN to respond to new issues and insights. The distributed nodes will be allocated the authority and responsibility to initiate and maintain tasks relevant for the whole network by a CRRN Governance Team. Details, By-laws, terms of office, and additional members related to the structures of governance will be decided as one of the first tasks of CRRN should it be funded, but the basic elements and personnel for this process are outlined below. *CRRN Governance Team*

CRRN will be directed by a Governance Team. It will function much like a corporate Board of Directors. Its general tasks will be focused upon strategic decision-making and approval of CRRN directions. In addition, the Governance Team members will be expected to bring their experience and networks to the table to identify and build new receptor communities and broaden the connectivity of

CRRN. For the purposes of managing meetings, and for more routine liaising with the CRRN Director, the Team will self-select a Chair on an annual basis via a simple majority vote. Nominations and elections for Chair shall be managed by the CRRN Manager.

The CRRN Governance Team will explicitly reflect the linkages to partner organizations and associated networks. It will include representatives from rural research, policy, and practitioner communities. It will also include regional representation. In particular, linkages will be made to the boards of CRRF and representatives from university-based research Centres, federal regional development agencies, provincial governments, municipal governments or related organizations, voluntary sector organizations interested in rural Canada, the private sector, and international partners.

The CRRN Governance Team will consist of voluntary participation of members but will have costs and expenses supported by CRRN. Initial members of the Governance Team are: David Bruce (RSTP), David Douglas (SEDRD), Rob Greenwood (Harris Centre), Judy Guernsey (Atlantic Rural Centre), Greg Halseth (UNBC), Kate Humpage (Rural Secretariat), Tom Johnson (USA), Erin O'Hoski (FCM), and Bill Reimer.

The Governance Team will establish three standing Sub-Committees that reflect the primary objectives of the Network: Research, KM, and Finances. Chairs of these Sub-Committees will be chosen from among the Governance team members. Nominations for Sub-Committee members can be brought to the CRRN Governance Team by any member of CRRN, providing that the nomination has the endorsement of at least two members of the existing Sub-Committee. Sub-Committee members need not be members of the Governance Team.

The Research Sub-Committee

The role of the Research Sub-Committee will be to identify existing and emerging research needs, provide commentary on research issues, and where appropriate, lend support to research activities. They will prepare a three-year research plan with annual updates to facilitate the strategic planning of the Governance Team. The Sub-Committee will provide guidance for workshop and conference topics and themes, establish mechanisms to communicate with partners and those broadly engaged with rural community topics, and seek funding opportunities for strategic research topics. In addition to these functions, the Committee will provide a quality control audit function by acting as a body of review readers for draft CRRN products.

The Research Sub-Committee will also provide the membership for a dispute resolution panel during on-going CRRN operations. Under the direction of the CRRN Director, five members of the Sub-Committee would be expected to hear and discuss a dispute from within CRRN if the parties involved wished to have resolved in this manner. The five members will provide a majority decision on the dispute. In cases where the CRRN Director may be involved in the subject dispute, another person will be appointed by the CRRN Governing Team to convene the arbiters from the Research Sub-Committee.

The Research Sub-Committee will involve the voluntary participation of members and would function largely via email. There may be some opportunity for face-to-face meetings of the Research Sub-Committee coming in connection with other rural research conferences or events. Initial members of the Research Sub-Committee will be: Ray Bollman (Statistics Canada), Greg Halseth (UNBC - Chair), Bruno Jean (UQAR), Judith Kulig (U. of Lethbridge), and Rosemary Ommer (U. of Victoria).

Knowledge Mobilization Sub-Committee

The KM Sub-Committee will identify and support opportunities for communication, partner engagement and expansion, dissemination, and evaluation of network materials and insights. This includes the preparation of proposals for future conferences and workshops, media opportunities, speaker engagements, the Rural Research Clearinghouse, and partner development. They will prepare a three-year plan with annual updates to facilitate the strategic planning of the Governance Team. They will also draft, implement, and oversee an ongoing Evaluation Program for CRRN – to monitor and

make recommendations for continual improvement in its KM objectives. The Liaison and Communications Officers will serve as ex-officio members of this Sub-Committee.

The KM Sub-Committee will involve the voluntary participation of members and would function largely via email. There may be some opportunity for face-to-face meetings of the KM Sub-Committee coming in connection with other rural research conferences or events. Initial members of the KM Sub-Committee will be: Bob Annis (RDI), David Bruce (RSTP - Chair), Diane Martz (PWHCE), Patrice LeBlanc (UQAT), and Mike Stolte (CIEL).

Finance Sub-Committee

The Finance Sub-Committee will identify new funding opportunities and develop the plan for endowment development in collaboration with Concordia University. They will prepare a three-year plan with annual updates to facilitate the strategic planning of the Governance Team. The initial members of the Finance Sub-Committee will be: David Douglas (SEDCD), Brett Fairbairn (U. of SK), Rob Greenwood (Harris Centre - Chair), and a representative from Concordia University.

Administration

CRRN tasks and activities will be distributed among participants and partners according to their relative strengths and interests. Each task assignment will be given to at least two Centres: with one Centre designated as the primary assignment and another Centre as backup. The two Centres will work closely with one another, thereby facilitating cross-Centre communication and at the same time providing support for one another to accomplish the tasks. The following table identifies initial assignments as illustrations. Final decisions regarding this allocation will be made at the first meeting of CRRN should the Strategic Cluster Award be granted.

Task	Primary Centre	Backup Centre
Annual Conference	CRRF	NRRN
CRRN Workshops	The Rural and Small Town Programme, Mt. Allison U.	UNBC Community Development Institute
Rural Information Gateway	Concordia University	The Rural Development Institute, Brandon U.
Data Repository and Archives	Concordia University	The Rural and Small Town Programme, Mt. Allison U.
Research Stimulation and Guidance	UNBC Community Development Institute	The Rural Development Institute; Statistics Canada
KM Best Practices	The Harris Centre, MUN	Concordia University
Capacity-Building Internships	Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, U. of SK	The Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Rural Research Clearinghouse	The Rural and Small Town Programme, Mt. Allison U.	The Rural Development Institute, Brandon U.
Extending the Rural Voice	Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF)	Foundation for Rural Living, ON
Liaison and Networking Opportunities	Concordia University	Centre de recherche sur le développement territoriale, UQAR
Municipal and Provincial Participation	School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, U. of Guelph	Centre de recherche sur le développement territoriale
Voluntary and Service Sector Participation	UNBC Community Development Institute	Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership
Aboriginal Peoples	Chair in Early Intervention/Child	PWHCE; Coastal Communities

Task	Primary Centre	Backup Centre
Participation	Development, TRU	Network
Private Sector Participation	Canadian Rural Economy Research Lab (C-CRERL), U. of SK	Canadian Forest Service
International Partnerships	Concordia University	International Rural Network
Endowment Fund	Concordia University	CRRF

The *CRRN Administrative Team* will be responsible for the overall coordination and support of these activities. Coordination tasks will involve the CRRN Manager, a Liaison Officer, a Communications Officer, and an Administrative Assistant.

- The CRRN Manager will serve in the role of a Project Manager under the CRRN Director and will be responsible for directing day-to-day activities of CRRN. Concordia will provide office space and equipment and will support the administration and payroll. The primary strengths of the CRRN Manager will be in project management. Familiarity with the academic and research milieu is essential along with knowledge of the needs of the policy and practitioner communities.
- The CRRN Manager will be supported by an Administrative Assistant who will, in addition to support duties, be responsible for tracking CRRN budget expenditures. It is expected that the Administrative Assistant will have office and budget management experience, and will have a resumé with executive assistant experience of not less than 5 years.
- Based on experience from the NRE Project, there is a critical role for a Liaison Officer within CRRN. The Liaison Officer will serve three basic functions. The first is to maintain routine contact with partner groups and their constituent contributors, the second is to identify opportunities and challenges and to expand the network. The third is to provide logistical support for the organization of CRRN workshops and meetings. The Liaison Officer must have a demonstrated track record of professional responsibility in coordinating and managing group or network activities. The Liaison Officer is expected to be highly organized, task-oriented, and have demonstrated the capacity to remain on time with activities and deliverables.
- In addition to the Liaison Officer, CRRN will be supported by a Communications Officer. The Communications Officer will assist the KM function by providing newsletter development and distribution, new media design and implementation (e.g. podcasts, e-newsletters, chat rooms, blogs), and preparing regular materials to update partner websites regarding rural research opportunities and insights. The Communications Officer will also be the focal point for maintenance of the Rural Information Gateway Website. Finally, the Communications Officer will support initiatives emerging from the KM Sub-Committee. Principal among these activities will be rewriting of cutting-edge rural research work for communication to rural and small town municipal governments, local service providers, and voluntary sector organizations. The Communications Officer is expected to have a minimum of two to four years of experience with communications activities such as newsletter or website management. Given KM demands, the position will also require an individual whose writing skills allow them to communicate research products in lay language. In addition to writing skills, the position is best suited for someone comfortable in a variety of venues including public presentations, video, television, and radio.

Management Steering Committee

A Steering Committee to support and guide the CRRN Manager with ongoing challenges will be formed from among the Primary Centre representatives with key activity responsibilities. This Committee will communicate regularly (via e-mail and conference calls on at least a monthly basis) with the Administrative Team in order to exchange updates on Centre and management activities, provide advice, and facilitate communication. Members will be chosen annually by the Governance

Team on the basis of nominations made by the CRRN Director. Regional representation will be maintained. Initial members of the Steering Committee will be: David Bruce (RSTP), Rob Greenwood (Harris Centre), Greg Halseth (UNBC), Kate Humpage (Rural Secretariat), Bruno Jean (CRDT), and Diane Martz (PWHCE).

Dispute Resolution

As mentioned above, the Research Sub-Committee will also provide the membership for a dispute resolution panel during on-going CRRN operations. Under the direction of the CRRN Director or designate, five members of the Sub-Committee would be expected to hear and discuss any dispute arising from within CRRN if requested by the parties involved.

Leverage

The history of the NRE Project provides an excellent illustration of the ability of this team to leverage funding and support. In 1997 the project was initiated on the basis of a \$25,000 contract with HRDC for a workshop and some related research work. For the first three years of the project it survived on project-based funding from government partners such as the HRDC, the Rural Secretariat, Health Canada, Fednor, ACOA, and Statistics Canada. For the next 3 years primary funding came via SSHRC's Strategic Grant on Social Cohesion and for the final 4 years we have relied on a SSHRC INE Grant entitled "Building Rural Capacity in the New Economy". Over the 9-year period the total funds involved are more than \$4 million (not counting the annual conferences).

CRRN is organized to draw upon the considerable research activity already reflected in its partner Centres. The nature of this support is difficult to measure since it includes funds that are directly administered by the Centres as well as the amounts to which it has access through its networks and partners. RDI, for example, records more than \$1 million in currently committed 'hard' research funds over the 2007 to 2010 period. This figure does not include the research funds in its network over which it does not have administrative control. This pattern is repeated in most of the other 19 Canadian research Centres in our cluster. We anticipate that each Centre and Partner will search for additional opportunities whereby specific cluster activities are supplemented with funds for research, meetings, conferences, materials production, distribution, and travel. At the same time, CRRN researchers will have more time available for research activities since many of the administrative functions will be supported by CRRN. This will produce a significant increase in research grants for rural research.

CRRN will attract considerable in-kind support as well (over \$1.9 million in the current proposal). As with the NRE Project we will likely receive our in-kind support in the form of office space, access to students, institutional infrastructure, and voluntary time contributions from all of our target groups. One of the valuable consequences of our decision to meet in rural areas, for example, is the vast amount of good will, time, and energy we receive from local people as they host our activities.

Long-term viability

During the early period of the NRE, most of the leveraged support came from government sources and participants' institutions. These are usually provided in the form of project-based contributions with rather specific outputs, little 'core funding' and short time-frames, however. As a result, we will seek to supplement such income with foundation funding through one or more of the major granting agencies operating in Canada and the USA. At the same time, we will explore the possibility of establishing endowment funding specifically for KM activities as outlined below.

In collaboration with Concordia University the PI is exploring the option of an Endowment Fund for rural-related research and education. This Fund would be used to provide core support for CRRN over the long term. Initial materials regarding such a Fund have already been drafted and are undergoing development with a plan to launching in 2008 or 2009. By the time that the CRRN period is complete, we hope to have an Endowment established to ensure both the institutional continuation of CRRN along with additional funds for research and education initiatives.

Budget rationale

Networking and KM activities require resources, both financial and in-kind. Finances are required to meet, produce materials, communicate, and develop linkages. Unfortunately there are very few sources for such funding. The current government climate requires project-focused funding with specific (non-infrastructure) outcomes, the private sector has shown little interest in supporting social science research that is not directly related to their specific product or service, and granting agencies favour traditional research projects with specific objectives rather than the long term, more open, and flexible programs required for KM objectives.

The Strategic Cluster program funding will provide us with the type of support necessary to take existing research and make it available to a wider audience, maintain a consistent and long-term collaboration among partners to build trust, and discover new ways to exchange and operationalize our insights. It will also free our researchers from the administrative duties that take them away from research and the funds will allow us to explore innovations in KM that were not previously possible when all our resources were designated for more traditional research activities.

Budget Justification

Personnel costs

Student salaries and benefits/Stipends (22%)

Student assistants will be used for many of the cluster activities, including the Conferences, Workshops, Information Gateway, Data Archives, Research Products, Best Practices, Internships, Clearinghouse, Rural Voice, Receptor Capacity, and International Partnership activities. As a result, they will be directly involved in project development, data preparation and interpretation, communication, collaboration, and liaison activities. Since the activities will be distributed among the various Centres of the cluster it will also provide them with opportunities for exchange and comparison across many locations. We estimate the student support across all Centres as the equivalent of 2 undergraduate and about 2 MA students at \$16,500/yr (incl. benefits) and \$18,600/yr respectively.

Non-student salaries and benefits/Stipends (46%)

The core administrative and liaison activities of the cluster require the commitment of staff over a relatively long period of time. In most cases, student careers do not make this possible since their primary objective is graduation. As a result, we will most likely allocate these core activities to non-student personnel with some occasional student support. This includes the Network Manager, Liaison Officer, Communications Officer, Administrative Support staff, and support for the Director of the RSTP at Mt. Allison U. The latter amount is necessary since the RSTP depends on external funding.

RTS requested (SSHRC portion) (<1%)

We are requesting 1 time release allocation to free time for Bob Annis, the Director of the RDI. In order to commit the time to the cluster he must cover his costs since the Institute depends on external funding. The use of time release subsidies has worked well in the past to make this possible.

Travel and subsistence costs

Applicant/Team member travel (19%)

Since distance is a key element of what we mean by 'rural', travel costs are inevitably a major part of our budget. These funds will primarily be used to bring team members and target groups together for Conferences and Workshops, Internships, Liaison, Clearinghouse, Rural Voice, Receptor Capacity, International, and Administrative activities. Some of these funds will be used to support the movement of non-academic partners through the Internship activities.

Student travel (4%)

Students will travel as part of our Conference, Workshop, Research Products, Internship, and Receptor Capacity activities. We have found that having the opportunity to meet with academic and

non-academic partners from many parts of the country has been extremely valuable for building understanding, sharpening the analysis, opening opportunities, and motivating young scholars interested in rural issues. The ‘alumni’ activities of the NRE Project, for example, have gone a long way to ensuring the capacity built during the project is maintained after the students have moved to other stages in their careers (cf. Attachment 8.7). Their first-hand experience with places and people from across the country has contributed a great deal to the maintenance of these contacts.

Other expenses

Professional/Technical services (3%)

3% of our budget is allocated for technical support in two major areas: translation and journalism. The former is necessary to maintain the important links we have established between English and French-speaking partners and participants. This is especially important for the analysis of rural issues since the policy approaches among the provinces are so different and the networks of researchers tend to be language-specific. We will also hire writers with journalism experience to support the issue identification and rewriting that is necessary in order to make academic insights more understandable and appropriate for public audiences. These funds will be spent mostly within our Gateway, Data Archives, and Clearinghouse activities.

Supplies (5%)

Supplies for communication, media, meetings, administration, and publicity materials both internally and externally will be necessary for all activities.

Non-disposable equipment (<1%)

Computer purchases in years 1 and 4 (\$2,500 per computer) and the purchase of a video camera in year 3 (\$1,250) will be made to support the Clearinghouse activities.

Time Line and Milestones

Year One: This year will be devoted to the establishment and organization of the core governance structures, formalization of the working relationships, and implementation of the central activities – including discussions for the Endowment Fund and other fund-raising options. It will include network expansion and consolidation. By the end of this year, the structures will be in place, the Centres will be operational, and the network will have grown.

Year Two: This year will emphasize network-building and expansion. Programs for collaboration with the five special target groups will be developed and the initial steps taken toward implementation. By the end of this year, we should have established working arrangements with all of these target groups and increased our network partners substantially.

Year Three: This year will emphasize the consolidation and the preparation for evaluation of our activities. If feasible, the Endowment plan will be finalized. By the end of the year, we will have evaluation plans from all the Sub-Committees and an endowment strategy in place.

Year Four: This year will concentrate on the evaluation of our cluster, the identification of possible reorganization, and the launching of the Endowment project. By the end of the year we should have a new strategic plan in place and the Endowment or other funding underway.

Year Five: This year will emphasize the implementation of the new strategic plan. By the end of the year we should have a revised organization in place (if necessary) and the initial stages of the Endowment and future funding activities completed.

Year Six: This year will emphasize capacity-building among our partners and self-reflection on the future options for rural research and KM. By the end of the year we should show increased capacity among our partners and the outlines of a plan for the use of our post-SSHRC funding.

Year Seven: This year will be devoted to the documentation and evaluation of our activities, celebration of our accomplishments, and preparation for the future of the Cluster. By the end of the year we should have our Endowment funding in place, a plan for the long term, and an organizational structure to reflect this plan.

3. List of References

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- Halseth, G., D. Bruce, and L. Sullivan (2004) "Leading and Lagging: The Long Run Role of Institutions and Social Capital in Fostering Community Economic Development." In *Building for Success: Explorations of Rural Community and Rural Development*. G. Halseth and Halseth R (eds.). Brandon University: Rural Development Institute & Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, pp. 306-336.
- Jean, B. and A. Épenda Muteba Wa (2004) "Le capital social et le développement des « capacités de développement » des communautés rurales : les enseignements d'une étude canadienne", *Revue d'économie régionale et urbaine* Vol. 3, pp. 673-694.

8. Supporting Documents

- Attachment 8.1: Glossary of Acronyms
- Attachment 8.2: CRRF Introductory Flyer
- Attachment 8.3: NRE Introductory Flyer
- Attachment 8.4: List of Participants, Institutions, and Fields of Expertise
- Attachment 8.5: NRE Rural Observatory
- Attachment 8.6: List of CRRF and NRRN Conferences and Workshops
- Attachment 8.7: NRE Alumni activities
- Attachment 8.8: Letter from Tweed, ON

Attachment 8.1 – Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
Atlantic RURAL	Atlantic Research towards Understanding Rural Health in Atlantic Canadian Landscapes
CCN	Coastal Communities Network
C-CRERL	Canadian Rural Economy Research Lab (U. of SK)
CDI	The Community Development Institute (UNBC)
CEE	The Centre of Environmental Excellence (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College)
CFS	Canadian Forest Service
CIEL	The Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (BC)
CRDT	Centre de recherche sur le développement territoriale (UQAR)
CRRF	The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation
CRRN	The Canadian Rural Research Network
CSAA	The Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association
FCM	The Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Fednor	Federal Regional Development Organization for Northern Ontario
FRL	The Foundation for Rural Living, ON
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
HRSDC	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
IRN	The International Rural Network (Scotland)
KM	Knowledge Mobilization
MUN	Memorial University of Newfoundland
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NRE	The New Rural Economy Project
NRRN	The National Rural Network
OMAFRA	Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
PI	Principal Investigator
PWHCE	Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence
RDI	The Rural Development Institute (Brandon U.)
RS	Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
RSTP	The Rural and Small Town Programme (Mt. Allison U.)
RUPRI	The Rural Policy Research Institute (USA)
SEDRD	School of Environmental Design and Rural Development (Guelph U.)
SSHRC	The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
TORC	The Ontario Rural Council, ON
TRU	Thompson Rivers University
UNBC	University of Northern British Columbia
UQAR	Université du Québec à Rimouski
UQAT	Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue
VUURN	Victorian Universities Regional Research Network (Australia)

Attachment 8.2 – Introduction to CRRF



The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation – Mission and Values

Mission

- Revitalize rural Canada. All Canadians benefit when rural Canada is strong, productive and sustainable. CRRF achieves this mission through education and research for rural leaders, in communities, business and commerce, and in government.
- Build mutually beneficial rural/urban relationships. Improved understanding of the common interest of rural and urban Canadians advances the fortunes of all, and reduces rural dependency.

Vision

- CRRF believes that fresh solutions through research and continuing education can be found to break the long series of income, environment and employment crises in rural Canada.
- CRRF is committed to Canadian global competitiveness by 'trading up' on rural family income, standard of living, environmental and countryside amenities, rural heritage and human safety.
- CRRF believes that alliances and partnerships among rural organizations, professionals, universities, corporate citizens and the urban public are critical to success for rural Canadians.

Core Values

- Respect for common interests: The common interests of investors, researchers, and rural and urban people are to be explored, broadened and deepened, inclusively.
- Innovation: The greatest proportion of the earnings from the Endowment Fund must be used to be the best we can at delivering concrete, evidently useful options and opportunities.
- Accountable: CRRF is open, transparent and accountable.
- Inclusive: The diversity of Canadian talent, interest and communities can find a home in CRRF to advance sound rural outcomes.

Objectives

- CRRF is a charitable institution committed to bettering the lives of rural Canadians. The objectives for which the Foundation is established are as follows:
- Promoting and funding research on economic issues and scientific developments affecting rural populations;
- Providing education and instruction through seminars, workshops, conferences, and publications for the purpose of continuing learning, knowledge, and information dissemination to rural Canadians;
- Promoting economic development with the objective of helping to relieve poverty experienced by rural Canadians.

Activities

- CRRF fulfils its objectives by the following types of activities:
- Bringing together people and institutions interested in improving and stabilizing the economic and social condition of rural people and places in Canada;
- Funding "think-tank" style workshops and seminars leading to annual Rural Universities. In this way, the CRRF will speed the transformation of research into action and provide continuing education through an international exchange of views and experience;
- Promoting and funding research which examines the development of options and strategies for economic sectors, private enterprise, and rural communities seeking to take advantage of global opportunities;
- Funding the publication of research results addressing issues of rural restructuring to ensure continued learning and information dissemination to Canadians.

Attachment 8.3 – Introduction to the NRE Project

The New Rural Economy Project (Canada)

The NRE Project is in its ninth year. It is a multi-disciplinary, national, collaborative research project examining the changes occurring in rural Canada and the opportunities they create for rural revitalization. Two main types of questions are being explored by 15 researchers supported by 23 institutional partners and 32 field sites.

- **What are the key changes affecting rural Canada? How can rural communities and people best position themselves for revitalization in the light of these changes?** and
- **What conditions enhance or inhibit the capacity of rural people to achieve revitalization?**

The project is also organized to build research capacity on behalf of rural Canada. The dispersion and diversity of rural researchers has been a major challenge to comparative work and the development of sufficient mass to support the level of attention required. The NRE Project has addressed this obstacle through institution-building in rural locations; conferences and workshops; training opportunities for students, policy-makers, and rural citizens; and the creation of a ‘Rural Observatory’: 32 systematically selected rural sites (plus 2 in Japan) that serve as sources of information, criticism, and inspiration for our activities.

What have we learned?

Rural Canada must reposition itself for the new economy. Although the extraction of natural resources remains important for rural economies, it is no longer sustaining local communities and livelihoods. Labour-shedding technologies and improved transportation have centralized commodity production to a point where most of the goods, capital, and labour move through large regional centres – leaving smaller towns and villages struggling to justify their existence.

The new economy provides opportunities for rural revitalization. Rapid and extensive communication technologies have meant that relatively remote locations have access to information that can help identify and service new markets. They also enable new networks for knowledge-sharing and collaboration. Our field work identifies many examples where rural people have capitalized on these opportunities – creating innovations in production, marketing, services, and governance that extend their capacity to function in the new economy.

Capacity is a social affair. Our survey and field work make clear that technology and infrastructure are only part of the requirements for revitalization. Social capital – the networks and norms that support local action – is critical to the use of the technology. Our rural household survey and site profiles provide key evidence of the multi-dimensional nature of this type of capital. Facility with market or associative-based social capital is more likely to result in higher household incomes, for example, than capacity based on bureaucratic or communal relations.

Context matters. Our comparative approach reveals how the context can affect the nature and extent of important outcomes. In general, household incomes are higher where participation in voluntary associations is high. But this relationship disappears where the economy is locally oriented or close to urban centres. These results imply that social capital is even more important for incomes within the new economy – especially in more isolated communities.

Innovations in institutions are key. Institutional innovation does not typically occur by decree. Instead, it emerges as people find existing institutions to be inadequate or obstructive to achieving their objectives. In some cases it means modifying existing forms, while in others, it means creating new ones.

We have identified some of the ways this has occurred in rural areas. Citizens concerned about the sustainability of salmon fishing organized a watershed-focused committee that brought together businesses, industries, environmental groups, and municipalities in a forum that cut across their traditional institutional divisions. Municipal councilors frustrated by their inability to raise funds, created a corporate structure that enables them to initiate projects on behalf of their community. In each case, local capacity is increased through institutional innovation.

Unfortunately, these innovations are not widespread, often remaining weakest in the locations that need them the most. By analyzing the conditions and processes leading to innovation, we will be better equipped to meet the need of such places.

Challenges and Opportunities of Collaborative Research

Collaborative research introduces a number of key challenges to social science research. These occur because:

- Financial demands must be substantial and long-term;
- Multiple disciplines make communication and commitment challenging;
- Researcher, policy-maker, and citizen collaboration is demanding;
- Our institutional and career contexts are typically unsupportive; and
- Multi-level analysis requires extra methodological demands.

We have sought to meet these challenges by:

- Diversifying our funding support and ensuring multiple products to warrant them;
- Exchange materials and work across disciplines within specific projects;
- Use our partner organizations strategically (e.g. CRRF) to provide a place for meeting;
- Divide tasks to meet career stages and demands; and
- Explore diverse methodologies in a context of triangulation.

Project Themes

- **Governance:** Investigating how new forms of local and regional governance facilitate or inhibit rural capacities.
- **Services:** Exploring innovations in service delivery to rural peoples
- **Communications:** Investigating the relationship between traditional and new communication techniques – and how they facilitate or inhibit rural capacities
- **Environment and Natural Resources:** Investigating how innovations in natural resource management and environmental concerns relate to rural capacities.
- **Integration:** Developing the conceptual framework for capacity, social capital, social cohesion and other theoretical aspects. Maintaining common data resources.

The NRE Project is an initiative of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (514) 848-2424 (ext. 2323);
E-mail: nre@alcor.concordia.ca; Websites: nre.concordia.ca & www.crrf.ca



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada



Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Attachment 8.4 – Co-Investigators, Collaborators, Partners

Co-Investigators (NRE participants indicated by *)

Participant	Location	Topics
Robert Annis	Brandon U.; Director of RDI	Rural community development
*Omer Chouinard	Université de Moncton	Environment and sustainability
Amedeo D'Angiulli	Thompson Rivers University; Canada Research Chair in Early Intervention/Child Development	Children, Education, Health
Polo Diaz	U. of Regina; Canadian Plains Research Centre	Environment and sustainability
David Douglas	Guelph University; School of Environmental Design and Rural Development	Regional development; Planning; Governance
*Ivan Emke	Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University	Anthropology ; Sociology ; Media ; Communications
Brett Fairbairn	U. of SK; History	Co-operative Movements
Tony Fuller	U. of Guelph	Rural community development
Murray Fulton	U. of SK	Agricultural economics
*Greg Halseth	U. of Northern BC; Director, Community Development Institute	Economic and regional development; Housing
*Bruno Jean	UQAR ; Le Centre de recherche sur le développement territorial	Développement territorial
Judith Kulig	University of Lethbridge; Canadian Rural Health Research Society	Health; Multiculturalism
Belinda Leach	Guelph; University Research Chair in Rural Gender Studies	Gender, Rural
*Patrice Leblanc	UQAT; Chaire Desjardins en développement des petites collectivités	Economic and regional development; Youth, politics and government
*E. Dianne Looker	MSV University	Education, occupational attainment; Gender
Stefania Maggi	Thompson Rivers University; Center for Education and Development Studies	Children; Education; Health
*Diane Martz	U. of SK; Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence	Economic and regional development; Women
Ralph Matthews	UBC	Social capital; Community resilience
*Katja Neves-Graca	Concordia University; Sociology and Anthropology Department	Fisheries, Environment and sustainability, Education
Maureen Reed	U. of SK	Environment and sustainability
Margaret Rose Olfert	University of Saskatchewan; Canada Research Chair in the New Rural Economy	Economic and regional development; Labour
Chris Southcott	Lakehead University; Department of Sociology	Environment and Sustainability, Globalization, Northern development
Robert Summerby-Murray	Mount Allison U.; Geography	Geography, Landscapes, Economic development
*Derek Wilkinson	Laurentian University	Economic and social development

Collaborators (NRE participants indicated by *)

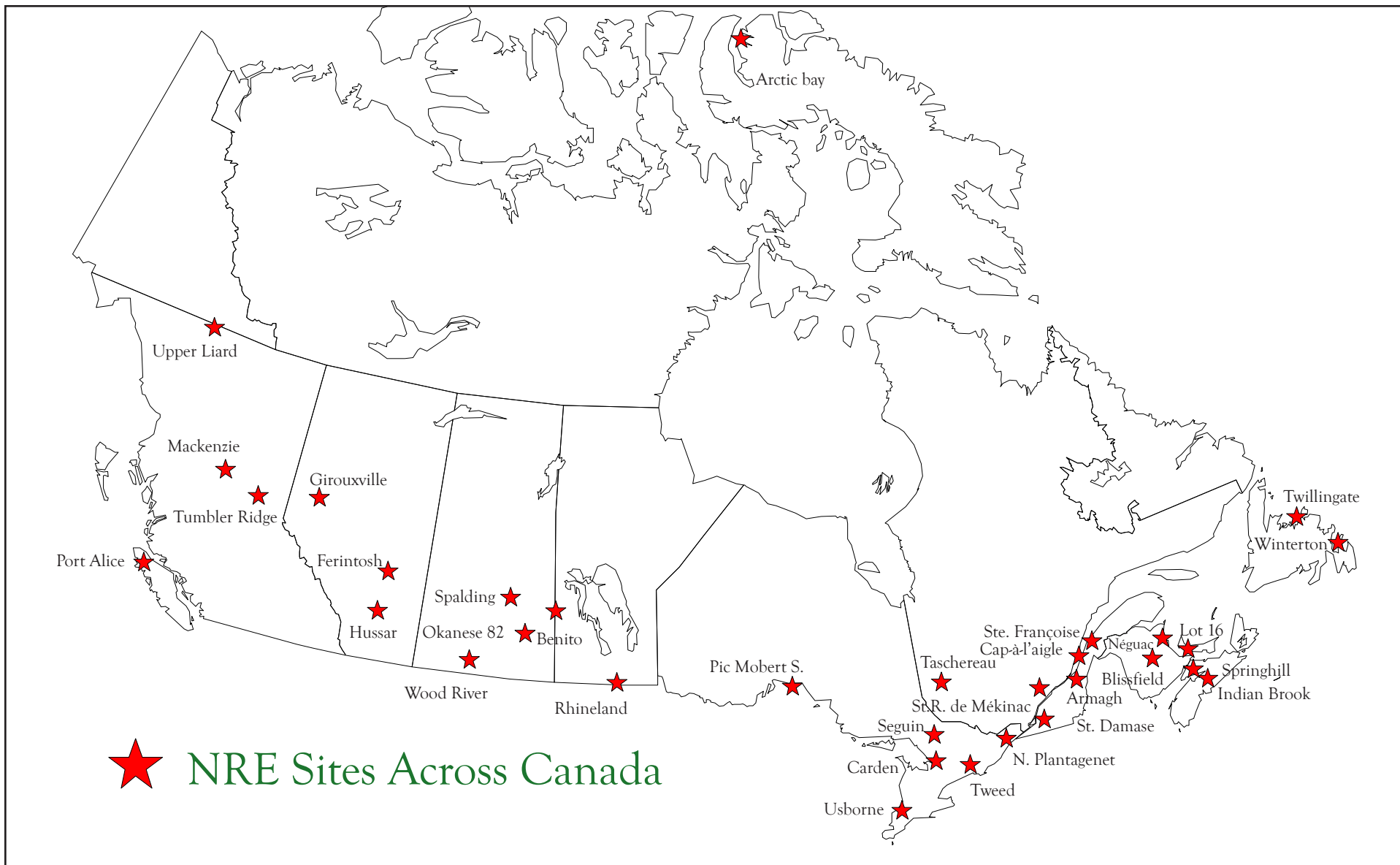
Participant	Location	Topics
Elizabeth Beaton	Cape Breton U.; Atlantic Agriculture Project	Geography; Religion; Housing
*Tom Beckley	U. of NB; Forestry and Management	Environment and sustainability; Forestry
*Ray D. Bollman	Statistics Canada ; Economics	Economic and Regional Development, Employment and labour, Population studies
John Bryden	U. of Highlands and Islands, Scotland; IRN	Agriculture, Economic and regional development
Heather Clemenson	Statistics Canada ; Economics	Economic and Regional Development, Employment and labour, Population studies
Jerry Courvisanos	U. of Ballarat, AU; School of Business	Innovation; Regional development
Robyn Eversole	RMIT U., Australia; Regional development in Global Context	Economic and regional development; Indigenous people
David Freshwater	University of Kentucky	Agricultural Economics
Serge Gagnon	Université du Québec en Outaouais Discipline: Social sciences	Regional and Economic Development, Tourism, Environment and Sustainable Development
Nicole Gallant	Département de science politique Université de Moncton	Immigration
Rob Greenwood	Director, Harris Centre, MUN; President, CRRF; NRRN	Economic and Regional Development, Environment and Sustainability, Employment and labour
Judy Guernsey	Dalhousie University	Environmental health; Population health
Karen Heisler	City of Airdrie, AB; Planning	Economic and regional development; politics and government
Kate Humpage	Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada	Dissemination; Policy mobilization
Tom Johnson	U of Missouri; RUPRI; Agricultural Economics	Economic and regional development
Kevin O'Toole	Deakin U., Australia	Politics and government; Economic development
Rosemary Ommer	U. of Victoria; Centre for Earth and Ocean Research	Environment and sustainability
*John Parkins	Canadian Forest Service	Environment and sustainability
Mark Partridge	Ohio State U.; Economic Development; Swank Chair in	Economic and regional development
Raymond Pong	Laurentian University	Health, Elderly, Northern development
Sally Shortall	Queens University, Northern Ireland	Gender issues; Economic and regional development, Agriculture
Richard Steadman	Pennsylvania State U.; USA	Environment and Sustainability, leisure, Recreation and tourism, Energy and natural resources
Mike Stolte	Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurial Leadership	Economic and regional development, Northern development, Indigenous people
Ivan Townsend	The University of Lethbridge Geography Department	Population studies, Mental Health, Population and labour
Erik Westholm	Högskolan Dalarna, Sweden; Economic and Social Geography	Localities and regions; Demographic changes
Kimberly Wingrove	Director, Rural Programs Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	Community and economic development

Partners (NRE participants indicated by *)

Contact	Organization	Location
Murray Fulton	Adapting to New Environment Project: Agriculture and Rural Economies in the 21st Century	SK
Judith Guernsey	Atlantic Research towards Understanding Rural Health in Atlantic Canadian Landscapes	NS
John Parkins	*Canadian Forest Service	AB
Polo Diaz	Canadian Plains Research Centre	SK
Rose Olfert	Canadian Rural Economy Research Lab	SK
Ivan Emke	Center for Environmental Excellence: Education, Research, Technology, and Development	NL
Belinda Leach	Center for Families, Work and Well-being	ON
Mike Stolte	Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurial Leadership	BC
Raymond Pong	Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research	ON
John Martin	Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities	Australia
Patrice Leblanc	*Chaire Desjardins en développement des petites collectivités de l'Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue	QC
Ralph Matthews	Coastal Communities Project	BC
Greg Halseth	*Community Development Institute	BC
Bill Reimer	*Concordia University	QC
Rob Greenwood	*CRRF	NL
Erin O'Hoski	Federation of Canadian Municipalities	ON
Anita Hayes	Foundation for Rural Living	ON
Ken Donnelly	Human Resources and Social Development Canada	ON
Derek Wilkinson	*Institute on Northern Ontario, Research and Development	ON
John Bryden	International Rural Network	Scotland
Bruno Jean	*Le Centre de recherche sur le développement territorial	QC
Rob Greenwood	Leslie Harris Center of Regional Policy and Development	NL
Robert Summerby-Murray	Mount Allison University	NB
Diane Martz	*Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence	SK
George Penfold	Regional Innovation Research Chair for Rural Economic Development	BC
Ralph Matthews	Resilient Communities Project	BC
Robert Annis	*Rural Development Institute	MB
Kimberly Wingrove	Rural Development Division at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	ON
Brian Dabson	Rural Policy Research Institute	USA
David Douglas	School of Environmental Design and Rural Development	ON
Sally Shortall	School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work	Northern Ireland
Ray Bollman	*Statistics Canada	ON
Mark Partridge	Swank Education Program	USA
Harold Flaming	*The Ontario Rural Council (TORC)	ON
David Bruce	*The Rural and Small Town Programme	NB
Kate Humpage	*The Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	ON
Kevin O'Toole	Victorian Universities Regional Research Network	Australia

NRE

THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY



★ NRE Sites Across Canada

Attachment 8.6 – History of CRRF/NRE Conferences and Workshops

Date	Conference or Workshop	Location
2006	Oct 26-28: A Rural Meeting of Minds	Gatineau QC and Lanark, ON
2006	Apr 28-May 1: NRE ² Spring Workshop	Taschereau, QC
2005	Oct 13-15: Big Lessons from Small Places	Twillingate, NL
2005	Apr 29-May 1: NRE ² Spring Workshop	Duck Mountain, SK (Benito, MB)
2004	Oct 13-17: CRRF National Conference	Tweed, ON
2004	Apr 27-May 3: Think Tank 2004: Local Governance of Rural-Urban Interaction	Prince George, B.C.
2003	Oct 30 – Nov 3: CRRF National Conference	St-Damase and Gatineau, QC
2003	May 1-3: New Economy Brainstorm	Ferintosh, AB
2002	Oct 27 - 29: Rural Matters: CRRF Rural University	Miramichi City, NB
2002	May 8 - 12: Spring Workshop	Altona, MB
2001	Oct 24-27: CRRF Rural University: The NRE: From Challenge to Action	Muenster, SK
2001	Apr 28-May 2 - Workshop: The NRE – From Challenge to Action	Sackville, NB
2000	Oct 11-14: National Conference: The New Rural Economy	Alfred, ON
2000	May 3-7: Workshop: The New Rural Economy	Nanaimo, BC
1999	October - FCRR Universite Rurale Quebecoise, Entreprenre Chez-nous	Trois Pistoles, QC
1999	May 26-30: Workshop - NRE research vision	Newtown, NL
1998	Oct - National Conference - Rural Marginalization	Nelson, BC
1998	Spring - Workshop - Rural Marginalization	St-Donat, QC
1997	Oct - National Conference - The New rural Economy: Rural Revitalization	West Prince County, PE
1997	May - Workshop - The New rural Economy: Rural Revitalization	North Bay, ON
1996	Oct - National Conference - NAFTA and the New Rural Economy	Gimli, MB
1996	May - Workshop - NAFTA and the New Rural Economy	Quesnel, BC
1995	Oct - National Conference - International Perspectives on Rural Employment	Coaticook, QC
1995	May - Workshop - International Perspectives on Rural Employment	Corner Brook, NL
1994	Oct - National Conference - Rural Institutional Restructuring	Grande Prairie, AB
1994	Mar - Workshop - Social Networks and Institutional Restructuring	St. Clement, QC
1993	Oct - National Conference - Development Strategies for Rural Canada: Evaluating Partnerships, Jobs, and Communities	Wolfville, NS
1993	Apr - Workshop - Progress and Partnerships for Local Initiative Programs for Rural Development	Merrickville, ON
1992	Oct - National Conference - Manufacturing and the Service Sector in Rural Development Strategy	Goderich, ON
1992	Jul - Workshop - The Potential for Manufacturing in Rural Economic Diversification	Brandon, MB
1991	Oct - National Conference - Stimulating Rural Economies for the 2000s	Camrose, AB
1991	Apr - Workshop - Development in Resource-Dependent and Single Industry Rural Places	Coaticook, QC
1990	Oct - National Conference - The Databases for Monitoring and Researching Rural Restructuring	Ottawa in partnership with Statistics Canada
1990	Mar - Workshop - Globalization and Agricultural Restructuring	Ottawa, ON
1989	Oct - National Conference - Sustainable Rural Communities in Canada	Saskatoon, SK
1989	Workshop - Sustaining Rural Development	Ottawa, ON

Attachment 8.7 – NRE Alumni Activities

Student	University	Post-Grad Activity
Briscoe	Concordia	Heritage Canada
Brueckner	U. of SK	Senior Policy Analyst – Sask Water
Bryant	Concordia	Statistics Canada
Chapman	Mt. Allison	Senior Analyst, Canadian Institute for Health Information, Ottawa
Chen	Concordia	Data analyst – Hudsons Bay Company
Chisholm	Mt. Allison	MA in Public Administration at Queen's
Connell	Guelph	Assistant Professor, School of Environmental Planning, UNBC
Draca	Concordia	Completed MA, now in PhD
Dressler	Concordia	Completed MA, now Rural Assessment Consultant at OECD, Paris
Element	Concordia	Teaching at CEGEP – Gaspé
Gallant	Concordia	Program Development – Jacob Canada Charity
Gold	Brandon	PhD at University of Otago (Dunedin, NZ)
Hayes	Concordia	Regional Child Protection Specialist – Save the Children, West Africa
Jacob	Concordia	Urban Planning PhD, U. of Chicago
Jané	Concordia	RCMP Officer
Lyons	Concordia	PhD, Carleton University
MacInnis	Mt. Allison	Communications Officer – BC Government Caucus
Magnan-MacKay	Concordia	PhD, Université Laval
Mendis	U. of SK	PhD at Waterloo University
Morin	UQAR	Agent de recherche – Trois-Pistoles
Perzow	Concordia	Senior Policy Analyst – Health Canada
Ryser	UNBC	Research Manager – Rural and Small Town Studies Program, UNBC
Saracino	Concordia	NATO
Sharkey	Concordia	PhD, Carleton University
Stevens	Mt. Allison	MA in Environmental Design, U. of Calgary
Sullivan	UNBC	Special Projects Coordinator – Rural Maternity NET, Vancouver

Attachment 8.8: Letter from NRE Field Site

Tweed Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 988
Tweed, ON
K0K 3J0

October 30, 2006

Bill Reimer, Ph.D
Concordia University
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, H1125.01
Montreal, Quebec
H3G 1M8

Dear Dr.Reimer,

It was a pleasure to be asked to attend the NRE conference in Gatineau. This Conference gave me many ideas that I could implement in my community.

I was told a while ago a story about a General who walked out to the trenches in a war. Bullets were whizzing all around. He asked a soldier in a trench " Who is winning the war." That is the perspective I think many of us feel we have in our small rural communities. So it is very important for us to hear and see so many fine people from across our great nation. We may not always see eye to eye but I feel our hearts are in the right place. Of course many will say though are you getting any results? So let me rely to you the Good News from Tweed, the site of your 2004 NRE conference.

As a result of a workshop at this conference myself and Francois Varin (Executive Director Rue principales) were able to discuss the program he delivers in Quebec and New Brunswick. I realized the model was too costly for our village but with four surrounding villages Tweed, Madoc, Marmora and Stirling (a group we call COMFORT COUNTRY) it might be achievable. I got the Municipal approvals, sold the idea to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Rural Affairs Ontario, as a pilot project to rejuvenate our downtown cores. We hired a coordinator. Consultants were used for market surveys and drafting potential new streetscapes. This was done with local input at numerous public meetings.

After the initial year we hosted what we call a Mainstreet Summit where as a pilot site we had over 130 delegates from across Ontario telling them about our project and addressing rural issues. Many have now attempted similar projects in their communities. The Mainstreet Group has recently been informed that a Rural Economic Development application has been approved allowing our project to go forward next year.

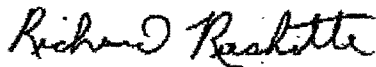
I would like to stress to you some of the local actions and thoughts so here are some random observations....After the Summit meeting a local Village Representative of Mainstreet said: " I have never been more proud of anything in my life to match what we are doing here." The local high school has been contacted so that young people can

design locally made benches, garbage receptacles and picnic tables. Horticultural groups are looking at building and maintaining flowerbeds in new parks. The arts community are designing murals with local themes and looking for the wow effects. The municipal governments are looking at signage and lighting, retaining experts in signs and lights. The local business community is branding and joint marketing and at the same time some have put up new facades.

I could go on and on but enough writing from me. I have asked our Mainstreet Coordinator Andrew Redden to follow up with more facts, figures, press releases etc. I guess the point I wanted to make to you was that your New Rural Economy Conference in Tweed allowed a few "soldiers in the trenches" the opportunity to see the big picture, giving us some ammunition to fight the war for the communities that we call home.

I wish you all the best for you and the group.

Yours truly



Richard Rashotte
President
Tweed Chamber of Commerce
Chair
Comfort Country