

**Rural Development Institute**

**Annual Report**

**2005**

***Providing academic research and leadership on issues  
affecting rural communities in Canada***

## **Rural Development Institute, Brandon University**

Brandon University established the Rural Development Institute in 1989 as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in Western Canada and elsewhere.



RDI functions as a not-for-profit research and development organization designed to promote, facilitate, coordinate, initiate and conduct multi-disciplinary academic and applied research on rural issues. The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and the community by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development. RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of multi-stakeholders.

The Institute has diverse research affiliations, and multiple community and government linkages related to its rural development mandate. RDI disseminates information to a variety of constituents and stakeholders and makes research information and results widely available to the public either in printed form or by means of public lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

For more information, please visit [www.brandonu.ca/rdi](http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi).

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### **Rural Development Institute**

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## 2005 Annual Report Highlights

RDI took a leadership role in the project design and implementation of the new 5-year CCP Models Project. See **pages 29-31**.

The section, Consultation, Collaboration, **pages 41-46**, describe RDI's efforts to remain open and responsive to rural and northern issues.

Information and communications technology (ICT) received additional attention over the past 12 months. Several of RDI's project and research activities investigated the potential of ICT in rural communities. Information on these projects can be found on **pages 8, 13, 16 and 25**.

Since 1999, BU Community Outreach Service has responded to over 100 requests from faculty, students and the community and facilitated over 50 projects. All Community Outreach Service projects combine the involvement of community organizations, BU students and BU faculty. See **pages 51 and 52** and the *BU Community Outreach Annual Report*.

In 2004, an RDI research team received a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant to undertake a multi-year project looking at health care access for residents in selected northern communities in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. For information about this project turn to **page 27**.

RDI Director, Robert Annis, received the Brandon University President's Medal for teaching, research and community service. See **page 53** for details.

RDI added to its publications, communications and reports. A complete listing of RDI's 2005 publications, reports and presentations can be found on **pages 42 to 46**.

RDI continues to promote awareness of leafy spurge, an invasive noxious weed, to landowners, managers and rural municipalities through short and multi-year projects. Some of these efforts have now expanded into other provinces. See **pages 12, 20, 39 and 40**.

Support from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) helps RDI respond to emerging opportunities such as the External Research Fellows program. The areas of funding support from MAFRI are described on **page 47**.

**Page 49** outlines the role and membership of the RDI Advisory Committee.

The *National Rural Think Tank 2005 – Immigration and Rural Canada: Research and Practice*, described on **page 23**, was an important venue to discuss collaborative research and policy development on rural immigration.

## Message from the Chair

As I look back, the year 2005 has been an exciting year for the Rural Development Institute. The year started off with two new multi-year projects and the continuation of others. These projects demonstrate that RDI's activities and goals are not in one single year but are cumulative, incremental and on going.

RDI's success is in large measure built on its ongoing vision as a centre of excellence for rural issues. It sustains this vision through its multi-disciplinary strategies, social science approaches and expertise in a number of rural research interests. This vision is amplified by its continual and purposeful connections with rural communities, stakeholders and the people on the ground that can make things happen.



RDI's success is also notable for the support it receives from funding partners as well as in-kind support from a range of contributors. These partnerships are essential if RDI is to continue its efforts to address rural issues and extend its knowledge to rural communities. On behalf of the RDI Advisory Committee, RDI and Brandon University, I extend my sincere appreciation. Many thanks also go to the RDI Advisory Committee and various community-based committees for their input and time.

For me, some of the most rewarding outcomes of RDI's efforts are found in opportunities for students and young researchers to explore rural issues and promote our rural areas. These opportunities have been made even greater by the recent contribution of \$250,000 from the Province of Manitoba to Brandon University's Endowment Fund. This contribution is aimed at benefiting undergraduate students in the Rural and Community Studies Program as well as graduate students in the Department of Rural Development's Graduate Diploma and Master of Rural Development programs.

As this New Year begins, I am impressed by the energy and momentum at RDI. There is much to look forward to in 2006!

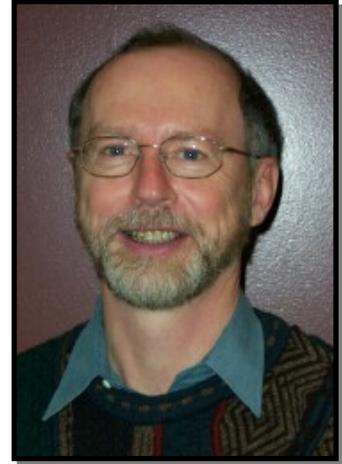
Sincerely,

Dr. Scott Grills  
Dean, Faculty of Arts and  
Chair, RDI Advisory Committee

## Message from the Director

Each year RDI tries to summarize its efforts and progress of the past 12 months in this Annual Report. The intention is to capture the highlights and critical incidents that mark progress and lessons learned.

It is important to keep in mind however, that these efforts are not the work of a single year or a single individual. For example, RDI's community and government partners, rural stakeholders and research alliances have helped build our capacity to undertake projects. Overtime, as these relationships grow and develop, we are able to explore new opportunities in Manitoba as well other parts of the country. For example, in 2005, RDI implemented the *CCP Model Project: Empowering Communities & Building Capacity*. This three-year project involves regional round tables in Saskatchewan, and, perhaps northern British Columbia and the Yukon. Also, in 2005, RDI expanded the *Prairie Region Leafy Spurge Project* that now aims to build coordination of efforts to control leafy spurge across the Prairie Region of Canada.



On a personal level, 2005 holds special significance. Early in the year, I was very pleased to receive the unanimous approval from the Director's Review Committee for renewal of another five-year term as Director of RDI. Then in May, I was greatly honoured when Dr. Louis Visentin, President of Brandon University, presented me the President's Medal for outstanding contributions in the areas of teaching, research and service.

I am truly grateful for these personal acknowledgements – however, I am keenly aware that our achievements are a team effort based on the skills and expertise of RDI's administrative staff and the members of our research and project teams. Equally important is the financial and collaborative support of our partners and contributors. I look forward to all we can collectively achieve in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Robert Annis, Ph.D.  
Director  
Rural Development Institute

## **Achievements and Highlights in 2005**

RDI's achievements and highlights are characterized by innovative and inter/multi-disciplinary approaches to undertake research and project activities. Many of these activities come from contacts with rural groups, towns and villages, governments, academic researchers and observers of the rural situation.

### ***RDI – A Centre of Excellence for Rural Issues***

RDI's vision is to be a centre of excellence for rural issues recognized by (a) our capacity and experience to play a neutral and facilitative role in bringing together individuals and agencies to work cooperatively and collaboratively on rural issues; and (b) our ability to enhance this capacity with multi-disciplinary and social science approaches in selected domains of research interests that are responsive to rural issues.

In 2005 our domains of research interests were community economic development (CED), community leadership, environmental and agro-economic issues, information and communications technology for CED, policy and program research and development, rural adaptation and change, rural and northern health, and, rural and northern tourism.

#### *Community Economic Development (CED)*

RDI encourages communities and community agencies to actively pursue community economic development processes that reflect a contemporary conceptual framework most commonly known as 'CED'. Elements of this framework include a linkage between social and economic needs; an integration of economic, environmental, and social development goals; local community participation and control of CED process; and community and agency partnerships.

#### *Community Leadership*

Community leadership is a key factor in successful community development. RDI recognizes the key leadership role that community development professionals and practitioners play in encouraging broad-based and active participation in community leadership.

#### *Environmental and Agro-economic Issues*

RDI takes a multi-disciplinary, social science approach to environmental and agro-economic issues. Many of these issues have extensive ramifications involving complex circumstances and competing demands across local communities, individuals, and conservation and agricultural non-governmental organizations. Most of RDI's efforts have been education and awareness activities focused on leafy spurge, a highly invasive noxious weed.

#### *Information and Communications Technology for CED*

Rural communities recognize that information and communications technology (ICT) has great potential and application for CED.

#### *Policy and Program Research and Development*

Policy makers need accurate and relevant information for the development of rural policy. As a leading source of information on rural issues, RDI is often called upon to provide advice, facilitate discussions or participate in proceedings.

### *Rural Adaptation and Change*

Over the past several years, RDI has undertaken research and project activities on issues that confront rural communities as they adapt to change. To date, these activities have focused on evaluating the effectiveness of rural programs to address change, or assessing the needs of individuals or communities to adjust to change.

### *Rural and Northern Health*

RDI has had a sustained research focus on the factors that have an impact on the health of rural and northern communities. Many of the rural health research and project activities are interdisciplinary in nature and actively involve the participation of communities, regional health authorities and government agencies with rural and health policy interests.

### *Rural and Northern Tourism*

Rural and northern tourism is receiving attention as a component of community economic development for many communities and regions.

The following pages describe RDI's *short-term research and projects* that have been implemented and completed in 12 – 15 months. These projects respond to short-term, emergent issues and opportunities, or build on past activities. RDI's *multi-year research and projects* are more extensive research or activities aimed at achieving longer-term goals.

#### **Short-term research and projects**

*Assessing Technology Usage Barriers and Opportunities in the Business Community: A Case of Southwestern Manitoba*

*Assessment of Well-Being and Quality of Life in Leaf Rapids*

*Assisting Landowners/Managers with Establishing, Implementing and Sustaining Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plans for Leafy Spurge*

*Broadband Economic Impacts in Churchill, MB and Parrsboro, NS*

*Changing Needs of Rural and Northern Women in Manitoba*

*Exploring Connectivity, Use and Usefulness of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in a Northern Community Setting*

*Joint Co-operative Development Project*

*Managing Invasive Species: Leafy Spurge Control*

*Manitoba Rural Immigration Community Case Studies*

*National Rural Think Tank 2005 – Immigration and Rural Canada: Research and Practice*

*Using ICT Tools to Facilitate Networks of CED Organizations*

#### **Multi-year research and projects**

*Community Collaboration to Improve Health Care Access of Northern Residents*

*Community Collaboration Project Model Project: Empowering Communities and Building Capacity 2005-2008*

*Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities*

*MANITOBA BEST Workshops*

*Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy: SSHRC Research Project*

*Prairie Region Leafy Spurge Project*

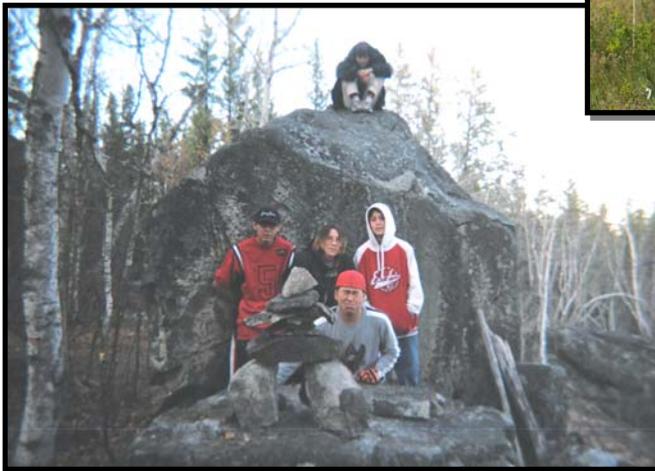
## 2005 Short-Term Research and Projects



*Joint Co-operative Development Project  
Lake Cormorant, Manitoba*



*Managing Invasive Species: Leafy Spurge Control  
Sweeping for Beetles*



*Assessment of Well-Being and Quality of Life in Leaf Rapids  
Through the Eyes of Youth*



*Exploring Connectivity, Use and Usefulness of Information  
and Communications Technology (ICT) in a Northern  
Community Setting, Churchill, Manitoba*

## **Assessing Technology Usage Barriers and Opportunities in the Business Community: A Case of Southwestern Manitoba**

In 2004-05, RDI initiated the project, *Assessing Technology Usage Barriers and Opportunities in the Business Community: A Case of Southwestern Manitoba*. The major aims of the project were to assess the level of technology use within the Brandon and southwestern region of the province and to gather views on the challenges and opportunities facing businesses with regards to information and communications technology. Another aim was to establish baseline data from which to measure growth in the use of technology.

Activities included the creation of a comprehensive business inventory for Brandon and selected southwestern Manitoba communities. The RDI project team also conducted key informant interviews with a sample of Brandon businesses in order to gather information on the use of technology, as well as barriers and challenges faced by these businesses.

The study found that:

- businesses reported that full-time employees are twice as likely to have access to a computer than either part-time or seasonal/casual employees.
- most of the responding businesses had between 1 and 5 computer workstations within their business.
- all of the respondents reported that computers within the business were used for accessing the Internet, e-mail and research purposes.
- over half of responding businesses reported using a high speed DSL line as their business Internet connection.
- 62% of respondents indicated that they have a business web site.
- almost half of all businesses indicated that they utilize at least three different types of information and communication technology supports/services.

Highlights of the barriers and challenges reported by questionnaire participants included:

- more than half of the respondents indicated that the high cost of development and maintenance was the main barrier to accessing and fully utilizing technology by over half of responding businesses.
- 81% of responding businesses reported that current market conditions were a main barrier preventing growth of their business.
- 72% of responding businesses indicated that they had expanded in the past 5 years.

An ongoing project activity is the design and development of a user-friendly database suitable for updating a business inventory. Partners in the project anticipate that once designed, the database will be used to house a comprehensive Brandon business list and a select southwestern business list. As well, the database will contain some of the benchmarking information that was gathered from the business questionnaires.

The aggregate data summarized within this report can assist with future decision making by the project partners. This report will be augmented by the individual business data that will be part of the final database/business inventory.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2004
<u>Completion date</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Pamela McTavish
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Gerald Dueck Elicia Funk Ryan Gibson Lori Gould Devron Kobluk Brad McKenzie Katherine Pachkowski Beth Peers Deatra Walsh Troy Wilkinson
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	McTavish, P., Peers, B., Gibson, R., & Gould, L. (2005). <i>Assessing technology usage barriers and opportunities in the business community: A case of Southwestern Manitoba.</i> Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University. (Commissioned Report)
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Information and communications technology for CED Rural adaptation and change Policy and program research and development
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Economic Development Brandon (City of Brandon) Manitoba Smart Network Inc.

## **Assessment of Well-Being and Quality of Life in Leaf Rapids**

The *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities Research Project* was a multi-year SSHRC research project involving communities, regional health authorities and government agencies with rural and health policy interests. One of the components of the research project involved the Town and Community Adjustment Committee of Leaf Rapids, a remote northern Manitoba community. Members of the research team traveled to Leaf Rapids and met with several residents and groups in the community. During that visit, the community invited RDI to assist them in studying well-being and quality of life in Leaf Rapids; implementing community action on key issues; and building skills and capacity that would remain in the community. An advisory committee was established to guide the project, and a local community coordinator who provided support for the project was hired. RDI researchers and students traveled to the community on a regular basis, facilitating advisory and community meetings, data gathering and data analysis. Outcomes of RDI's work in Leaf Rapids are described below.

### **Through the Eyes of Youth**

*Through the Eyes of Youth* project came about through a partnership between the National Exhibition Centre in Leaf Rapids and RDI. The goal of this project was to gain an understanding of how children and youth of the community view their community. Children and youth residing in the town were provided with disposable cameras and over a two-week period took pictures that illustrated what their community was to them. Students kept photography journals noting how they came to take each picture, the content of the picture, and the significance of the picture to them. Each participant chose one picture for enlargement and display. The photos were displayed at the National Exhibition Centre in Leaf Rapids in December 2004. This exhibit, entitled *Leaf Rapids Through the Eyes of Youth*, provided a unique mechanism for the youth to share their perspectives of the community in a creative manner. The display was popular with the community and comments were overwhelmingly positive. The photographs and journals were analyzed by RDI researchers to understand how the children and youth view their community.

### **Students' Social and Education Needs and Aspirations**

*Students' Social and Education Needs and Aspirations* project was conducted to gain a better understanding of the issues facing children and youth in the school and community. RDI Researchers interviewed senior students at the Leaf Rapids Education Centre in December 2004. Students were asked to identify any challenges for young people in the community, how the school meets their needs, and their plans for the future. Students also commented on issues such as cultural heritage content within the school curriculum, how older youth can help children of the community, and suggestions for the community.

Although the formal *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities* project wrapped up in March 2005, the Leaf Rapids Advisory Committee did not disband. The Advisory Committee plans to continue working together beyond March 2005. Understanding that community development is a continual process, the Advisory Committee will continue gathering the input of community residents in planning for both the short-term and long-term futures.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Marian Beattie John Everitt Barbara Gfellner Ryan Gibson Tanis Horkey Fran Racher Rosemarie Gruska
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	<p>Annis, R. (2005). <i>Determinants of health or rural populations and communities research project: Final report 1999-2005</i>. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.</p> <p>Annis, R., &amp; Racher, F. (2005). <i>A model for action on rural community health and well-being</i>. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC.</p> <p>Gfellner, B. (2005). <i>Youth speak out: Aftermath of devolution in a rural northern community</i>. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC.</p> <p>Racher, F. (2005). <i>Community photovoice: Leaf Rapids through the eyes of youth</i>. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC.</p> <p>Racher, F., &amp; Annis, R. (2005). Community partnerships: Translating research for community development. In <i>Canadian Journal of Nursing Research</i>, 37(1), 169-175.</p> <p>Rural Development Institute (2005). <i>Leaf Rapids community assessment</i>. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.</p>
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Community leadership Rural adaptation and change Rural and northern health
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Leaf Rapids Community Adjustment Committee Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Town of Leaf Rapids

## Assisting Landowners/Managers with Establishing, Implementing and Sustaining Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plans for Leafy Spurge

The goal of the project was to assist landowners/managers with establishing, implementing and sustaining IPM strategies. The objectives and activities were to:

- identify programs, information and resources available to landowners/managers for IPM strategies;
- establish a framework of priority information needs based on interviews with key informants; and,
- develop a best practice document of two municipalities that have designed, implemented and monitored management plans for the control of leafy spurge within their boundaries.

This project was supported through the *Covering New Ground Program*, a Manitoba Agricultural Sustainability Initiative of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2004
<u>Completion</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Beth Peers
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Ryan Gibson Pamela McTavish
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Peers, B. (2005). <i>Leafy spurge control ~ A best practice: Cameron, Glenwood, Sifton Weed Control District</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.  Gibson, R. (2005). <i>Inventory of programs, services and resources</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.  Peers, B., & McTavish, P. (2005). <i>A framework of priority information needs: Interviews with key informants</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Environmental and agro-economic issues Policy and program research and development
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

## Broadband Economic Impacts in Churchill, MB and Parrsboro, NS

In many rural and remote areas, communities and government agencies face the challenge of the 'digital divide', a discrepancy in the use and capability of information communications technology (ICT). In order to bridge 'the digital divide', Industry Canada invested in ICT using broadband<sup>1</sup> technology for rural and remote regions through the *Broadband for Rural and Northern Development, Community Access Program, and Smart Communities Programs*. Before making further investments in broadband and ICT, communities and government wanted to investigate the economic impact of the broadband access. This project was aimed at providing information on the economic impacts of broadband access and usage using the experiences of two small Canadian communities, Churchill, Manitoba and Parrsboro, Nova Scotia.



The information was gathered primarily from a multiple round of basic telephone surveys followed up by a smaller series of more detailed interviews. A small workshop was held in Parrsboro, NS to gain greater depth into the community and business impacts of acquiring broadband access. Remoteness and cost prevented the study team from doing a similar workshop in Churchill, MB.

The study team, comprised of researchers from Brandon University, Dalhousie University, Mount Allison University and Strategic Networks Group, found that there is a 'digital divide' in Canada that separates businesses in rural and remote communities from being able to play on an even field with their competitors that have broadband access. Whether it is the family farm that cannot deal with e-government files and forms or the bed and breakfast that loses customers because there is no broadband access for them or the tour company or theatre that cannot sell efficiently over the Internet, all are kept from operating as productively as they might otherwise. The critical impact that came through all of the research was that of job, company and community retention. Overall, the return on investment of broadband on Churchill and Parrsboro has been positive and respondents strongly support future investments in broadening access to ICT and broadband

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<sup>1</sup>Broadband is defined as 'always on' Internet access greater than 1 Mb/s via technologies that include digital subscriber loop or DSL, cable, wireless, and T1.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2005
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis, Director, RDI
<u>Project Team Members</u>	David Bruce Michael Curri Gary Dunmore Ryan Gibson Lori Gould Tom McGuire James McNiven
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Annis, R., & Gibson, R. ( <i>forthcoming</i> ). Economic impact of broadband. In <i>Making Waves</i> .  Rural Development Institute, Dalhousie University, & Strategic Networks Group (2005). <i>Industry Canada broadband economic impact study: Final report</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Community leadership Information and communications technology for CED Policy and program research and development Rural adaptation and change
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Churchill Community Network Churchill Northern Studies Centre Cumberland Regional Economic Development Association Strategic Networks Group Town of Churchill, Manitoba Town of Parrsboro, Nova Scotia

## **Changing Needs of Rural and Northern Women in Manitoba**

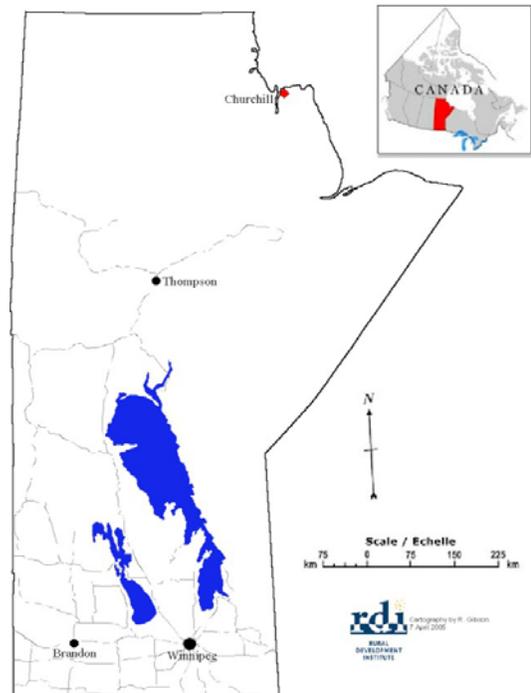
The project *Changing Needs of Rural and Northern Women in Manitoba* is RDI's first project on women's issues. The aim of the project was to examine the issues affecting rural and northern women in Manitoba. The study looked at the steps taken so far by various levels of government, as well as organizations and individuals to address these issues and their impact on rural and northern women.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2005
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion</u>	March 2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis, Director, RDI
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Betty Kelly Osayanmo Idehen
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Report Kelly, B., Idehen, O., (2005) <i>Changing needs of rural and northern women in Manitoba</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute.
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Community leadership Rural adaptation and change
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Health Canada Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Women's Enterprise Centre, Winnipeg

## Exploring Connectivity, Use and Usefulness of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in a Northern Community Setting

Prior to the establishment of federal broadband programs and initiatives to promote Internet connectivity in rural and remote areas of Canada, a small group of citizens from Churchill started their own community based Internet business. The initial incentive for the community members to start the Internet service provider was to reduce the fees associated with long distance phone and service charges. However, through the process of researching and applying for funding for the initiative, the members of the group realized that an Internet connection could bring social and economic benefits to the entire town.

The group, all volunteers, worked tirelessly to research the business start up, seek funding, organize training sessions for other community members, and ensure community access to the Internet through computers in the public school and library. In 1997, they formed the Churchill Community Network Inc. (CCNet). The start up of this business was an especially remarkable achievement as CCNet was established at a time when Internet connectivity was just gaining momentum, especially in rural, remote and northern areas of Canada.



Through the start up period, the volunteer group faced huge barriers such as a lack of trained computer technicians in Churchill, the need to generate funds to start the business, and the huge task of researching and purchasing appropriate technologies. They managed to overcome these challenges and make dial up Internet connectivity available to citizens and businesses in Churchill. The members of the CCNet were proud of their accomplishments and empowered to learn about new technologies. Dial up Internet brought economic benefits to local businesses in Churchill that had a new tool to use to market their products, attract tourists, and communicate cheaply with other businesses and customers in other parts of Canada. Also, ordinary citizens in Churchill were able to access email and the Internet for research, educational and entertainment purposes. The community-based business paid back its start up loans and broke even after three years, which is an accomplishment for any business. From a community economic development perspective, CCNet was not only economically viable but was able to stimulate both social and economic returns for the individuals and businesses in Churchill.

Then members of CCNet decided to pursue broadband connectivity. The implementation of a broadband connection led to higher expenses and the need to update equipment due to rapid technology changes. As CCNet switched its operations to focus on broadband, a competing company offered cheaper dial up services to Churchill. Now, eight years into running the business, CCNet still has no full time employees. The task of continuously developing new marketing strategies, keeping up with the book keeping and receivables, researching new Internet technologies and providing maintenance services to members has become too heavy a

load for volunteers on an on-going basis. While, the community and residents identified many potential broadband Internet applications, CCNet is no longer turning a profit and it is difficult to pursue new business ventures. In addition, the volunteers have become burned out.

In 2005, rather than feeling empowered, CCNet's core group of volunteers felt frustrated. While the citizens of Churchill continue to reap social and economic benefits from broadband connection, the community-based business is not sustainable in its current structure. As anticipated, Internet connectivity has brought new opportunities for economic competitiveness and social development in Churchill. However, how to provide broadband services on a sustainable basis to a remote location such as Churchill is a continuing challenge. As a community economic development strategy, CCNet is faltering.

The case study contributes to an understanding of connectivity barriers, decision-making processes, government involvement, and economic opportunities for a northern community through connectivity infrastructure.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2006
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	John Everitt
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Robert Annis Susannah Cameron
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Reports  Annis, R., Everitt, J., Walsh, D. & Cameron, S. (2005). <i>Exploring Connectivity, Use and Usefulness of Information and Communication Technology in a Northern Community Setting: A Churchill Case Study. The Churchill Connectivity Story</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.  Cameron, S., Annis, R. & Everitt J. (2005). <i>Internet Connectivity in a Northern Setting: A Churchill Case Study</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.  Cameron, S. Annis, R., & Everitt, J. ( <i>forthcoming</i> ). A Churchill case study. <i>Canadian Journal of Rural and Community Development</i> .
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Community leadership Information and communications technology for CED Rural adaptation and change
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Board of Directors, Churchill Community Network Initiative on the New Economy of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council via the Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy Town Council, Churchill, Manitoba

## Joint Co-operative Development Project

In 2005, RDI, in partnership with Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs and four Community Futures Development Corporations, undertook a project to look at the potential of sustainable co-operative ventures in northern communities. The objectives of the project were to assess the need, desire, and levels of commitment to retail-consumer cooperative development in the northern Manitoba communities of Camperville, Cormorant, Matheson Island and Seymourville.

With the aid of a community liaison, and support of the community mayors and councils and Community Futures Development Corporations, graduate students from the Department, administered a survey in each of the four participating communities. Staff from Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives, and Community Futures Partners of Manitoba, also collaborated on the project.

Outcomes of the project include a series of working papers developed to highlight the historical background to the co-operative movement, northern and aboriginal community involvement with co-operatives, and the role of co-operatives in community economic development.

RDI project team members prepared feasibility reports for each of the four communities that reviewed demographics, economic activity, social services and findings from the in-person delivered survey. Residents of each community provided information on spending habits (communities traveled to, frequency and amounts purchased), desire and commitment towards a co-operative in the community and other family information such as household member ages.

Project design and development 2004

Implementation 2004

Completion date 2005

Project Coordinator Robert Annis

Project Team Members Susannah Cameron  
Ryan Gibson  
Lori Gould  
Devron Kobluk  
Brad McKenzie

Publications and Communications Reports

Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary: Seymourville, MB*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary: Camperville, MB*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary: Cormorant, MB*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary: Matheson Island, MB*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Gibson, R., Kobluk, D., & Gould, L. (2005). *The co-operative movement: Historical overview and relevance to Northern and Aboriginal communities* (RDI Working Paper #2005-1). Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Opportunities for success: A review of the Seymourville Co-operative* (RDI Working Paper #2005-2). Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Gibson, R. (2005). *The role of co-operatives in community economic development* (RDI Working Paper #2005-3). Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

#### Presentations

- Kobluk, D., Gould, L., & Gibson, R. (2004, November). *Joint Co-operative Development Project*. Presented to the Rural Development Institute Advisory Committee meeting, Brandon, MB

#### Domains/Areas of Research Interests

Community economic development  
Policy and program research and development  
Rural adaptation and change

#### Contributors and Partners

Camperville, Manitoba  
Cedar Lake Community Futures Development Corporation  
Cormorant, Manitoba  
Matheson Island, Manitoba  
Seymourville, Manitoba  
Co-operative Development Initiative, Co-operatives Secretariat  
Manitoba Aboriginal & Northern Affairs  
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives  
NEICOM Community Futures Development Corporation  
Parkland Community Futures Development Corporation  
Winnipeg River Brokenhead Community Futures Development Corporation

## Managing Invasive Species: Leafy Spurge Control

The aim of the *Managing Invasive Species: Leafy Spurge Control* project is to enhance control of leafy spurge in Manitoba. The project is funded through the Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative (ARDI), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The major areas of activities include:

- *Awareness and prevention activities* in areas of Manitoba where the infestations of spurge were low or not present. These activities focused on creating a broad awareness of leafy spurge and prevention strategies to control the spread of the weed.
- *Assistance with integrated pest management planning* is aimed at assisting producers in moderate and high infestation areas by assessing their leafy spurge infestation followed by the development and implementation of specific site-based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans for control and containment.
- *Collection and distribution* of spurge beetles and the establishment of nurse sites.
- *Opportunities for financial assistance* land owners or managers to help with control and management activities for spurge. The assistance will involve partnerships with other agencies, such as conservation districts and weed districts.
- *Evaluation and monitoring activities* will assess the impact and success of program activities. The RDI project team will use the information to make on-going improvements to project activities.

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<u>Project design and development</u>	2005
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2006
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Beth Peers
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Ryan Gibson Laine Mosset Pamela McTavish Jennifer Pachkowski April Peers
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Awareness and promotional materials and conference display IPM management plans for six landowners
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Environmental and agro-economic issues
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Conservation Districts Farm Stewardship Association of Manitoba Geography Department, Brandon University Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives Stanley Soil Management Association Riverbank Discovery Centre Spruce Woods Provincial Park Victoria Grazing Association

## Manitoba Rural Immigration Community Case Studies

The *Manitoba Rural Immigration Community Case Studies* was a series of case studies on the recent immigration experience and initiatives of four rural communities or rural regions in Manitoba. Manitoba Labour and Immigration recommended the sites for the case studies on the basis of the range of diversity between the communities. The aim of these case studies was to provide information to other rural communities as well as individuals from government involved with or interested in community immigration strategies.

The case studies were a highly collaborative effort between Ray Silvius and Robert Annis, on behalf of RDI, Manitoba Labour and Immigration and the communities and region involved in the study. Manitoba Labour and Immigration has used the case studies to inform its policy, as well in presentations to communities and other interested parties.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Ray Silvius
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Reports Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Parkland</i> . (Working Paper 2005-5). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute. Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Portage la Prairie</i> . (Working Paper 2005-6). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute. Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Steinbach</i> . (Working Paper 2005-7). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute. Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Winkler</i> . (Working Paper 2005-8). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute. Silvius, R., & Annis, R. (2005). <i>Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Issues in rural immigration: lessons, challenges and responses</i> . (Working Paper 2005-9). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute. Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Recommendations for enhancing the immigration experience in the rural west: Lessons from research, policy and practice</i> . (Working Paper 2005-11). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Domains/Areas of Research Interests

Community economic development  
Community leadership  
Information and communications technology for CED  
Policy and program research and development  
Rural adaptation and change

Contributors and Partners

Citizenship and Immigration Canada  
Manitoba Labour and Immigration  
Morden, Manitoba  
Parkland Region Community Futures Partner of Manitoba  
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba  
Steinbach, Manitoba  
Winkler, Manitoba

## **National Rural Think Tank 2005 – Immigration and Rural Canada: Research and Practice**

Canada's overall economic strength and cultural vitality are highly dependent on informed and innovative immigration programs and policies. Though a disproportionately high number of immigrants coming to Canada end up in the major metropolitan centers of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, immigration clearly remains a crucial issue for rural Canada. It may in fact be more so, given the challenges faced by rural communities in attracting and retaining immigrants, the noticeable impact and visibility of immigrant populations in Canada's rural communities and the comparative lack of debate on rural immigration issues vis-à-vis those of urban centers.

Successfully attracting and retaining immigrants can be a key component of a rural community's economic development strategy. The injection of people and their skills into areas that are struggling to retain current residents serves as a crucial facet of wider strategies to combat the demographic challenges facing rural Canadian communities.

For a number of reasons, multiple groups are coming to realize the importance of immigration to rural Canada, yet there presently exists little coordinated capacity with respect to research on the theme and no synergy amongst those interested. Innovative programs and practices are to be found, though these exist in an isolated fashion with little set recourse to information sharing and collaboration to learn from them.

The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation and the Rural Development Institute have together identified and acted upon these needs with the development of CRRF-RDI National Rural Think Tank 2005- *Immigration and Rural Canada: Research and Practice*, during which 40-50 invited researchers, policy personnel and immigration practitioners met to discuss the development of a national research agenda on rural immigration. The event, which was held on April 28, 2005 at the Keystone Centre, was aimed at exploring the dimensions of rural immigration in Canada. One of the major conclusions coming out of the session was the significant need for more collaborative research and policy development on rural immigration issues.

With the active involvement of a steering committee, the RDI project team helped organize the event, disseminate conference information, document proceedings, and prepare a final report.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2005
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Joy Dornian Lori Gould Pamela McTavish Ray Silvius
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Silvius, R. (2005). <i>Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) and Rural Development Institute (RDI) national rural think tank 2005 immigration and rural Canada: research and practice final report</i> . Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Community leadership Information and communications technology for CED Policy and program research and development Rural adaptation and change
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) Canada West Foundation Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) Manitoba Labour and Immigration (LIM) Metropolis New Rural Economy (NRE) Project Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)

## Using Information and Communications Technology Tools to Facilitate Networks of CED Organizations

Community economic development organizations are located in communities across Canada. Over the past 10 years, the level of communication and collaboration between these isolated and independent community groups has increased due to the formation of networks. Community economic development organizations join networks to learn from one another, to share information, to improve practice and to coordinate policy and funding initiatives.

Due to the size of Manitoba, the coordinators of community economic development (CED) in this province face the challenge of coordinating a membership located great distances from one another. While most networks or associations hold one or two events a year so their membership can meet face to face, most of the time it is necessary for the network coordinator must find ways to overcome physical distances. Therefore, the network coordinator must develop and use information and information and communications technology tools to facilitate communication and collaboration between members.

CED networks typically use information technology tools such as websites, email applications, list-serves, telephone conferencing and online surveys to help members develop a collective vision, facilitate sharing and learning, and to build productive partnerships.

RDI Research Affiliate Susannah Cameron coordinates a national network made up of organizations that finance community economic development. She interviewed five coordinators of national and regional CED networks to learn how they used online surveys, websites, extranets, listserves, email and teleconferencing to facilitate communication between network members. The report details how Canadian CED coordinators use these six ICT tools and determined which ones were best suited for particular tasks. The theoretical and practical understanding developed through this research will assist the members of CED networks and their staff to develop better modes of collaboration and communication.

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2004
<u>Completion date</u>	2006
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Susannah Cameron
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	forthcoming
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Information and communications technology for CED
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Canadian Community Investment Network Initiative on the New Economy of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council via the Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy

**Multi-Year Research and Projects**



*Community Collaboration Project Model Project:  
Empowering Communities and Building Capacity  
WaterWolf Regional Round Table (near Outlook, SK)*



*Prairie Region Leafy Spurge Project*



*Community Collaboration to Improve Health Care Access  
of Northern Residents, Community of Pikwitonei*



*Community Collaboration Project Model Project:  
Empowering Communities and Building Capacity  
Northeastern BC Regional Round Table Alaska Highway Community Initiative*

## **Community Collaboration to Improve Health Care Access of Northern Residents**

Residents of First Nation communities, Métis communities, large regional centres and smaller communities in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan experience multiple challenges in accessing health services. Access issues may be related to local services, itinerant services, and services for which residents must leave their communities. Such health services include primary health care, diagnostics, obstetrical and surgical services, dialysis, home care, emergency services, mental health services, preventative services and health promotion and education. Related issues of transportation compound the difficulties.

Details regarding issues of access for northern residents need to be documented and clarified from the perspectives of northern residents as well as their health care providers. Dr. Robert Annis of the Rural Development Institute and co-applicants, Dr. Fran Racher of the School of Health Studies, and Dr. Bonnie Jeffery of the University of Regina, have received a three-year Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant to undertake the facilitation of dialogue across northern communities in the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Researchers will explore access dimensions of availability, accessibility, accommodation, affordability and acceptability. Population characteristics, environmental factors, health behaviours and related outcomes will be examined from the perspective of community members and health care providers.

Researchers will use a participatory action research approach (PAR), blending scientific inquiry with learning and political action. The research plan includes strategies such as community meetings, focus groups and key informant interviews with northern residents and health providers regarding experiences in accessing health services. A steering committee of community members and their organizations, health service providers and researchers will set the direction of the project, including determining the process that will be used to organize the focus groups, invite participants and design the discussion guide. As jurisdictional issues often plague northern health service delivery, researchers will also seek the participation of Manitoba Health, Saskatchewan Health and Health Canada.

Northern people are seeking the opportunity to participate in the identification of the issues as well as discussions to develop solutions. A key goal of this project is to create a forum for dialogue that will involve community residents, community organizations, health-related organizations, health service providers, regional health authorities and others interested in access issues. This project will gather information that will be categorized and organized in a manner that will be useful for future program planning, service delivery and health policy development. It is essential that the forum created will facilitate dialogue among stakeholders, not only to identify the issues but also to generate creative and useful solutions to the problems. A potential outcome of the project is that the ability to use this process will remain in communities for future purposes.

PAR will be employed at the community level. Characteristics of PAR are the inclusion of community knowledge, personal experiences and other non-scientific ways of knowing; empowerment of northern communities to participate in the identification of issues as well as generating solutions related to access to health care; and consciousness raising and education of participants regarding the issues and potential solutions (as well as a process to problem-solve). Researchers will not only capture the content of the dialogue but also the process

undertaken to generate an understanding in the scientific world of how this approach can support community empowerment and movement to action. Knowledge translation of both the content and the process will enable use of the findings in other communities and for other community development topics of concern.

Project design and development 2004

Implementation 2005

Completion date 2007

Project Coordinator Co-applicants:  
Robert Annis  
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Bonnie Jeffery

Project Team Members Ryan Gibson  
Alex Martin  
Anisa Zehtab-Martin  
Alison Moss

Publications and Communications Racher, F. (Fall, 2005). Northerners share their stories. *Rural report*, 1-2. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.  
Rural Development Institute Fact Sheet (February 2005). *Community collaboration to improve health care access of northern residents* Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Domains/Areas of Research Interests Policy and program research and development  
Rural adaptation and change  
Rural and northern health

Contributors and Partners Bayline Regional Round Table  
Burntwood Regional Health Authority,  
Norman Regional Health Authority

## **Community Collaboration Project Model Project: Empowering Communities and Building Capacity 2005-2008**

Communities collaborating together in community development processes can increase their capacity to improve quality of life, better manage change and sustain long-term well-being. The *CCP Model Project: Empowering Communities & Building Capacity* project (hereafter referred to as the CCP Model Project) provides opportunities for new forms of collaboration and governance. With access to the appropriate tools, resources and information, individuals living in rural and northern communities can engage in self-sustaining, informed, local decision-making and meaningful dialogue between and among communities, organizations and governments.

The CCP in Manitoba and Nunavut, initiated in 1999, was a collaborative arrangement between communities in four regions of Manitoba and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut, federal, provincial and territorial government departments and agencies, non-government organizations and RDI. Four regional round tables (RRTs) emerged from this process, each with unique and different priorities goals and projects, yet similar in how they underwent community collaboration. Outcomes of the CCP experience in Manitoba/Nunavut included: the building of relationships among CCP stakeholders; the development of trusting relationships and increased communication between the community members and government officials; leadership development within the RRTs and the steering committee; capacity building among the RRTs and steering committee members; and exploration into new models of decision-making and governance among communities and governments.

The purpose of Brandon University's Rural Development Institute's CCP Model Project is to test the applicability and replicability of the CCP model. Through the Government of Canada's Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, RDI has funding to support the development of three new regional round tables (RRTs) in other provinces/territories. A project steering committee has been established and includes representation from the Rural Secretariat and RDI.

Rural Teams are involved as partners in the project. Rural Teams are provincial/territorial teams of federal, provincial, local government departments and agencies and community-serving organizations who have an interest in rural and northern Canada. In collaboration with the Rural Secretariat, RDI met with the Rural Teams in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the Yukon to discuss the feasibility of implementing RRTs in their province or territory. The Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Yukon Rural Teams committed to becoming actively engaged in the CCP process and with the site selected in their province/territory. Each Rural Team initiated a subcommittee, the CCP steering committee.

In 2005, RDI met with potential community stakeholders and funding partners in each of the provinces/territory, and in collaboration with the Rural Secretariat, selected the RRT sites based upon a set of criteria. Ultimately, three new Regional Round Table sites were selected.

- In Saskatchewan, the Rural Team Saskatchewan and the Mid-Sask Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC)/Regional Economic Development Agency (REDA) presented a proposal to create the Water Wolf Regional Round Table (*WRRRT*) for the establishment of a regional services delivery model.

- In early November 2005, RDI met with representatives of Rural Team British Columbia, who also endorsed the formation of a RRT, and initiated a steering committee. The Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association (NRAHTA) has signed a MOU with RDI agreeing to be the coordinating organization for a regional round table in northeastern BC.
- Members of Rural Team Yukon expressed an interest in facilitating the formation of a RRT in the Yukon, with close connections to the RRT being initiated in British Columbia. At the time of this writing, interest and input from communities, initially Yukon signatories of the Alaska Highway Community Initiative are being sought by RDI and the steering committee.

<u>Project design and development</u>	October – December 2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2008
<u>Project Director</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Marian Beattie
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Susannah Cameron Ryan Gibson Bev Lischka Anisa Zehtab-Martin Alison Moss
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Rural Development Institute (December 2005). <i>Community collaboration project model project: Empowering communities and building capacity</i> . Annual meeting report. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
	Rural Development Institute (December 2005). <i>Community collaboration project model project: Empowering communities and building capacity: Project description</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
	Rural Development Institute Fact Sheet (December 2005). <i>Community collaboration project model project: Empowering communities and building capacity project</i> . Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Domains/Areas of Research Interests

Community economic development (CED)  
Community leadership  
Information and communications technology for CED  
Policy and program research and development  
Rural adaptation and change  
Rural health  
Rural tourism

Contributors and Partners

Mid-Sask Community Futures Development Corporation/  
Regional Economic Development Association  
Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association  
Regional Economic Development Association  
Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Rural Team British Columbia  
Rural Team Manitoba  
Rural Team Saskatchewan  
Rural Team Yukon

## Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities

In 2005, RDI completed the final report for the research project, *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities*, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). RDI implemented this innovative, interdisciplinary research in 1999. The goals of the project were to examine the determinants of population health and community health indicators; to generate and adapt health indicators for application to rural populations and communities; to develop a framework, process and tools with selected rural communities to assist them with assessing their health and sustainability; and to apply and evaluate the resulting framework, process and tools with selected communities.

A critical component of the research project involved engaging students in field research. During the course of the project, RDI engaged a total of eighteen students, thirteen undergraduate and five graduate, with thirty-five percent of the total expenditures going to student salaries and benefits. Students participated in designing the research, collecting and analyzing data, presenting research results, publishing the guidebooks, producing presentations, providing administrative support, organizing workshops, designing and maintaining websites, maintaining contact with community stakeholders, managing databases, meetings with researchers, partners and collaborators, while working in an interdisciplinary and multi-university research environment.

Rural residents, researchers and project partners, developed a framework for rural communities. Participants in fifteen focus groups from communities throughout southwestern Manitoba were asked to share their views of the concepts of 'rural', 'health' and 'community'; to describe ways to determine if a community was healthy; and to suggest criteria to assess rural community health and well-being. Following the focus groups, representatives of each focus group participated in a workshop to develop a meaningful framework and indicators for rural community assessment. Ten framework categories were identified and visually represented as a flower. During the same period of time, health care managers throughout western Manitoba were interviewed to ascertain their perceptions of quality of life in rural communities and to obtain their suggestions for indicators of rural health and well-being. The researchers used the resulting information to the guidebook, *A Rural Community Guide for Assessing Well-Being and Quality of Life*, for use by residents of rural communities to assess the health and quality of life of their communities.

Pilot communities were required to test the guidebook, processes and tools. The criteria for the pilot communities included a commitment and desire for residents to undertake a project to look at the health and well-being of their community; a contact person/coordinator to work with the research partners and act as a liaison with a community committee; and a group of volunteers to act as a steering group for the project. Research partners nominated two southwestern Manitoba communities: the Town of Shoal Lake and Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake; and the Town of Virden and the Rural Municipality of Wallace. The communities eagerly joined the project in late 2002 and formed steering committees of interested residents. A copy of the guidebook was provided to each steering committee. Sub-committees were organized around the framework categories (petals) and each sub-committee reviewed the indicators within their category and decided which data to collect. Community project coordinators assisted the committees in collecting, analyzing and organizing the data with the support of student interns and student research assistants from RDI. Community and business

surveys were developed to gather information and opinions that were not available through regional or local data sources

Based on the experiences and feedback from the first two pilot communities, researchers developed a *Community Resiliency Framework*. Researchers also revised the *Rural Community Health & Well-Being Framework* and indicators to reflect the knowledge gained and the experiences of the pilot communities. This research resulted in the development of a *Community Health Action Model* which combines the *Community Resiliency Framework* and the *Rural Health & Well-Being Framework* to produce a model for community development and action. A new guidebook, *Rural Community Health and Well-Being: A Guide for Action*, was created.

In the spring of 2004, RDI sought a community partner in northern Manitoba. The Town and Community Adjustment Committee of Leaf Rapids, a remote northern Manitoba community invited RDI to the community. Members of RDI's research team traveled to Leaf Rapids and met with several residents and groups in the community. During that visit, the community invited RDI to assist them in studying well-being and quality of life in Leaf Rapids; implementing community action on key issues; and building skills and capacity that would remain in the community. An advisory committee was established to guide the project, and a local community coordinator who provided support for the project was engaged. RDI researchers and student traveled to the community on a regular basis, facilitating advisory and community meetings, data gathering and data analysis.

Community committees spent countless hours partnering with the university researchers gathering information to better understand their communities. They also provided invaluable feedback on the design, structure and content of the frameworks, *Community Health Action Model* and the guidebooks developed through this research project. The citizens of the pilot communities will use the skills and knowledge they gained, and the information gathered in their communities to surface public values, opinions and priorities; dispel myths; confirm knowledge; set priorities; develop short and long range plans; define and solve problems; stimulate action; build support to address issues; and provide evidence to influence others. Citizens in other rural and northern communities within Canada will be able to use the frameworks, model, processes and tools developed in this research project for building capacity within their own environments to gather information and make decisions regarding their health and quality of life.

Major benefits for students working on this project were opportunities to work in an interdisciplinary research environment that developed their ability to be flexible, innovative and to put theory into action. It provided them with opportunities for academic and professional development, as well as developing skills for future employment. Students developed contacts and networks in communities and professional areas of practice such as community development, mental health and rural health.

The research project also yielded a significant number of knowledge transfer tools including reports, journal articles, presentations, meetings and policy consultations, working papers and two community workbooks. Information on these publications can be obtained from the Rural Development Institute.

Project Coordinator

Robert Annis, Principal Investigator

Project Team Members

Co-Investigators

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RDI Contributors

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Administrative:  
Sylvia Henry  
Bev Lischka

Publications and Communications

This list is too extensive to include. Please contact the Rural Development Institute for a list of titles at (204) 571-8515 or check the RDI website [www.brandonu.ca/rdi/](http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/).

Domains/Areas of Research Interests

Community leadership  
Program and policy research and development  
Rural adaptation and change  
Rural and northern health

Contributors and Partners

Community Partners

Town and Rural Municipality of Shoal Lake  
Town of Virden and Rural Municipality of Wallace  
Town of Leafy Rapids

Participating Focus Group Communities

Carberry  
Coolspring and Decker Hutterite Colonies  
Deloraine  
Glenboro  
Glenella  
Killarney  
Melita  
Miniota  
Minnedosa  
Rivers  
Russell  
Souris  
Strathclair  
Treherne  
Virden

Community-Serving Partners

Assiniboine and Brandon Regional Health Authorities  
Community Futures Partners of Manitoba  
Virden-Wallace Community Development Corporation  
Wheat Belt Community Futures Corporation

Government Partners

Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Population and Public Health Branch, Health Canada  
Statistics Canada

## MANITOBA BEST Workshops

In 2005, RDI continued its successful partnership with the Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC) by providing MANITOBA BEST programs to the Southwest region of Manitoba. This partnership allows relevant tourism training to be made more accessible to rural communities. Pamela McTavish, on behalf of RDI, facilitated two workshops in Brandon during 2005.

This year marks the end of RDI's successful association with the Manitoba Tourism Education Council and the MANITOBA BEST Workshops. In 2005, Ms. McTavish accepted a position with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives in Hamiota, Manitoba.



<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Pamela McTavish
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Sylvia Henry
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	Workshop materials
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Rural tourism
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Manitoba Tourism Education Council

## **Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy: SSHRC Research Project**

In recent years, the emergence of a new knowledge-based economy has been credited with generating robust economic growth, new and challenging employment opportunities, new wealth creation possibilities, and the promise of greatly enhancing productivity in the rest of the economy. Current evidence, however, suggests that the rewards and opportunities presented by this New Economy have not been shared equally. Moreover, the New Economy might impose additional obstacles to communities that already faced sizeable barriers to economic development under previous economic conditions.

The Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy is investigating how disadvantaged communities might share in the benefits of the New Economy. Where the transition to a New Economy has erected new barriers, it is identifying how these might be overcome. The Research Alliance has identified Community Economic Development (CED), a development strategy that emphasizes local self-sufficiency, local decision-making and local ownership, as a strategic response to assist communities in taking up the opportunities and meeting the challenges created by the transition to a New Economy.

The Research Alliance brings together academic researchers from the Universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg and Brandon; senior government policy makers; and practitioners active in Manitoba's dynamic CED community (and elsewhere). The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba, a community-based research institute uniquely positioned to make such community-university connections, provides leadership for the project. The diversity of the research group will create a context for innovative, inter-disciplinary assessments of the impacts of the New Economy on disadvantaged communities.

One of the research activities included a study of the impact of community learning networks aimed at community economic development in several Manitoba communities. Karen Rempel, a PhD student at the University of Calgary completed the research based on the experiences of the Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres (NCEDC) Learning for Life project as an example of community learning networks. The research report, *Impact of a Community Learning Network on CED*, is available on RDI's website. Other projects sponsored via the Manitoba Research Alliance were

- *Exploring Connectivity, Use and Usefulness of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in a Northern Community Setting* and
- *Using Information and Communications Technology Tools to Facilitate Networks of CED Organizations.*

For more information visit the Manitoba Research Alliance's website [www.manitobaresearchallianceced.ca](http://www.manitobaresearchallianceced.ca).

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2005
<u>Completion date</u>	2007
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Robert Annis
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Susannah Cameron Karen Rempel
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	<p>Rempel, K. (2004). <i>The evolution of community learning networks: Political philosophy and historical examples from Rural Manitoba</i>. Working Paper prepared for the SSHRC research project, Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy.</p> <p>Rempel, K. (2005). <i>Lifelong Learning, Social Capital and Social Policies</i>. Working paper prepared for the SSHRC research project, Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy.</p> <p>Rempel, K. (2005). <i>The Impact of Lifelong Learning on CED</i>. Research report prepared for the SSHRC research project, Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy.</p>
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Community economic development Policy and program research and development Rural adaptation and change
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	Manitoba Research Alliance on CED in the New Economy Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres

## **Prairie Region Leafy Spurge Project**

For several years, RDI has been involved in a number of projects focused on the invasive noxious weed, leafy spurge in Manitoba. In 2004, RDI began a three-year project that aimed at extending these efforts across the Prairie Region. The project, officially called the *Integrated Pest Management- Biocontrol Regional Leafy Spurge Project*, is funded through the Greencover Canada Technical Assistance Program, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. A primary aim of the project is to encourage prairie wide cooperation and collaboration to help control the spread of leafy spurge and to re-distribute spurge beetles for biocontrol. Spurge is highly invasive and spreads easily through a variety of human activities such as haying, mowing and spreading of gravel. It is also spread by wildlife and along waterways. Native grasslands, seeded pasture and forage crops across the Prairie region are particularly vulnerable to infestation by leafy spurge.

In 2005, RDI began work on one of the most important first steps toward this aim - the development of a prairie region database framework that will manage, display, and analyze geographic information relating to leafy spurge. The Canada Rural Economy Research Lab (C-RERL), a Geographic Information System (GIS) lab at the College of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan, is assisting RDI with the development of the database. A broad range of organizations and individuals from across the Prairies have contributed data. These include Ducks Unlimited, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association, the Rural Municipalities of Cornwallis and Whitehead, and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. Team members have also worked with the rural municipalities and the Grasslands National Park in southwestern Saskatchewan to map areas of infestation.

Another component of the project is the establishment of a plot and demonstration site aimed at demonstrating how various integrated pest management (IPM) strategies influence spurge beetle populations. The demonstration site involves multiple control methods including spraying, mowing, spurge beetles fertilization, herbicide, and burning. Technicians from the Brandon Research Station, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and biologists from Ducks Unlimited, Brandon, have contributed a considerable amount of time and effort during the 2005 spring and summer months.

To date, there have been some significant 'lessons learned' based on the efforts of this project. First, across the Prairie Region, the number of acres of land infested with leafy spurge has increased dramatically to more than 750,000 acres. Second, there needs to be a greater understanding and appreciation of the social aspects of integrated pest management of invasive weeds.

In 2006, work on the database across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta will continue. Project team members will also look for opportunities to share resources with other organizations in the Prairie Region involved with invasive noxious weeds. As well, landowners and managers will have the opportunity to visit the plot and demonstration site and attend field days during the spring and summer months. .

<u>Project design and development</u>	2004
<u>Implementation</u>	2004
<u>Completion date</u>	2007
<u>Project Coordinator</u>	Karen Rempel
<u>Project Team Members</u>	Alex Martin Jennifer McKinnon
<u>Publications and Communications</u>	<p>Martin, A., McKinnon, J., Rempel, K. (May, 2005) Prairie region leafy spurge project. Presented to the Rural Development Institute Advisory Committee meeting, Brandon, MB</p> <p>McKinnon, J., Rempel, K., (2005). <i>Plot and demonstration site report</i>. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute</p> <p>Rempel, K. (2005). <i>Report of First Year Activities</i>. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute</p> <p>Rempel, K. (July, 2005). <i>Prairie region leafy spurge project</i>. Presented to Grasslands National Park and surrounding RMs. Val Marie, SK.</p> <p>Rempel, K. (July, 2005) <i>GIS database for leafy spurge</i>. Presented to the Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association. Virden, MB.</p> <p>Rempel, K. (September, 2005) <i>Update on the Prairie Region GIS database</i>. Presented to Industrial Vegetation Management Association – MB/SK. Winnipeg, MB.</p> <p>Rempel, K. (November, 2005). <i>The social side of invasive weed management</i>. Presented to the Canadian Weed Science Society Annual Meeting. Niagara Falls, ON.</p>
<u>Domains/Areas of Research Interests</u>	Environmental and agro-economic issues
<u>Contributors and Partners</u>	<p>Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Brandon Research Station, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Canada Rural Economy Research Lab, College of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan</p> <p>Ducks Unlimited</p> <p>Greencover Canada Technical Assistance Program, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</p> <p>Industrial Vegetation Management Association (Man/Sask) John and Marge Nichol, Brandon, Manitoba</p> <p>Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group</p> <p>Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives</p> <p>Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association</p> <p>Rural Municipality of Cornwallis</p> <p>Rural Municipality of Whitehead</p> <p>Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food</p>

## **Consultation, Collaboration and Outreach**

RDI remains attentive, open and responsive to rural and northern issues by participating in consultation sessions; by collaborating with community organizations, stakeholder groups, government agencies and other research organizations; and by participating in outreach events such as conferences and seminars. Large portions of RDI's efforts involve the preparation of reports, fact sheets, newsletters, conference presentations and peer-reviewed publications.

### **Rural Team Manitoba**

In 1998, the Federal Government established the Canadian Rural Partnership (CRP). The CRP is designed to support rural community development by adopting new approaches and practices to respond to rural development issues and concerns. In each of the provinces and territories, a Rural Team of representatives from federal and provincial government departments as well as rural stakeholders undertake a range of policy-related activities. Partnerships, networks and alliances help focus the activities on key rural issues of local relevance.

Rural Team Manitoba is a team of 35 representatives from 26 federal and provincial government departments and community serving organizations that have an interest in rural, remote and northern Canada. Throughout 2005, Robert Annis, Director of RDI, represented academic interests in rural community development on the Rural Team Manitoba.

### **Canadian Rural Health Research Society**

RDI has been a supporter of rural health research for several years. The Canadian Rural Health Research Society is an alliance of researchers and research organizations advocating on behalf of rural health research. In addition to lobbying for increased funding and support for rural health research, the Society is building connections through policy efforts and publications. In 2005, RDI provided support to the Canadian Rural Health Research Society for its winter 2005 newsletter. The newsletter is available on-line at <http://crhrs-scrsr.usask.ca/>.

### **Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives**

RDI gratefully acknowledges the support from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) for funding and for advice and guidance from MAFRI representatives. On several occasions RDI Director, Robert Annis and Peter Reimer, Policy Analysis Manager with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives meet to discuss issues and potential collaboration.

### **Professional Development Opportunities**

Professional development sessions hold significant potential to build individuals' skills, share information or develop future collaborative efforts. In 2005, RDI worked with a number of partners to present professional development sessions for community development practitioners, organizations and communities. Some of these sessions include:

- RDI was one of the organizers for the 10<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference. *Our Diverse Cities: Migration, Diversity and Change* held in October in Toronto.

- In March, Dr. Rob Greenwood, facilitated a professional development session, *The New Economy and Rural Economic Development: Regional Approaches for Business Networks, Attracting Investment and Organizing Innovation*. Participants in the session, held in Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba, discussed and debated what the New Economy means and its implications for rural economic development.
- RDI presented a workshop, *Social Action Advantage*, to graduate students and the Brandon Mental Health Centre on the social action process. Workshop facilitator was Wendy Bullock, founder and owner of Building Up.
- RDI helped support a training session for graduate students and faculty on Atlas/TI qualitative data analysis software. Dr. Dale Vaillancourt of Toronto facilitated the session.

### **Outreach and Consultations**

RDI actively participates in various outreach events and conferences. The Director, Robert Annis, is the primary agent for these consultations; however, other members of research and project teams also make meaningful contributions to policy and program discussion. For example

- Robert Annis is an invited member of Manitoba's Rural Team, a group comprised of representatives from federal and provincial government departments and community stakeholder groups with rural interests.
- Robert Annis is a member of Industry Canada's National Selection Committee for broadband initiatives.
- On behalf of RDI, graduate student Anisa Zehtab-Martin participated in a roundtable discussion to provide a context for the research team to visit Manitoba immigration serving agencies. This was a follow up to the Immigration Think Tank at the Rural Forum 2005.
- Robert Annis, was a participant in a *Leadership Tour* in Bologna, Italy, the *Mondragon Cooperative Research Conference* also in Spain and *Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society* held in Tunis.
- RDI continued its participation in the Manitoba Rural Forum held in April 2005 in Brandon.

### **Journal of Rural and Community Development**

RDI continues to provide financial support to the *Journal of Rural and Community Development*. The purpose of the *Journal of Rural and Community Development* (JRCD) is to provide a venue academics, policy analysts, community practitioners, and students interested in rural and small community research to disseminate their peer-reviewed findings to the largest audience possible. An on-line format, offered free of charge to readers, ensures that the largest audience possible is reached and in a timely fashion. Doug Ramsey, Department of Rural Development, is the journal's editor. For more information on the JRCD visit [www.jrcd.ca](http://www.jrcd.ca).

## **Publications, Reports and Presentations**

RDI continuously seeks to enhance its reporting, publications and communications by encouraging and sponsoring peer-reviewed papers, presentations, working papers and project reports. Many of the following 2005 presentations, reports and publications are available through RDI's web site at [www.brandonu.ca/rdi](http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi).

### **Peer-Reviewed Publications**

Racher, F., & Annis, R. (2005). Community partnerships: Translating research for community development. In *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 37(1), 169-175.

### **RDI Working Papers and Reports**

Annis, R. (2005). *Determinants of health or rural populations and communities research project: Final report 1999-2005*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Annis, R., Everitt, J., Walsh, D., & Cameron, S. (2005). *Exploring connectivity, use and usefulness of information and communication technology in a northern community setting: a Churchill case study*. Brandon, MB. Brandon University, Rural Development Institute

Gibson, R; Annis R.C.; Beattie, M. (2005). *Leaf Rapids community assessment*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Annis, R., McNiven, J., & Curri, M. (2005). *Industry Canada broadband economic impact study final report*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Beattie, M., Annis, R., & Zehtab, A. (2005, May). *Community collaboration (CCP) empowering communities and building capacity 2005-2008 annual meeting report*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Beattie, M., Gibson, R., & Annis, R. (2005). *Determinants of health of rural populations and communities research project final report*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Cameron, S., Annis, R., & Everitt, J. (2005). *Internet connectivity in a northern setting: A Churchill case study*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Everitt, J., Massam, B., Romo, E., Dagostino, R., Lara, M., Cupul-Magaña, A., et al. (2005). *Footprints on Puerto Vallarta: Social Spaces and Environmental Impacts*. (Working Paper #2005-12). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Gibson, R. (2005). *The role of co-operatives in community economic development*. (Working Paper 2005-3). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

Gibson, R., & Annis, R. (2005). *Inventory of program, services and resources*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

- Gibson, R., Annis, R., & Beattie, M. (2005). *Leaf Rapids community assessment final report*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., & Kobluk, D. (2005). *The co-operative movement: A historical overview and relevance to northern & aboriginal communities*. (Working Paper 2005-1). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary Camperville, joint co-operative project*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary Commorant, joint co-operative project*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary Matheson Island, joint co-operative project*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Gibson, R., Gould, L., Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *Survey results and community summary Seymourville, joint co-operative project*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Kelly, B., & Idehen, O. (2005). *Changing needs of rural and northern women in Manitoba, a research report*. (Working Paper 2005-10). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Kobluk, D., & McKenzie, B. (2005). *A review of the Seymourville co-operative*. (Working Paper 2005-2). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- McTavish, P., Peers, B., Gibson, R., & Gould, L. (2005). *Assessing technology usage barriers and opportunities in the business community: A case of Southwestern Manitoba*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Peers, B., & Annis, R. (2005). *Leafy spurge control-A best practice: Cameron, Glenwood, Sifton weed control districts*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Peers, B., McTavish, P., & Annis, R. (2005). *A framework of priority information needs: Interviews with key informants*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Rempel, K., (2005). *2004-05 Year end report for the Greencover project*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Rural Development Institute (December 2005). *Community collaboration model project: Empowering communities and building capacity*. Annual meeting report. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

- Rural Development Institute (December 2005). *Community collaboration model project: Empowering communities and building capacity: Project description*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Rural Development Institute (2005). *Leaf Rapids community assessment*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) and Rural Development Institute (RDI) national rural think tank 2005 immigration and rural Canada: research and practice final report*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Rempel, K. (2005). *Lifelong Learning, Social Capital and Social Policies*. Working paper prepared for the SSHRC research project, Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy.
- Rempel, K. (2005). *The Impact of Lifelong Learning on CED*. Research report prepared for the SSHRC research project, Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Parkland*. (Working Paper 2005-5). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Portage la Prairie*. (Working Paper 2005-6). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Steinbach*. (Working Paper 2005-7). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Winkler*. (Working Paper 2005-8). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Silvius, R., & Annis, R. (2005). *Manitoba rural immigration community case studies: Issues in rural immigration: lessons, challenges and responses*. (Working Paper 2005-9). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.
- Silvius, R. (2005). *Recommendations for enhancing the immigration experience in the rural west: Lessons from research, policy and practice*. (Working Paper 2005-11). Brandon, MB: Brandon University, Rural Development Institute.

## **Presentations**

- Annis, R. & Racher, F. (2005, October). *Collaborative model for community health action*. Presented at Rural and Northern Health Research: Bridging the Distance conference, Quebec City, QC.

- Annis, R., & Racher, F. (2005, October). *A model for action on rural community health and well-being*. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC
- Annis, R. & Silvius, R. (2005, October). *Rural Canada and immigration: The interface of research, policy and practice*. Presented at An Overview of Canadian Rural Research Conference, Twillingate, NL.
- Gfellner, B. (2005, October). *Youth speak out: Aftermath of devolution in a rural northern community*. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC.
- Racher, F. (2005, October). *Canadian Rural Health Research Society*. Presented at the National Rural Research Network conference, Twillingate, NL.
- Racher, F. (2005, October). *Community photovoice: Leaf Rapids through the eyes of youth*. Presented at the Sixth Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society, Québec City, QC.
- Rempel, K. (July, 2005). *GIS database for leafy spurge*. Presented to the Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association, Virden, MB.
- Rempel, K. (July, 2005). *Prairie region leafy spurge project*. Presented to Grasslands National Park and surrounding RMs, Val Marie, SK.
- Rempel, K. (September, 2005). *Update on the prairie region GIS database*. Presented to Industrial Vegetation Management Association – MB/SK, Winnipeg, MB.
- Rempel, K. (2005, November). *Learning strategies to build human capital and social capital for sustainable rural communities*. Presented at the Identifying Strategies to Support Sustainable Agriculture in Canada conference, Quebec City, QC.
- Rempel, K. (November, 2005). *The social side of invasive weed management*. Presented to the Canadian Weed Science Society Annual Meeting, Niagara Falls, ON.
- Side, K., Annis, R., Racher, F. & Dornian, J. (2005, October). *Picturing rural communities: Using photovoice in community development*. Presented at the National Rural Research Network conference, Twillingate, NL.

### **Public Communications**

- Rural Development Institute Fact Sheet (February 2005). *Community collaboration to improve health care access of northern residents*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.
- Rural Development Institute Fact Sheet (December 2005). *Community collaboration model project: Empowering communities and building capacity project*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

## Financial Support

RDI gratefully acknowledges the support of a wide variety of partners for providing financial resources and in-kind contributions for research and project activities.

### ***Support from the Government of Manitoba***

Since its establishment in 1989, RDI has had a long relationship with the Government of Manitoba facilitated by on-going consultations and formalized through a series of three year Memorandums of Agreement (MOA). The most recent MOA was signed between Brandon University/RDI and the Government of Manitoba, specifically, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) in February 2004 for the fiscal years 2003-04 through to 2006-07.

The RDI Steering Committee, as outlined in current MOA, includes agreement on the yearly framework of activities and distribution of the funding support received through the MOA. The framework also includes agreement on RDI's decision-making processes relating to the implementation of the MOA. For 2005, the framework of activities and distribution of funding support included the following

- *RDI Program Support* enabled RDI to respond to emergent issues confronting rural communities in a flexible and responsive manner.
- Funding allocated to *RDI Research Fellows Program* supported a program intended to attract rural development academics to Brandon University.
- The *Department of Rural Development Masters Student Thesis and Research Support* funding provided annual financial support to Masters students during their academic program.
- A portion of MAFRI funding supports *Brandon University Community Outreach Service*. This support assists Brandon University students and faculty with direct costs associated with community outreach projects.
- A portion of MAFRI funding supported the *Professional Development Program of Activities*. This program was and continues to be an organized and sustained program of professional development activities for individuals involved in various kinds of community economic development activities.
- A large portion of MAFRI funding has been allocated to the *Designated Research Program* which is a targeted program of research activities that may include building research alliances, enhancing community-based rural research and project activities; or, supporting collaborative research efforts with MAFRI government or communities.

In 2005, the RDI Steering Committee included:

Robert Annis, Director of the Rural Development Institute;  
Scott Grills, Dean of Arts, designate of the Vice-President (Academic and Research); and,  
Peter Reimer, representative from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

The financial support from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives plays a critical role in RDI's direction and growth. Specifically, this funding enables RDI to respond to opportunities in ways that extend the funds many times over. Over time, RDI estimates that the MAFRI funding has helped lever additional dollars and activities including:

- the expansion of the Community Collaboration Project;
- additional support leafy spurge technology transfer and network;
- assistance with planning the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation 2006 conference;
- policy and program research on broadband communications, social economy, and regional cooperatives;
- enhancement of the Manitoba Smart Network information database; and,
- a case study of women engaged in rural and northern enterprise development.

MAFRI funding is also used to complement communications and publication activities.

### ***Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)***

In 2005, RDI concluded its multi-year health research project, *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities*, with the preparation of a final report on the project. RDI also continued with work on the CED and New Economy project funded through SSHRC. RDI is one of four partners in the Manitoba Research Alliance on CED that received approval from SSHRC for an extensive, multi-year research project on CED in the New Economy. As a member of the Alliance, RDI received funding in 2005 to carry on with three projects on various dimensions of CED.

### ***Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)***

In 2004, Dr. Robert Annis of the Rural Development Institute and co-applicants, Dr. Fran Racher of the School of Health Studies, and Dr. Bonnie Jeffery of the University of Regina, have received a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant to undertake the facilitation of dialogue across northern communities in the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Researchers will explore access dimensions of availability, accessibility, accommodation, affordability and acceptability. Population characteristics, environmental factors, health behaviours and related outcomes will be examined from the perspective of community members and health care providers

## Institutional Direction

On an annual basis, RDI sets out a number of short- and medium-term priority areas aimed at encouraging the Institute's growth, developing its position as a centre of excellence for rural development, and enhancing its capacity to respond to emergent rural issues and opportunities for research activities.

### ***RDI Advisory Committee***

In addition to the guidance of the RDI Steering Committee, RDI receives the advice of the RDI Advisory Committee. This committee includes a broad section of stakeholders with interests in rural issues. The Committee has representatives from both internal and external constituencies. The role of the RDI Advisory Committee is to discuss issues and offer advice on academic and applied rural research interests and needs.

### **2005 RDI Advisory Committee Members**



Scott Grills (Chair)  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB



Larry Flynn  
Health Canada  
Winnipeg, MB



Reg Helwer  
Shur-Gro Farm Services  
Brandon, MB



Ben Maendel  
Baker Hutterite Colony  
MacGregor, MB



Jonathan Maendel  
Baker Hutterite Colony  
MacGregor, MB



Darell Pack  
Agriculture and Agri-  
Food Canada  
Winnipeg, MB



W.J. (Bill) Pugh  
Meyers Norris Penny  
Brandon, MB



Fran Racher  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB



Doug Ramsey  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB



Peter Reimer  
Manitoba Agriculture,  
Food and Rural  
Initiatives  
Winnipeg, MB



Ray Simms  
MTS Communications  
Brandon, MB



Frank Thomas  
Canadian Imperial  
Bank of Commerce  
Brandon, MB



Jeff Williams  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB



Dion Wiseman  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB



Robert Annis  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB

## **Goals for 2005**

Each year RDI reviews and renews its short- and medium-term goals based on a strategic approach to remain open and attentive to emerging rural issues and opportunities. In 2005, RDI identified these priorities were:

These funded areas of activities are intended to support RDI's efforts toward some of the major goals of the Institute. In 2005 these goals included:

- Goal 1: Promote RDI as a nationally recognized centre for rural research.
- Goal 2: Enhance RDI's capacity to conduct rural research and related activities.
- Goal 3: Pursue research and project funding to address rural issues.
- Goal 4: Demonstrate administrative leadership of RDI.

Within each of these priorities RDI set out specific objectives targeted to achieve these priorities. The following describes the progress toward these goals and objectives.

### **Goal 1: Promote RDI as a national centre of excellence for rural issues**

RDI's objectives in 2005 for this priority were to demonstrate and promote our research capacity with community economic development organizations, regional health authorities and other rural community stakeholders; design and implement strategic communications for key federal and provincial government partners and rural community stakeholders; and raise awareness of RDI's profile and capacity to conduct and manage rural research and policy development. Measurements indicating successful achievements of these objectives are:

- RDI has been active in a number of consultations with policy makers. For example, Robert Annis, Director of RDI is a member of Manitoba Rural Team Annual Strategic Planning Session and is a member of the National Selection Committee on Broadband for Industry Canada.
- RDI Director and team members facilitated a number workshops and consultations including sessions at Rural Forum 2005, Community Collaboration/Regional Round Tables, Manitoba Community Development Corporation Board development, research sessions for faculty and students on the use of databases and conference support to students.
- At Rural Forum 2005, RDI played a key role in organizing and facilitating the national *Think Tank on Immigration*. The session featured Dr. Rob Greenwood and involved the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation, Manitoba Immigration and Labour, the Manitoba Rural Team, Memorial University and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

## **Goal 2: Enhance RDI's capacity for rural research and activities**

In 2005, RDI's objectives for this priority were to continue to encourage the involvement of BU faculty members in RDI research and related activities; implement the RDI Research Fellows Program; develop and implement a student research internship programme; and remain open to emergent opportunities and issues confronting rural communities.

RDI's achievements in this priority area consist of:

- RDI responded to emerging opportunities such as the expansion of the Community Collaboration Project; support for leafy spurge technology transfer and networking; assistance with planning the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation 2006 conference; research and project activities relating to policies in broadband communications, regional cooperatives, the social economy; assisting with the Manitoba Smart Network information database; and a case study of women engaged in rural and northern enterprise development.
- RDI initiated and received approval from Brandon University on the RDI External Research Fellows Policy.
- RDI provided financial support for eight students to attend rural development conferences including Community Futures Conference.
- The RDI Student Internship Program engaged one PhD student and eight graduate students involved in the Department of Rural Development program.

## **Goal 3: Pursue research and project funding to address rural issues.**

To achieve this priority, RDI identified that its objectives would be to encourage the growth and further development of the BU Community Outreach Service; continue to build professional development opportunities for rural development practitioners; propose, facilitate and engage in rural research and project activities that have direct relevance to rural communities; and submit new funding proposals to national granting councils.

Indicators of progress in 2005 toward these objectives include:

- RDI proposed new or expanded research and project activities including national expansion of the Community Collaboration Project, health submissions to the Canadian Institute of Health Research, and several submissions on invasive weed species.
- The Director is also involved in the Manitoba Research Alliance for CED in the New Economy. The Alliance is currently developing a submission for research on social economy.
- Since 1999, BU Community Outreach Service has responded to over 100 requests from faculty, students and the community and facilitated over 50 projects. Keith Edmunds and Victoria Krahn, served as Community Outreach Coordinators in 2005.

All BU Community Outreach Service projects combine the involvement of community organizations, BU students and BU faculty. The value of in-kind and cash contributions in

2005 amounted to more than \$25,000. Activities supported in 2005 through Community Outreach include:

*Assiniboine River Corridor Birder Education Program*

*Consumer Participation in Mental Health Program and Service Evaluation and Development*

*Development of Database and Mapping Technology by Conservation District Programs, Projects and Services*

*RM of Whitehead Municipal Infrastructure Inventory*

More information on BU Community Outreach Service can be found in the Community Outreach Annual report, available on-line at <http://outreach.brandonu.ca/>

#### **Goal 4: Demonstrate administrative leadership of RDI.**

RDI's objectives for administrative leaderships were to:

- Demonstrate and promote our research capacity with community economic development organizations, regional health authorities and other rural community stakeholders.
- Design and implement strategic communications for key federal and provincial government partners and rural community stakeholders.
- Prepare and share research findings and project activities across rural research networks, alliances and to government and community policy-makers
- Expand network of rural researchers and professionals via Research Affiliates designation and Research Fellows Program.

RDI also successfully administered the Brandon University Community Outreach Service. The Service is one of the funded areas of activities supported by funding from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

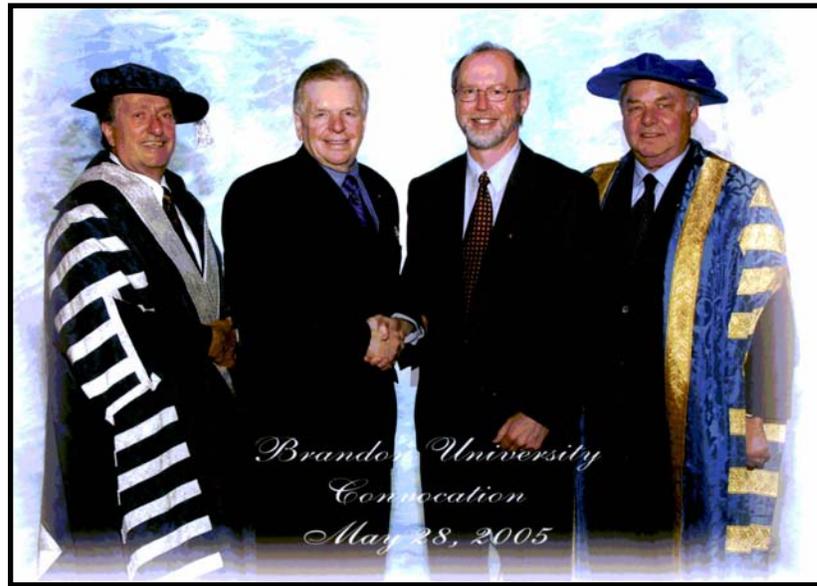
The Brandon University Community Outreach Committee provides advice on the Service. The membership of this committee is comprised of:

Robert Annis, (Co-Chair) Rural Development Institute  
Anne Cheverie, Faculty of Education  
Andrée Dagenais, Faculty of Music  
Jim Forsythe, Faculty of Arts  
Roberta Graham, School of Health Studies  
Jeff Williams, VP Academic and Research,  
Dion Wiseman, Faculty of Science (Chair)

Keith Edmunds followed by Victoria Krahn, 2005 Community Outreach Coordinators

In 2005, RDI successfully continued its commitment to rural community development under the administrative leadership of Robert Annis, Director, and Beverley Lischka, Administrative Assistant. Sylvia Henry continued to provide project support.

Notably, early in 2005, Dr. Robert Annis, RDI's Director, received unanimous approval from the Director's Review Committee for renewal of another five-year term. Dr. Annis received other honours, when in May 2005, Dr. Louis Visentin, President of Brandon University, presented Dr. Annis, with one of two President's Medals for outstanding contributions in the areas of teaching, research and service.



### ***Looking Ahead to 2006***

RDI has much to look forward to in 2006. For example, in addition to fully implementing or completing multi-year projects, RDI will begin the process to review and renew the Memorandum of Agreement with the Province of Manitoba.

### **RDI's Institutional Goals for 2006**

*Goal 1: Promote RDI as a recognized centre for rural issues..*

A major objective is to capitalize on opportunities for expanded research activities and collaborative efforts fostered by associations with research alliances and rural networks.

*Goal 2: Enhance RDI's capacity to conduct rural research and related activities.*

Two of the most important objectives in achieving this goal will be to (1) implement the Research Fellows (External) program; and to (2) encourage the involvement of BU faculty members and students in RDI activities. RDI is particularly interested in supporting students involved in Brandon University's Rural and Community Studies undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree and the Department of Rural Development's Graduate Diploma and Master of Rural Development (MRD) degree.

*Goal 3: Document RDI's profile and capacity to conduct and manage rural research and policy development.*

In addition to increasing RDI's publications activities, RDI aims to develop a communications strategy to document and share research findings and project activities across rural research networks, alliances and to government and community policy-makers.

*Goal 4: Pursue research and project funding to address rural issues.*

In 2006, RDI will continue to propose, facilitate and engage in rural research and project activities that have direct relevance to rural communities. It will also continue to seek opportunities and submit research funding proposals.

*Goal 5: Demonstrate administrative leadership to RDI.*

One of RDI's major objectives for 2006 will be to begin the renewal process for the Memorandum of Agreement with the Province of Manitoba.

## **2005 Research and Project Team Members**

All of RDI's work, progress and achievements come from an efficient administrative team and from the academic and professional contributions of faculty and students from Brandon University, academic researchers from other universities, related research networks or alliances, or from knowledgeable, independent community development professionals from a broad range of disciplines related to rural development research.

### ***RDI Staff and Administration***

Robert Annis, Director  
Sylvia Henry, Project Support  
Beverley Lischka, Administrative Assistant

### ***Brandon University Faculty Members***

Robert Annis, Ph.D., Director, Rural Development Institute  
Ken Beesley, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts and RDI Research Affiliate  
Ken Bessant, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts and RDI Research Affiliate  
Gerald Dueck, Ph.D., Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, Faculty of Science  
John Everitt, Ph.D., Department of Geography, Faculty of Science  
Barbara Gfellner, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Faculty of Science  
Doug Ramsey, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts and RDI Research Affiliate  
Fran Racher, R.N., Ph.D., School of Health Studies and RDI Research Affiliate

### ***Community Development Professionals***

Marian Beattie, PHEc, B.Ed (5<sup>th</sup> Yr), Brandon, MB and RDI Research Affiliate  
Susannah Cameron, M.Sc. Brandon, MB and RDI Research Affiliate  
Michael Curri, M.A, Strategic Networks Group, Ottawa, ON  
Joy Dornian, M.A., Souris, MB  
Gary Dunmore, B.Eng., Strategic Networks Group, Ottawa, ON  
Ryan Gibson, MRD, Brandon, MB  
Tom McGuire, M.A., Strategic Networks Group, Ottawa, ON  
Pamela McTavish, B.A., Hamiota, MB  
Jennifer Pachkowski, B.Sc., Brandon, MB  
Beth Peers, B.A. (Spec.), Virden, MB  
Karen Rempel, M.Ed., Brandon, MB and RDI Research Affiliate  
Ray Silvius, M.A., Brandon, MB

### ***Faculty from Other Universities***

David Bruce, M.A., Director, Rural and Small Towne Program, Mount Alison University  
Bonnie Jeffrey, Ph.D., University of Regina, Regina  
Diane Martz, M.Sc. Director Centre for Rural Studies & Enrichment, St. Peter's College  
affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan  
James McNiven, Ph.D., Professor, School of Public Administration, Dalhousie University

### ***Student Assistants and Research Assistants***

Gale Bowering, Brandon University student, School of Health Studies  
Keith Edmunds, B.Sc. (Spec.) Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Lori Gould, Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Tanis Horkey, Brandon University student, School of Health Studies  
Osayamo Idehen, B.Sc, Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Betty Kelly, B.A., Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Devron Kobluk, HBES, Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Alex Martin, B.A., Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Brad McKenzie, B.A., Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Jennifer McKinnon, Brandon University student, Faculty of Science  
Kwesi Osa Mensah, Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Alison Moss, B.A. (Hons.) Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Laine Mosset, B.Sc. (Hons), Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development  
Katherine Pachkowski, B.Sc.P.N., Brandon University, School of Health Studies  
April Peers, Dipl. Rural Development, Brandon University student, Faculty of Science  
Victoria Krahn, Brandon University student, Faculty of Arts  
Anisa Zehtab-Martin, B.A., Brandon University student, Master of Rural Development

**RDI ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**Jeff Williams**  
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**Dion Wiseman**  
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Brandon, MB

**Robert Annis**, Director RDI  
Brandon University  
Brandon, MB

The role of the RDI Advisory Committee is to provide general advice and direction to the Institute on matters of rural concern. On a semi-annual basis the Committee meets to share information about issues of mutual interest in rural Manitoba and foster linkages with the constituencies they represent.