At Brandon University, we are proud of the Rural Development Institute’s research accomplishments and collaborative endeavors through its many partnerships with community leaders, government representative, and academic colleague over the past year.

The 2009 Annual Report is marked by a significant change. The Directorship has changed hands, passing from Robert Annis to William (Bill) Ashton. Brandon University wishes to thank Dr. Annis for his outstanding service to the university community, to the Rural Development Institute, and to his many colleagues and friends in the rural development field over the past 10 years at the helm of RDI. On behalf of Brandon University, I extend a warm welcome to Bill Ashton to the university community, to RDI in particular, and to his new home of Brandon. I have every confidence that he will excel in meeting the challenges of his position as Director and in seeking new opportunities that strengthen the policy and research capacity of RDI. His extensive experience gained working in a wide range of university and government positions is an asset to the Institute.

The research and other community activities undertaken by the many researchers and scholars at RDI would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of its many funders. The $100,000 provided by Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives is an essential contribution that funds a broad range of activities and projects undertaken by RDI. The additional monies in excess of $254,000 received from the Federal, Provincial and Territorial government, as well as other funders were as crucial in providing the means for RDI to fulfill its mandate of promoting, facilitating, and conducting multidisciplinary academic and applied research on rural and northern issues. I wish to express my appreciation for your continuing support.

I look forward to the ongoing success of RDI in completing ongoing projects and in undertaking new initiatives impacting on rural and northern communities in Canada. I have every confidence that RDI will continue to inspire.
I am very pleased to present the 2009 Annual Report of the Rural Development Institute.

Through 2009, RDI commenced work on a multi-year research project focusing on the problems, issues and concerns experienced by the recent wave of new immigrants to communities in rural and southwestern Manitoba. This project, titled Building Welcoming Communities: A Multi-Sector Regional Collaborative Approach to Rural Immigration, seeks to understand the ways and means by which these centres can improve their ability to become welcoming communities. Although this study has a decidedly regional focus, one of its crucial questions is whether the lessons learned in southwestern Manitoba with regard to rural immigration have relevance in other regions and provinces. The various stakeholder forums and dialogues groups completed to date have already shed considerable light on the many challenges faced and opportunities open to these communities as they endeavor to expand their capacity to invite, settle, and retain immigrants, both workers and their families members, who will continue to be essential for the economic and social well-being of these communities.

RDI also saw its project, A Scan of Community Foundations in Manitoba, draw to a close. This study examined over 40 community foundations registered in Manitoba, and analyzed their organization, structure, endowments, community grants and their local benefits through the use of a survey and follow-up interviews. The study confirmed that these organizations provide a unique and essential contribution to countless community development projects in towns and cities across Manitoba. This project was guided by RDI Research Affiliate, Ryan Gibson and Ian Shanghvi, one of RDI’s researchers completing his Masters of Rural Development.

The Understanding Youth Mobility in Manitoba project, coordinated by Alison Moss and Lonnie Patterson, was completed in 2009. The data collected from Statistics Canada was used to map graphically the comparative changes in population of those aged 15-34 in the province’s eight economic regions from 1996 to 2006.

This year saw the completion of Ethnocultural communities and organizations in Brandon and Steinbach. Undertaken by Research Affiliate Jill Bucklaschuk, this multi-phased, comparative project captured the important role provided by and the many challenges faced by the various ethnocultural groups in shaping the future and diversity of both communities.

Over the past year, RDI saw the completion of two important projects geared towards the agricultural sector in Manitoba, including the Economic Impact of Leafy Spurge in Manitoba and Pathway Prevention of Invasive Species: Increasing Education and Awareness. Coordinated respectively by RDI Research Affiliate, Karen Rempel and Wanda McFadyen, researcher both studies included surveys and broad consultations with agricultural producers, landowners, farm suppliers and local and municipal representatives who have an interest in this noxious plant. The many partnerships developed among the academic researchers, producers and industry and government representatives involved in these projects is representative of the nature of the work conducted at RDI.

Fulfilling RDI’s mandate would not have been possible without the broad expertise of its twenty Research Affiliates, Researchers and Assistants. Their efforts are essential to RDI’s involvement and success in its projects and other research activities. RDI was pleased to include Dr Alex Michalos within its ranks as research affiliate. As importantly, the operation of RDI were greatly assisted through the administrative skills of Bev Lischka and technical savvy of Sylvia Henry.

Throughout 2009, RDI demonstrated its capacity to share knowledge and project findings with a wider audience through its publications and presentations. Over 29 publications were completed or 6 are forthcoming from the research projects undertaken though RDI and its research affiliates. RDI also made use of website platforms to post updates and factsheets on current status of its projects as well as to host forums for exchanging information and insights among rural and community researchers and practitioners.

I would like to acknowledging that this has been a transitional year, closing a few projects initiated under Robert Annis as well as taking the first steps in others. The stewardship provided by Robert has made my transition as Director all the easier. I wish him all the best in his new endeavors and look forward to the exciting opportunities 2010 will bring.
A Tribute to Robert Annis

Dr. Robert (Bob) Annis served as the Director of the Rural Development Institute for the past ten years from 1999 to 2009. His involvement in the rural and community development field began long before joining RDI through his lengthy involvement with the Community Futures Program in Manitoba and his consultancy work with Canadian federal and provincial governments and non-profit agencies.

Through his years in service with Rural Development Institute and WESTARC Group, he was instrumental in negotiating funding in excess of $19 million for research related activities in some 500 differing projects, both large and small, that range from studies in rural and community development, immigration, rural tourism, rural health initiatives, communication and technology utilization, and rural development policy, just to name a few.

His involvement has led to over 30 book chapters and journal articles in both national and international publications, more than 100 RDI publications and reports and over 170 presentations, invited addresses, community lectures and workshops. To say that he has been very busy is a gross understatement. Significantly as well, the vast majority of these works include a number of different authors, which highlights Bob’s earnest commitment and desire to work collaboratively with external research partners, RDI Research Affiliates and Student Assistants engaged in these various projects.

Though each project contributed in its own way to rural and northern issues, Bob is especially pleased by the reception received from project partners and community member for RDI’s involvement in a number of research initiatives, including Community Collaboration Project: Empowering Communities and Building Capacity funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Rural Secretariat, and Manitoba Research Alliance: Community Development in the New Economy, funded by SSHRC.

It is in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the needs and interests of rural and northern communities, that he received the prestigious Brandon University’s President’s Medal in 2005 and Brandon University Order of Merit in 2009. He also received the Minister’s Award for Community Futures Volunteerism in 2008. Sponsored by Western Economic Diversification Canada, the award honors a volunteer who demonstrates exceptional dedication and involvement in the Community Futures Program in Manitoba. He has done so through his long service on the local, provincial, and regional Boards of Community Futures serving as a Board Member and as Chair of each organization. For its own, Brandon University also presented Bob with the Order of Merit in recognition that his professional service and work has enhanced and advanced Brandon University and the wider rural community.

RDI wishes Bob and his family all the best in the future.

Tributes

Darell Pack: “In the spring of 1996 I joined the Rural Secretariat and I was ready to change the world – at least the world with the Government of Canada. And then I met someone who has forgotten more about rural issues that I could ever dream of knowing – that person was Bob Annis.”

Scott Grills: “Brandon University will be a different place without Bob. Under Bob’s leadership the Rural Development Institute has established itself as one of the principle research engines at this institution. The Institute has provided support to researchers in all faculty (that includes music), has generated genuine innovative partnerships between communities, governments at all levels, and university partnerships in Canada, US and Europe.”
Building Welcoming Communities

From 2007 – 2009, the Rural Development Institute explored the impact of temporary foreign worker on the demographical of Brandon and the community’s ability to absorb and support newcomers. From these foundational projects, RDI commenced work in 2009 on its multi-year Building Welcoming Communities project that will build multi-sector partnerships among community leaders, community-based organizations, three levels of government, and industry to discuss, design, and implement welcoming community strategies. The need for welcoming community strategies is pivotal. Many rural, northern, and rural regional centres are exploring immigration as an option to address local challenges and opportunities such as labour shortages and re-population strategies. The urgency of this strategy is especially apparent in Brandon and southwestern Manitoba where over the past five years both have received significant number of immigrant arrivals. The catalyst for this influx was due in part to the expansion of operations at industries such as Maple Leaf Foods and Hytech/Springhill Farms. New employees recruited from overseas, together with the ability to re-unite family members through the Provincial Nominee Program, are anticipated to result in more than 5,000 new immigrants to the region between 2002 and 2011.

Understanding the communities’ ability to absorb and support newcomers is a key concern. From a community development perspective, provincial and federal policies and programmes directly impact the ability to effectively plan at the local level. Although economic factors have traditionally influenced immigration policies and strategies, with the majority of immigrants settling in large metropolitan centres, there are opportunities to influence settlement patterns and retention rates by focusing policies and programmes on social supports thereby increasing the attractiveness of rural and small communities. Through provincial and local partnerships, a community-based approach to planning for the arrival and settlement of immigrants can support rural economic development. Working together through multi-sector collaborations can build partnerships and increase capacity and knowledge, which will in turn result in an improved quality of life for all residents.

Drawing on its previous experience in partnership and collaboration building, the Rural Development Institute utilized a facilitated process to bring together multi-sector stakeholders who began examining and defining the characteristics of a welcoming community, identifying gaps and duplication in service provision, designing a welcoming community strategy, and developing implementation plans for this welcoming community strategy, and implement components of the strategy. This project will assist rural communities in improving their ability to be welcoming communities during the inviting, settling and retaining phases (WISR model) through a collaborative engagement process that blends community development practices and participatory action research.

- Invite
- Settle
- Retain

Guiding Questions

- What are the unique opportunities and barriers faced by regions and communities as they invite, settle, and retain immigrant?
- What are the indicators of a welcoming community?
- What resources and knowledge do rural regions and communities need to successfully welcome immigrants?
- How can rural regions and communities learn and create opportunities from common experiences? What lessons have been learned in other rural communities and regions and how are these applicable in southwestern Manitoba?

Central Activities

- Host dialogue sessions to help identify regional/local challenges, opportunities, and indicators of a welcoming community.
- Work with communities to develop and enhance regionally appropriate, centralized resources for immigrants and service providers focused on attracting, welcoming and retaining newcomers.
- Co-host a regional forum for small rural communities and disseminate knowledge on immigration and immigration-related processes to immigrants, employers, community residents, and service providers.
• Develop pathways for businesses regarding rural immigrants for acquiring workers through immigration.
• Build opportunities for exploring the characteristics of welcoming rural communities beyond Manitoba, into other regions and provinces.

This project is funded through the Rural Secretariat’s Building Rural and Northern Partnership program, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, as well as many other important project partners such as Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Manitoba Labour and Immigration, and the City of Brandon.

Collaborating to Build a Welcoming Community: A Stakeholders’ Forum

One of the central activities of the Building Welcoming Communities project was for RDI to co-host a regional forum for small rural communities and disseminate knowledge on immigration and immigration-related processes to immigrants, employers, community residents, and service providers. This day-long event took place on November 16th at the Royal Oak Inn, Regency Room, in Brandon. The event brought together more than 50 representatives from local, provincial, and federal governments, community-based organizations, immigrant service providers, community service providers, and other key stakeholders.

The day’s three main dialogue sessions included first an overview of recent immigration to Brandon, as well as presentations on the Temporary Foreign Worker / Welcoming Communities projects conducted by RDI and the Welcoming Communities Survey, which was an initial activity in the Welcoming Communities project. The late morning session involved a detailed review of the survey results that addressed four main issues: Employment and education; Housing and neighborhoods; Service provision; and Culture and diversity. The afternoon began with participants moving into break out groups to review and examine a series of action oriented questions, the results and recommendations of which would help to inform how the stakeholders could begin to move on designing and implementing welcoming community strategies. The forum closed with a wrap up session geared towards establishing processes to continue the discussion on these action questions so to maintain the momentum of the Forum as well as to establish a mechanism for Strategic planning on moving forward.

Key participants throughout the day’s activities included: Rural Secretariat, Citizen & Immigration Canada, Service Canada, MAFRI, Manitoba Family & Housing, Manitoba Labour & Immigration, Community Futures Westman, City of Brandon Economic Development, Brandon Regional Health Authority, 7th Street Health Access Centre, Westman Immigrant Services, Southwest Regional Immigration Committee, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Brandon City Police, The Marquis Project, Maple Leaf Foods, Brandon, Knox United Church, Assiniboine Community College, and Brandon University.
Over the course of 2009, RDI completed its multi-phased research project, using a case analysis and comparative approach, to develop an understanding of the ethnocultural communities and organizations in rural Manitoba, what these groups need to be vibrant and successful, and the challenges they face as a community. While it is well known that in large urban centres ethnocultural communities and organizations provide members with increased social resources that assist in finding employment, pursuing education, and meeting other social needs, the same is not true of smaller rural centres. With support funding provided by Manitoba Labor and Immigration, this project sought to undercover what these groups need in order to contribute more fully to the well being of rural communities in Manitoba that have become reliant on rural immigration to address demographic challenges and labor shortages.

In the project’s second phase, the case analysis of Steinbach was completed, which provided the foundation for the comparative analysis of data gleaned about ethnocultural communities and organizations in Brandon. The investigation in Steinbach utilized a community scan as well as interview to gain perspective on the nature of immigration to the community and presence of ethnocultural organizations and immigration service providers. Immigration shaping the history of Steinbach dates back as far as 1874 with the arrival of its first Mennonite families. This heritage continues to this day, though from 2005 Steinbach has welcomed more than 1,110 immigrants from more than 32 countries such as Germany, Paraguay, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, India, Columbia, and Mexico. The Eastman Immigration Services provided details on many of these groups, but the in-person interview proved to provide the richest information. The case analysis confirmed that the changing cultural base has necessitated a change in service delivery strategies as new languages and cultural traditions are introduced to Steinbach. The study found that the recent influx of newcomers has increased the cultural diversity to such an extent that established community organization have yet to emerge, though many members can see the need for one in the future. At the present time, many ethnocultural communities rely on their church-based organizations as a means of social networking and participating in other community-oriented activities. In contrast, the influx of immigration to Brandon has been much sharper and more recent due to local businesses such as Maple Leaf Foods taking advantage of the Temporary Foreign Workers program to address labour shortages. Unlike in Steinbach, many of these newcomers to Brandon have no immigration history in the region. The steady influx of new temporary foreign workers and the second-wave arrival of families and dependents of workers who gained permanent residency status through the Provincial Nominee Program has introduced new challenges for service providers in Brandon, given the ever-increasing requests for services such as childcare, medical attention, legal aid, counseling, and housing.

In January, Robert Annis facilitated Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities: A Discussion Session, asking representatives from various ethnocultural groups, non-governmental organizations and service providers to discuss challenges faced by Brandon’s ethnocultural groups. A number of common themes that arose included:

- Ways to share information and to form new partnerships among different groups,
- Member recruitment and retention, and participation in organizations and events,
- Lack of volunteers for newcomer support services and special events,
- Threat of burnout by core volunteers with groups, and
- Engagement of community at large.

A number of key findings emerged from the project. While rural communities face difficulties in organizing ethnocultural communities and providing requisite service, immigration presents new possibilities of many rural communities. Inviting, settling and retaining newcomers also requires creative approaches to celebrate this diversity as well as strategies for collaboration and communication among non-government organizations and ethnocultural communities. Just as importantly, the ethnocultural communities and organizations need easily accessible information resources. In time, with the proper, cultural-appropriate information and supports from government, ethnocultural communities can develop community organizations and serve many of the same functions as immigrant-servicing organizations.
Understanding Youth Mobility in Manitoba

Community leaders, municipalities, and government have identified youth attraction and retention as key issues for rural and northern community development and sustainability. And yet, although Statistics Canada releases limited mobility information from census data every five years, this data does not provide rural and northern communities information at the local/regional level regarding youth mobility. Given this key deficit in information, the purpose of this project was to build an understanding of youth migration and mobility based on Statistics Canada data. The objectives were threefold: (1) to measure youth migration to and from select rural communities, (2) to provide data to assist the communities, regions, Rural Team Manitoba and others to identify opportunities to keep youth in Manitoba and to attract youth back to rural communities, and (3) to build research and collaboration capacity among graduate and senior undergraduate students.

Population data from the 1996, 2001 and 2006 censuses were used to construct population pyramids and to analyze changes in population in rural and northern Manitoba to indicate whether the population structure demonstrated expansive growth or if it was stable, stationary, or in decline. The intent of the analysis was to gain a regional perspective on changes throughout the province’s eight economic regions. In keeping with previous RDI reports on youth mobility, youths were defined as those aged between 15-34. Separate population pyramids were generated for age groups 15-19, 20-24, 24-30, and 30-34. In addition, statistical software was used to measure changes in age cohorts between 1996 and 2006: the two cohorts were for people born between 1972 and 1976, and for those born between 1977 and 1981.

The statistical data provided a detailed graphical representation of the regional variations in youth mobility over the ten year period from 1996 to 2006. A few of the insightful findings are as follows:

- Across the province, the total number of young people (15-34) declined 5.2% between 1996-2006, with males decreasing by 5.8% and females by 4.6%; however, the most significant decline over the 10-year period was for those aged 30-34 with a decrease of 26% and with a remarkable drop of 22.7% for males and 22.2% for females in the census years 1996-2001.
- Regionally, while Parkland was the only one to suffer persistent population decline (-22.1%) for those aged 15-34 over both 5-year periods, Pembina Valley grew by 2.2%.
- Over the 10-year period, those aged 15-19 increased in every region except Parkland, which declined 11.1%, compared to Eastman’s increase of 13.8%.
- Over the 10-year period, those aged 20-24 increased in Eastman, Pembina Valley, Westman and Winnipeg; however, largest decline of this age group was in the Northern region between 1996 and 2001.
- Between 1996-2006, those aged 25-30 increased in Pembina Valley and Westman region whereas in Parkland the decline was the highest at 29.3%.
- Between 1996-2006, those aged 30-34 declined in every region, but with the lowest decline in Pembina Valley at (-10.8%); and whereas in Central Plains, Interlake and Westman this group declined by 30% between 1996-2001, this group increased by 2.9% in Westman between 2001-2006.
- Regional variation in population changes was evident for the two cohorts, but overall those born between 1977 and 1981 decline more than those born between 1972 and 1976.

In all, this cross-regional comparison report highlights the significant role Statistic Canada has in community planning and development.
Philanthropy, especially through community foundations, is a catalyst for strengthening communities in Canada. Board members of these foundations engage in ways to make the community a better place to live, work and play. Manitoba’s community foundations are diverse yet unique since they represent a disproportionately high number at 41 of the 164 community foundations in the rest of Canada.

Given their importance in so many communities across the province, the Rural Development Institute conducted an investigation through 2009 to better understand their organizations, structures, endowments, community grants, and local benefits with the goal to assist the community foundation movement, government policy and planning, and academic institutions interested in community development.

The methodology of this project included three approaches: (1) a survey of community foundations, (2) a series of interviews with foundation board members and/or staff, and (3) a review of Canada Revenue Agency tax records. Thirty-four surveys were completed representing 83% of the 41 foundations in Manitoba; 13 foundations participated in follow up interviews. The 34 community foundations represented 183 communities/municipalities.

The information distilled from the three approaches provided a comprehensive picture of their financial resourcefulness, organizational diversity, and commitment to community development. Key findings include:

- In 2007, tax records for the 37 foundations available revealed total assets to be more than $30.3 million.
- Since 2003, total assets have increased by almost $10 million; in 2007 foundations received more than $2.5 million in eligible tax receiptable gifts.
- In 2007, close to $1.2 million was distributed as grant to charitable organizations; average amounts granted increased 14% over the five-year period.
- The number of board members ranged from 4 to 14 with an average of 7; for the 34 participated foundations, gender breakdown for board members indicated 55% were male and 45% female.
- Two terms was the limit for board member for 47% of the surveyed foundations; a majority of these foundations (29%) indicated board members were selected through appointment.
- Half of the 34 surveyed foundations were involved in short and/or long term strategic plans.
- Each interviewed foundations confirmed the benefits of sharing resources and collaborating with other foundations and having formal or informal relations with other groups, municipalities, or associations.
- 44% of the surveyed foundations had a Youth in Philanthropy Group.
- All community foundations used a website to communicate their message.
- The most challenging issues facing foundations included human and financial resources, awareness of foundations, and operational structures, supports, skills and capacities.
- Major accomplishments cited included: increased profile and awareness, undertaking projects and initiatives towards education, endowment building/growth, funding health projects, supporting senior projects, arts and heritage projects as well as sports and recreational projects.

The projects findings generated a series of forward looking questions in three main areas; a sample are:

**Community development/practice -**

- How can the profile of community foundations be raised in rural and northern communities?
- How can collaborations among community foundations be encouraged across Manitoba?
- What resources need to be created to assist community foundation boards with effective management of staff and volunteers?

**Policy -**

- How do government departments/agencies support community foundations address challenges and opportunities?
- How can government policy/programs assist community foundation in continuing to contribute to the vitality of their regions/communities?

**Academia:**

- How can university research centres and faculty assist in strengthening the community foundation movement?

This initiative was funded by The Winnipeg Foundation and by contributions from Community Foundations of Canada and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.
Established in 1998, the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group is an association of more than 20 members from agricultural and conservation agencies as well as all three levels of government. Its goal is to raise awareness of the impacts of leafy spurge and to coordinate communication and outreach among the stakeholder agencies. The Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group has experience in documenting the impact of leafy spurge, working with landowners and rural municipalities in developing Integrated Pest Management Plans to control leafy spurge, and stewardship activities designed to increase awareness of leafy spurge and to alter behavior in landowners and agricultural producers that result in best management practices.

Listed as one of the world’s worst invasive species that annually costs Manitoba more than $20 million due to leafy spurge infestations, all stakeholders need to be made more aware of this situation and to prevent future ones. RDI was contracted to provide coordination and management services to enable the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group to attain its goals.

To building capacity among the stakeholders, this project established three broad goals:
1. To increase awareness of invasive species pathway for the prevent of leafy spurge infestations in Manitoba,
2. To enhance communication and education of leafy spurge prevention and management to producers, land owners, municipalities, government, and industry/private sector,
3. To increase awareness and effective management of leafy spurge bio-control agents.

To achieve these objectives an number of activities were undertaken.

First, four separate radio advertisements were aired on three radio stations in Portage la Prairie, Boissevain and Brandon. These stations were selected because they provided the greatest coverage of agricultural areas with current leafy spurge infestations or at risk of becoming infested. The advertisements were aimed at the public, government and industry in order to raise awareness of leafy spurge, to give information on various methods of control and eradication and to provide listeners with details on where to find more information and assistance in dealing with leafy spurge.

Second, a comprehensive website was created as a central point of information on topics such as scientific literature on leafy spurge, integrated pest management, control/management techniques, resources and publications, and secondary school education curriculum. The Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group has agreed to continue the ongoing maintenance and updating of the website. The new website, when ready, will facilitate easier access to producers, land owners, land managers, municipalities, government, and industry and will be linked to other sites that share similar information and interests.

Two articles were published on invasive species pathway prevention focusing on bio-control as a means to encourage this type of control technique by producers, producer organizations, municipalities, and government. The articles were circulated to a number of agricultural, conservation, and industry related publications as well as to community newspapers in southwest and south central Manitoba.

Informal presentations on invasive species pathway prevention were given at a number of agricultural events, including Grazing Days, Manitoba Cattle Producers Annual General Meeting and Conference, Manitoba Ag Days and the Manitoba Weed Supervisors Conference, leading to numerous one-on-one conversations with event attendees, which provided opportunities to share information on the project’s goals.

Third, a concise manual, created in consultation with technical advisors, was developed to provide information on leafy spurge bio-control unique to Manitoba. The manual contains details on indicators for ideal site selection, collection methods, and monitoring procedures. The manual is to be distributed to producers, land owners, municipalities, government departments/agencies and industry.

This project was funded by the Greencover Canada Technical Assistant Program, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration.
Economic Impact Assessment of Leafy Spurge

In 1999 the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group, a broad coalition of agricultural and conservation groups and the three levels of government, undertook a collaborative project to assess the economic impact of leafy spurge in Manitoba. The outcome of the project was the Leafy Spurge Economic Impact Assessment – Manitoba 1999. At the time, the assessment found the net economic impacts was approaching $20 million in direct and indirect costs.

Ten years later, the rate of infestation (distribution) and the level of infestation of leafy spurge (density) continue to raise several serious concerns particularly from producers, land managers and policy makers. In 2009, the Rural Development Institute, on behalf of the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group (LSSG), initiated an update of the economic impact on leafy spurge in Manitoba. This economic impact project utilized the 1999 Economic Impact Assessment as a starting point and updated publicly available economic and geographic data. This project had three objectives:

1. To measure the economic impact of leafy spurge infestation in Manitoba,
2. To encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices,
3. To increase capacity of local producers, land owners, weed supervisors, and municipalities to monitor and record invasive species.

To address the first, RDI reviewed current research and economic variables used for other economic impact assessment models of invasive species. Based on the input from the expert panel including those in weed management, economics, agriculture and land management, adjustments were made to the 1998 economic variables. As well, new thresholds of grazing capacity loss were also identified. Using the updated methodology for determining the number of acres, the number of infested acres of pastures, forage lands, and rights of way, was estimated at 1.3M acres up from 340,000 acres in 1998.

To ensure the economic impact assessment captures appropriate and accurate data, four consultations were held with participants coming from a number of organizations and agencies including the Manitoba Weed Supervisors, CFB Shilo, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Invasive Species Council of Manitoba, experts in weed management. It is anticipated that the 2010 Economic Impact Assessment of Leafy Spurge Report will be distributed by mid 2010.

The report will include the number of acres, annual costs, and suggestions for methodology to determine acreage, information on the invasion process of invasive species and the economic threshold of infestation levels.

To encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, a fact sheet on weed surveying and mapping, the invasive process and economic threshold for loss in grazing capacity due to spurge leafy was prepared for distribution through agricultural and municipal offices along with the 2010 Economic Impact Assessment of Leafy Spurge Report. The Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group also generated two news articles on the economic impact of leafy spurge in Manitoba and sustainable agricultural practices for publications aimed at audiences such as producer organizations, municipalities, and government.

Data collected but previously not entered into the Prairie Regional Invasive Plants Species Inventory PRIPS website was also completed. The project highlighted difficulties in collecting information about the geographic location of invasive species, current land use, land ownership, vegetation, area of infestation, current treatment (if any). Currently, most data is in the form of way points based on the chemical control of leafy spurge by weed supervisors typically found along road sides and rights of way and these way points do not contain information on area, spread or density.

The project found that determining the acreage of leafy spurge continues to be problematic. Unlike weed mapping and surveying systems for arable crop land, there have been no long term efforts to monitor the spread or density of leafy spurge. Although the methodology developed and applied in this economic impact assessment can be used and updated in the future with a reasonable amount of confidence in the acreage of infestation, the full range of economic variables for determined the direct impact of leafy spurge have not been fully developed, with the exception of the loss of grazing capacity.
RDI — Sponsored Community Events

Through 2009, RDI was active in offering members of the university community and the residents of the Westman region opportunities to attend various events featuring speakers who shared their unique perspectives on the rural experience.

Public Lecture
March 30, 2009
Louis Riel Room, McMaster Complex
Brandon University

Dr. Michael Dorsher, Fulbright Scholar – Visiting Chair in Media, McGill University & Communications and Journalism, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Presentation Title: The Wal-Marting of Canada’s Media: How Canada’s Largest Company Stifles its most Influential Industry.

Michael Dorsher is the 2008-2009 Fulbright Scholar Visiting Chair in Media at McGill University’s Institute for the Study of Canada. Dorsher is from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where he has been a journalism professor since 2000. He is also author of “Controversies in Media Ethics” and author of several entries in the “Encyclopedia of Journalism”; both books are due out in 2009. Dorsher earned a doctorate in mass communication from the University of Maryland in 1999. Before that he was a U.S. journalist for 20 years, ending up as one of the founding editors of washingtonpost.com. He normally lives with his wife, a newspaper editor, in St Paul, MN, and at their summer home on the North Dakota-Manitoba border.

Public Lecture
May 7, 2009
Louis Riel Room, McMaster Complex
Brandon University

Dr. Victòria Soldevila, Assistant Professor, Economics Department, Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Rues, Spain

Presentation Title: Value Chains and Environmental Regulation in the Hog Sector in Catalonia, Spain.

Dr. Victòria Soldevila has also taught at the University of Barcelona, National University of Managua (Nicaragua), Open University of Catalonia (UOC), and ESCE-École Supérieure de Commerce de Toulouse. She holds a Ph.D. in International Economics and Development from the Universitat de Barcelona. Her research interests include rural development and agri-food commodity chains studies. Her doctoral thesis, titled The impact of the environment costs in pork value chain: the Catalonia’s case, won “Llovet i Monros” Award in 2008. Dr. Soldevila also took part in an ex-ante and intermediate evaluation of LEADER + Regional Programme and the ex-post evaluation of LEADERII Programme, both of which are Rural Development Programs in Catalonia.

Dr. Soldevila spent two months of her research sabbatical in the Department of Rural Development at Brandon University where she researched a comparison of the hog sectors between Manitoba and Catalonia with Dr. Doug Ramsey, Associate Professor, Department of Rural Development.

Public Workshop
June 3, 2009
Louis Riel Room, McMaster Complex
Brandon University

Stacey Corriveau, Director, BC Centre for Social Enterprise
Richard Bridge, LLB, Member of the Law Society of British Columbia and the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society

Event Title: Enterprise, Allowable Fundraising Activities, and Mini Governance Session.

- Stacey Corriveau delivered a presentation titled,” Managing donation receipts: guidance for Charities.”

This workshop was designed for Charity Organization board members who have an interest in broadening their level of expertise in the governance and activities of charities.

Guest Lecture
October 22, 2009
Brodie Science Building, Rm 4-47
Brandon University

Joel Thomas Hynes, Writer, Playwright and Actor

Event Title: Life in Rural Canada: Life Experience and Perspectives from a Writer, Playwright and Actor.

Joel Hynes was invited by Dr. Doug Ramsey to give a guest lecture and readings in his class, Rural Canada: An Introduction. Joel spoke about the trials and tribulation of life in rural Newfoundland and as an actor/author bringing these experiences to life in print and on small and large screen. He has published to novels acclaimed novels “Down to the Dirt” (2004, Harper Collins) and “Right Away Monday” (2007, Harper Collins). Joel was co-screenwriter and lead actor when “Down to the Dirt” was made into a movie.
RDI and the Department of Rural Development have been actively engaged in the International Consortium on Comparative Rural Policy since 2004. Comprising members from 11 universities in Canada, Europe and the USA, the Consortium was developed to enhance policy formulation and analysis in the rural context. Designed for graduate students and mid-career professionals, the ICRPS program provides opportunities to study the nature and implications of new forms of governance in rural contexts. During the two-week international summer institute, students have an opportunity to engage in advanced topics and to share research results with faculty and other students. Each intensive summer school serves to connect faculty and international students in a dedicated learning environment.

Lonnie Patterson, Janielle Brooks-Smith and Ian Shanghvi, MRD students, had the opportunity to participate in the 2009 ICRPS summer institute hosted by the University of Highlands and Islands (Inverness, Scotland). Ian spent two weeks learning with and from graduate students, professionals and faculty from more than 10 countries.

The students experience included classroom presentations, field-trips and hands-on activities exploring policy related to, for example: sustainability, economic development, tourism and service delivery in a rural context. One of the highlights of the 2009 program was a community development project. Students worked in teams with local leaders from Isle of Skye to explore their community’s opportunities and challenges, and generate development recommendations.

The 2010 ICRPS Summer Institute will be held in Corvallis, Oregon and hosted by the Portland State University and Oregon State University. Further information on ICRPS is available at www.icrps.com.
A significant part of RDI’s mandate is the dissemination of RDI research and promotion of its community involvement and activities. Through 2009, RDI continued to report on its activities through various modes of publication and in presentations. RDI continued its open-source electronic publishing of the Journal of Rural and Community Development with 11 articles. The JRCD is based in the Rural Development Institute (RDI) at Brandon University. RDI was established in 1989 as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in western Canada and elsewhere. The JRCD is funded through annual grants from the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives.

**RDI Reports & Discussion Papers**


Sormova, M., & Bucklaschuk, J. (2009). *Enhancing and linking ethnocultural organizations and communities in rural Manitoba: A focus on Brandon and Steinbach final project report*. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.*

* Not for public dissemination.

**Journals**


13
Books, Book Chapter and Journal Articles


Beesley, K. (Ed.). (forthcoming). The rural-urban fringe in Canada: Conflict and controversy. Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University


Racher, F.E., & Annis, R.C. (2009). Community health action model: Health promotion by the com-

Presentations


ations of Canada Regional Conference, Brandon, MB.


Brandon University Community Outreach Service

The mandate of the Brandon University Community Outreach Service is to match the needs of community organizations in Brandon and rural Manitoba with the learning and research interests of Brandon University Students and faculty. The Outreach Service coordinates two main programs, Annual Calls for Proposals, and Service Learning program for students.

The Service Learning program encourages community volunteer participation of Brandon University students in the areas of their study. The program acknowledges the value of student activities beyond academic setting, and provides a valuable opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and skills to the benefit of the community. Once students successfully complete the Service Learning program, they receive official recognition of their activities on their Brandon University transcripts.

During 2009, over 40 students participated in Service Learning activities, volunteering with a wide variety of community organizations including Ogamas - Brandon Aboriginal Literary Festival, Ten Thousand Villages, World University Services of Canada, Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba, BU Student Leader Program, the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre, and other groups.

Two annual Calls for Proposals were held in 2009, the first in February and the second in October. The projects funded in 2009 initiated new partnerships between the University and community organizations in the local Westman region and in other northern communities.

The special funding provided by Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives, initiated six new projects in 2009.

Utility Assessment of UAV Technology in Conservation Agreement Land Monitoring Program

**Project Partners:** The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation and Dr. Dion Wiseman, Geography Department, Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $2,983.20

The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) focuses on the agricultural regions of Manitoba, and promotes conservation practices that not only benefit wildlife habitat, but also help sustain farm family income and productive use of land. MHHC uses Conservation Agreements as a way for landowners to ensure long-term conservation of the habitat on their land, and conducts aerial monitoring annually to ensure cooperation with the terms of agreement.

The focus of this project is to assess the effectiveness of implementing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Technology in the MHHC’s annual land monitoring program. As an alternative to conventional fixed-wing aircraft or field reconnaissance, this project will investigate the effectiveness of UAV technology for providing aerial photographs of CA lands at a higher level of detail, and in a more efficient and cost effective manner. A Brandon University student will be employed to acquire imagery, complete image processing and analyses, and conduct a comparison of results and costs. If successful, MHHC would consider using this technology in future monitoring projects.
Shoreline Plant and Seaweed Resources in Churchill

**Project Partners:** Churchill Northern Studies Centre (CNSC) and Dr. Terence McGonigle, Biology Department, Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $3,000

The Hudson Bay shoreline at Churchill, Manitoba, provides a seacoast in the province that is reasonable easy to access, and offers considerable opportunity for observation of marine life. However, the shoreline as a resource for research and education is often overlooked.

This field study will determine the composition of marine shoreline plants in the Churchill area. Under the supervision of BU faculty member, a biology student will collect and identify plants and algal species, and gain experience in literature research, data analyses, report writing, and presentation. Data collected will lay the foundation for development of the incorporation of shoreline ecosystems into the programs for education and ecotourism delivered by Churchill Northern Studies Centre, and form the basis for any future plans for possible commercial harvesting and utilization of seaweed resources by the Churchill community.

The Women’s Resource Centre (TWRC) provides services such as counseling on domestic violence, sessions on self-defense, informed women’s series, clothing exchange, and others. These programs serve all women who request them and are delivered free of charge. TWRC regularly has more than 1,000 contacts each month with users of TWRC, many of whom access services directly in the centre.

The purpose of this project is to conduct a needs assessment that will help inform and guide long-term planning for TWRC. Under the supervision of the TWRC program coordinator and BU faculty members, a Brandon University student will be hired to collect and analyse data on TWRC services. The acquired data will help assess the effectiveness of the current TWRC programs, provide feedback on potential gaps in services for women of all walks of life, and provide information to TWRC board members and staff that will instruct future direction and focus of the centre.

Survey and Analysis of the Motivation and Impact of Communities is Bloom on Manitoba Communities

**Project Partners:** Manitoba Communities in Bloom and Dr. Doug Ramsey with Dr. Ken Beesley, Department of Rural Development, Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $3,000

The mission of Manitoba Communities in Bloom (MB CIB) is to deliver a program that engages communities to participate. MB CIB inspires a sustainable approach for improving the quality of life in Manitoba’s communities through sustainable practices in community involvement, environmental awareness, beautification, heritage preservation, education, and networking.

The goal of the project is to determine the impact participation in Communities in Bloom has had on Manitoba communities. Brandon University Rural Development student will interview two representatives in each community that have participated in the program since 1995 to determine the motivation for their participation and their views regarding the value of the program. With the supervision of faculty members, the student will analyze the collected data, and provide recommendations on future direction of the program based on the findings.

Women’s Resource Centre Brandon: A Needs Assessment

**Project Partners:** The Women’s Resource Centre and Dr. Shannon Gadbois (Psychology Department) with Dr. Elizabeth Graham (Sociology Department), Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $2,000

The Women’s Resource Centre (TWRC) provides services such as counseling on domestic violence, sessions on self-defense, informed women’s series, clothing exchange, and others. These programs serve all women who request them and are delivered free of charge. TWRC regularly has more than 1,000 contacts each month with users of TWRC, many of whom access services directly in the centre.

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Building Strong Communities through Music Development in Rural Manitoba

**Project Partners:** Dauphin and District Allied Arts Council, Midwest Arts Council, Swan River Arts Support Group, Lt. Colonel Barker V. C. School, and Dr. Megumi Masaki, School of Music, Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $3,000.

Building Strong Communities through Music Development in Rural Manitoba is a partnership project between the Brandon University and four rural Manitoba communities: Dauphin, Swan River, Shoal Lake, and Hamiota.

The project is aimed to help rural Manitoba communities create partnerships with local organizations to develop strategies and activities that enhance community awareness, interest and support of the arts. Brandon University music students will research and document individual communities’ musical lives since 1990. Their research will provide basis for a greater understanding of past and present trends of musical activities and the cultural needs of participating communities. Professional concerts and advanced training workshops will further the development of rural music educators and music students in communities that are otherwise in geographical disadvantage to access similar opportunities.

Redesign and Expansion of the Silver Bend Hiking Trail

**Project Partners:** Miniota Archive Community Development Corporation and Dr. Daniel Olsen, Geography Department, Brandon University.

**Funding Approved:** $2,000

The Silver Bend Hiking Trail is a highly rated walking trail located north of the town of Miniota. This unique trail offers scenic landscapes along the Assiniboine River and aspects of local history such as an old pioneer trail along the edge of the Assiniboine Valley, and an opportunity to see where the first boats landed to drop supplies to people living in Miniota.

The purpose of this project is the redesign of the Silver Bend Hiking Trail to incorporate local historical event markers in its overall design, and the expansion of the trail from 4 to 8 kilometers. Under the supervision of a faculty member, and in cooperation with the Miniota Community Development Corporation, a Brandon University student will be involved in planning, designing, mapping, and expansion of the existing trail. The newly designed and expanded trail will help raise the profile of the community and promote tourism and recreation in the area.
Looking Ahead to 2010

Living in Manitoba: Community Immigration Beginnings Conference
February 20, 2010, Main Dining Hall, Brandon University

The Southwest Regional Immigration Committee presents a conference designed for education and informing rural communities, employers, and regional immigration initiative on the basics of rural immigration. Event sessions include: Immigration Basics, Immigration for Employers, Marketing your community, Rural Settlement Strategies, and Newcomers Awareness.

Creating opportunities for Temporary Foreign Workers and their Communities: Innovation in Capacity-Building and Skills Transfer in Latin America

Rural Development Institute (RDI) in collaboration with The Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) is conducting a survey and focus groups with local temporary foreign workers to gather information on their migration experience to Canada and perceptions and interests relating to skills upgrading and training in Manitoba, in order to increase benefits to workers, their families and the wider community. The Survey and Focus Groups will take place at:
7th Street Access Centre, 20 - 7th Street, Brandon, on February 13 at 7 – 9 p.m.
7th Street Access Centre, 20 - 7th Street, Brandon, on February 14 at 1 – 3 p.m.

International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Summer Institute
The 2010 ICRPS Summer Institute will be held in Corvallis, Oregon and hosted by the Portland State University and Oregon State University. Students in Brandon University’s Master of Rural Development program will have an opportunity to participate in this two-week summer institute. Further information on ICRPS is available at www.icrps.com.

On the Bright Side: Rural Canada Works Conference
Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) National Conference hosted by Rural Development Institute (RDI)
October 14-16, 2010, Royal Oak Inn and Suites Brandon, Manitoba

A national conference focusing on issues affecting rural communities and their futures, sharing policies, practices, and projects critical for others pursuing the brighter side of rural, and providing examples of those actively designing rural futures. Conference participants will include community leaders, economic development practitioners, rural researchers, policy analysts and senior representatives from Provincial and Federal ministries and agencies.