



# **Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities Annual Report May 2017 – May 2018**

ALBERTA CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

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Annual Report 2017/2018



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## ABOUT

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Established in 2008, the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) is a partnership between the Augustana Faculty and the Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences of the University of Alberta. The ACSRC fills the gap for research and policy in rural areas by fostering constructive dialogue, promoting interdisciplinary and collaborative research, and developing partnerships between the University of Alberta and rural communities in Alberta and beyond.

For more information, please visit the ACSRC's website: [www.acsrc.ca](http://www.acsrc.ca)

### Vision

The vision of the ACSRC is of resilient rural communities across Canada linked closely to the discovery, dissemination, and application of new knowledge at the University of Alberta through teaching and learning, research and creative activity, community involvement, and partnerships. Such resilient rural communities will hinge on informed citizens actively participating in community governance and development in order to support and sustain the people, livelihoods, regional and local capital, economic development and long-term social viability of rural communities as a key element of the Canadian economy, the natural environment and as home to many Canadians.

### Mission

The mission of the ACSRC is to link the research, outreach and educational capacity of the University of Alberta with students, researchers, rural communities, rural community organizations and policy makers at multiple levels across the province, nationally, and internationally in order to support the improved sustainability of rural communities and populations.

### Values

- **Collaboration:** The ACSRC recognizes the contributions and capacity of individual citizens, private, public, community and other non-governmental organizations, faculty, staff and students of post-secondary institutions in Alberta, in collectively advancing the development and sustainability of rural communities.
- **Methodological and Theoretical Rigour and Pluralism:** The ACSRC encourages both theoretical and methodological pluralism, and the critical reflection upon the suitability and implications of the theories and methods used.
- **Capacity Building:** The ACSRC is committed to supporting the ability of rural communities via research, outreach and knowledge transfer; to not only govern themselves, but to participate in a meaningful and efficacious manner at and with all levels of government and administration.
- **Transparency:** The ACSRC seeks to adopt best practices in all of its activities in order to ensure fair and open operations, and to comply with the appropriate FOIPOP legislation, etc.



- **Local Knowledge:** The ACSRC recognizes that the sustainability of rural communities in Canada varies from region to region, from community to community, and that factors such as culture, geography, natural environment, socio-economic context and political history can all lead to varying outcomes. The ACSRC, therefore, recognizes that the knowledge, experience and expertise present within communities has equal value and standing to that generated within an institution (university or college) setting.
- **Evidence-informed decision-making:** While keeping to all other values listed here, the ACSRC supports the application of systematically gained knowledge to guide the decisions, policies and programs of (1) the Centre; (2) rural communities; (3) regional, provincial and national policy-makers.

## Goals

The ACSRC has established 5 goals which, through their accomplishment, will move the Centre toward achieving its mission in a fashion consistent with its vision and values. Each goal is supported by key objectives (bulleted) which, in turn, will guide the day-to-day operations of the Centre:

### 1) Research

Stimulate, support and conduct research on the multiple elements of rural community sustainability.

### 2) Education

Stimulate and support innovative education in rural community development, sustainability and policy.

### 3) Outreach

Generate greater interaction and collaboration with rural community stakeholders.

### 4) Knowledge Synthesis, Translation and Exchange (KSTE)

Stimulate, support and conduct KSTE to support evidence-informed decision-making and governance at multiple levels, from the local to the international.

### 5) Sustainable Operations

The ACSRC strives to have internally sustainable operations through stable funding sources. To support the ACSRC please contact the Office of Advancement at the University of Alberta.

## Challenges

The ACSRC has four challenges:

- 1) to provide research leadership, profile and coordination to the University's commitment to rural engagement;



- 2) to foster research of relevance to rural communities, including interdisciplinary and inter-Faculty collaborative research, that may be regional, national, or international in scope;
- 3) to think respectfully and reciprocally with, not just for, rural communities, and to facilitate knowledge transfer;
- 4) to develop collaborative relationships with other university-based rural centres in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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As I close out the 9<sup>th</sup> year of my directorship of the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities, and through-out the process of compiling this report, I am struck by some of the continuities, but also the changes, that face rural citizens in Canada, and particularly in Alberta. As the snows finally melt, grasses green and life returns to the Prairies, one can practically feel the sense of urgency, activity and desire from not just the environment, but the many farmers already out preparing for the season, and responding to the very short yet intense growing season our climate offers. The same holds true for the University – as students depart for the summer, research activities ramp up, travel plans for conferences are made, and collaborative and team meetings kick into high(er) gear. For the ACSRC, this last year represents a similar pattern – an on-going cycle of external funding, events, community outreach, collaboration, publications and grant-writing.

Unfortunately, not all patterns are good – both the Province and federal government continue to show little interest in rural development (beyond investments in agriculture), and while there are substantial rural research networks in Canada, they contain largely the same people (some of whom have been active for over 30 years in the field) and there is little to suggest any meaningful change or innovation from the policy standpoint in the near future. For many rural municipalities in Alberta, they continue to watch younger citizens move away for employment, education and culture, while those same younger citizens struggle with significantly higher prevalence of stress, anxiety and depression than their urban counter-parts. Beyond the demographics, rural infrastructure continues to decline, small communities continue to wither, and the Prairies continue to get just a little bit bigger each day.

That said, many community leaders and officials continue to work for the betterment of their communities, and I can honestly say that our work does support their actions. Whether it is participation in our conferences or workshops, attending Extended Education short-courses, or (as in increasingly the case) actually using the tools our projects create, we are becoming, and have been, a resource for rural communities.

Lars K. Hallstrom, PhD  
Director, Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities





## PROJECTS

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### Projects Under Review

#### *Pillar 1: Communities, Planning and Policy*

##### **Non-wage household workers on Alberta farms: Risks, attitudes and policy**

Funding Source: Alberta OHS

Funding Amount: \$45,000

Project Lead: Emily Reid-Musson (University of Waterloo, School of Public Health)

Role of ACSRC: Co-investigator

Project Dates: 2018 – 2020

Description: In 2015, the Alberta government passed the **Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act**, extending Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) insurance coverage and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) legislation to Alberta farms and ranches. Lawmakers proposed the legislation after several child fatalities on Alberta farms. In the face of considerable farmer opposition to the law, the original statute was modified to exempt unwaged household worker from its scope. While the Act marks a significant accomplishment – previously, employees on Alberta farms and ranches had been exempt from basic safety and injury compensation protections – household workers are not presently covered by workplace health and safety statutes. While government extensively consulted with stakeholders in developing the Act as well as in its current implementation phase, there is a lack of systematic analysis of the views of the farming sector from varying standpoints vis-à-vis the new OHS regulation.

This study employs advanced qualitative health methodologies to analyze farmer attitudes towards OHS regulation and to assess appropriate pathways for the regulation of family and household worker OHS in Alberta.

There are two key components in the study's research design.

- 1) An **international inter-jurisdictional scan** to identify and compare multiple approaches from Canadian and international (US, EU) jurisdictions to assess and compare how governments have regulated the health and safety of child and household farm workers.
- 2) **In-depth qualitative interviews** with farmers, family members, farm association representatives, labour representatives, policy makers, and lawmakers will be conducted to collect and analyze attitudes towards OHS regulation in Alberta's agriculture sector, with a specific focus on household farm worker OHS vulnerabilities and regulation.

#### *Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems*

##### **Watersheds and Communities in Transition: Fostering Climate Change Resilience on the Plains**

Funding Source: SSHRC Partnership Grants LOI



Funding Amount: \$20,000

Project Lead: Makere Stewart-Harawira

Role of ACSRC: Co-applicant

Project Dates: 2018

Description: Rural communities, unlike their city or urban counterparts, have generally not been accorded the level of attention they deserve by researchers and policy makers in relation to the intricate and evolving climate change challenges they face. There is an urgent need for a more integrated understanding of the multidimensional issues faced by rural and remote communities across different national contexts with a view to establishing the unique and intersecting social - ecological aspects and how they can best be tackled. The proposed research program will directly address this gap. It will provide a comprehensive intersectoral understanding of how rural and remote Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities within distinct yet similar watershed regions are responding to the impact of climate change, identify barriers to change and identify, enhance and mobilize successful strategies towards transition. Key objectives are to understand the unequal impacts of climate change across rural communities in plains /boreal regions, enhance the capacity of rural and remote communities to directly engage in sustainable climate change resilience and adaptation practices, examine changes required in law and regulatory agencies to deal with the effect of climate change on freshwater resources, identify and address functional gaps between watershed planning, management and regulatory frameworks that promote ecological sustainability and climate change resilience, and propose intervention measures which translate into action. The overarching goal is to enhance and mobilize the capacity of diverse and marginalized rural and remote communities to respond to short and long term challenges posed by the effects of climate variations in the different and interconnected facets of community life.

### **NCE – KM Initiative for Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas**

Funding Source: Networks of Centres of Excellence Knowledge Mobilization

Funding Amount: \$1.6 million (\$400,000/year)

Project lead: Elizabeth Halpenny and Colleen Cassidy St. Clair

Role of ACSRC: Co-applicant

Project Dates: 2019 – 2023

Description: Our planet faces a biodiversity crisis amid increasing human populations and consumption, extinction rates 1000 times above background levels, and a halving of wildlife populations over recent decades. Slowing these trends requires protected areas that link terrestrial, freshwater, and marine domains to conserve biological and cultural diversity, provide ecosystem services, stabilize abiotic processes, create aesthetic and recreational enjoyment for people, and maintain options for future generations. Global action on biodiversity protection is marshalled for 168 signatory nations, including Canada, by the international Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with an ambitious Aichi Target 11 to protect 17% of terrestrial and 10% of marine areas by 2020. This goal is acutely challenged by



economies that are fueled by natural resources, without reflecting their ecological impacts. The goal cannot be achieved with traditional approaches to protected areas that ignore Indigenous Peoples and their rights, the needs of adjacent communities, the efforts of citizens, industrial and restoration contributions, and non-traditional conserved areas, such as land trusts and municipal reserves. To maximize the extent and efficacy of protected areas, while fostering ecological connectivity across landscapes, respecting the rights and cultures of Indigenous and other people, acknowledging parallel efforts in conserved areas, and encouraging sustainable practices, better exchange, use, and co-creation of knowledge must occur among the diverse conservation stakeholders.

We propose to create the Knowledge Mobilization Initiative for Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas (KMI for CPCA) to mobilize and integrate knowledge relevant to both terrestrial (including freshwater) and marine protected and conserved areas in Canada, thereby supporting their diverse ecological, cultural, and societal functions. Core goals are to (1) promote protected areas as key solutions to several societal problems, including biodiversity loss, climate change, and access to nature; (2) facilitate connections among those who produce, synthesize and use knowledge to all forms of protected and conserved areas; (3) increase co-production and use of knowledge across traditional silos of expertise including academic disciplines, government agencies, local communities, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and, especially, Indigenous organizations and communities; and (4) increase the designation and efficacy of protected and conserved areas in the coming decade by mobilizing diverse kinds of knowledge, methodologies, and data.

The federal 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets for Canada adapted the CBD statement as Canada's Target 1 to recognize the central role that protected and other conserved areas must play in a comprehensive strategy for protecting biodiversity. This commitment was deepened with the 2018 budget. Letters from our partners demonstrate the importance of effectively managed protected and conserved areas to all Canadians, while identifying both existing barriers to co-producing, sharing, and using knowledge, and opportunities for overcoming challenges that will worsen with impending climate and societal changes. By mobilizing knowledge, we will increase awareness, extent, efficacy, societal inclusivity, and designation targets of protected and conserved areas, thereby protecting both biological and cultural diversity for the benefit of all Canadians.

## Projects in Development

*Pillar 1: Communities, Planning and Policy*

### **Canadian Mountain Network NCE Proposal**

*Also included in Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems, and Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

Why Now? The establishment of a mountain network in Canada is overdue. Among the world's mountain states, Canada is conspicuously absent from international initiatives focused sustainable





mountain research, such as the UN Mountain Partnership (<http://www.fao.org/mountain-partnership/en/>). Canada does not have coherent approach for studying and managing our mountain environments, and while there are numerous initiatives (many small, a few large), these could collectively have a much greater impact if there was a national Network to advance and add-value to these efforts and align expertise to maximize the value of research investments. The Canadian Mountain Network has also adopted an approach to mountain research in Canada that recognizes the value of local knowledge to ensure small and Indigenous communities benefit from research and training opportunities. CMN activities will be co-designed and co-produced by and with Indigenous, municipal and regional partners, and the outcomes will be collaboratively implemented to provide new solutions to solve pressing practical problems, and facilitate decision-making and policy development. The CMN consortium is confident that now is the time to address the pressing research and practical questions that need to be answered in order to provide a robust basis for the future understanding and management of Canada's changing mountains. Fostering resilience, or the capacity to cope with uncertainty, requires an improved understanding of mountains in all their complexity, and the development and application of relevant knowledge, capacity, tools and policy. Inherently interdisciplinary, mountain research must integrate diverse perspectives including those of the sciences and humanities, and from indigenous and local peoples. Collaborations with already enormous investments in water (CFREF) and biodiversity (CFREF) research will be tapped to avoid overlap and maximize leveraging of available program funding and resources. Designed to be flexible enough to expand its research scope, the CMN will support new research and undertaking the critical tasks of synthesizing knowledge across disciplines and sectors, while supporting knowledge translation and mobilization that responds to community needs, priorities, and initiatives.

### *Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems*

#### **Alberta Parks Science Strategy Review**

The Alberta Parks' Division Science Strategy was initially adopted in 2009, and set out a range of outcomes, objectives, and priorities in order to foster the integration of science into Parks' management for social, ecological, and economic benefit. Now almost 10 years old, progress has been made in a number of areas, including the identification of both regional and provincial research and policy priorities, the establishment of research centres, improved integration with the research community, and the creation of both frameworks and collaborations to support indicator development and innovative monitoring structures. At the same time that this progress should be seen as a marker of success, it also points to the continuing need to further examine, refine, and structure the ways in which social, natural, and applied science can, do, and should inform the management, operations, and evaluation of Alberta Parks and protected areas.



**Project Description:** The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (located at the University of Alberta) and its affiliates (faculty and staff) will undertake a review and revision of the 2009 Science Strategy, with the completion of 5 key deliverables by March 15, 2019. These deliverables are:

- (a) a comparative scan, assessment, and synthesis of similar provincial and federal strategies from most-similar organizations (eg. Parks Canada, U.S. National Parks Service, etc);
- (b) a policy design-based and performance-based assessment and review of the existing strategy (including consultations linked with recent Innovation Fund and SSHRC Partnership Development Grants, linkage to protected area management effectiveness processes);
- (c) completion of a province-wide survey to assess capacity for, and barriers to, evidence-based decision-making in protected areas and Alberta Parks (see Lemieux et al 2018)
- (d) a new (draft) science strategy for review, revision, and adoption at both provincial and regional levels within Alberta; and
- (e) Recommendations for operational and implementation reforms to facilitate (d) and adoption of the Strategy (to be included as an appendix to (d)); recommendations on ‘conditions for success’.

### *Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

#### **The Challenge of Successfully Integrating Refugees in Rural and Small-Town Canadian Communities**

Funding Source: SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (w/C. Banack) – in development

Funding Amount: \$25,000

Description

This SSHRC Engage Grant proposes to address a subject of great concern to the Camrose Refugee Centre (and countless other such groups located in small towns throughout Canada) as well as one that is wholly understudied academically by asking: what are the specific challenges small towns and rural municipalities face when working towards the successful integration of refugees, and what are the best practices for addressing these challenges going forward? This project will entail a research partnership between the Camrose Messiah Lutheran Church and two research centres housed at the Camrose Campus of the University of Alberta that are uniquely positioned to conduct this type of inquiry: the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities and the Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life.

#### **Understanding and Responding to Intolerance in Rural Canada**

Funding Source: SSHRC Connection Grant (under revision)

Funding Amount: \$26,000

Project lead: Clark Banack

Role of ACSRC: Co-applicant



Project Dates: TBC

Description:

In Canada, patterns of extreme right-wing movements that express nativist and xenophobic sentiments are emerging: "hate group" activity and incidents of "hate crimes" are increasing, while levels of popular support for immigrants, refugees, and religious minorities weaken. Minorities are often especially vulnerable in rural contexts due to their heightened visibility, the lack of cultural competencies among service providers, and a general lack of victim support services.

To what degree does intolerant and xenophobic civic discourse exist in rural Canada? At whom is such intolerant discourse most likely to be directed? How active are "hate groups" in rural Canada compared to the rural United States or parts of rural Western Europe? And what role do two institutions central to the lived experiences of most rural citizens, rural schools and rural religious organizations, play with respect to either enabling or disabling this intolerant discourse in particular rural communities in Canada? We simply do not have detailed answers to such questions.

This project presents a series of Connection and Outreach events respond to this particular gap in our knowledge. The events will bring a group of 17 interdisciplinary scholars from across North America and Europe who possess the expertise required to facilitate further research into the levels and characteristics of intolerance in rural communities in Canada and the potential for formal programming at the level of both public schools and private religious organizations in rural settings to address and counter this intolerance. Events will take place in May and November 2018 at Augustana Campus, Sept 2018 held at the University of Guelph, and January 2019 at the University of New Brunswick's Fredericton Campus.

## Newly Awarded Grants and Projects

*Pillar 1: Communities, Planning and Policy*

*The ECHO Network (Environment, Community, Health Observatory): Strengthening Intersectoral Capacity to Understand and Respond to Health Impacts of Resource Development*

*Also included in Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems*

Funding Source: CIHR

Funding Amount: \$2,083,753

ACSRC Budget: \$279,000

Project lead: M. Parkes

Role of ACSRC: The ACSRC is the rural and Alberta hub for the ECHO activities (hub in each member province). L. Hallstrom is one of four principal applicants.

Project Dates: 2016-2021

Description:

Health is influenced by resource development through interrelated socioeconomic, ecological, cultural, and political pathways, which demand upstream, intersectoral responses. These relationships are



especially important in Canada, where the economy remains tightly coupled with the development of natural resources and where the rate and scale of social and environmental change occurring in resource-rich regions is fueling debate regarding health impacts, especially for rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

Our project, titled "The ECHO Network (Environment, Community, Health Observatory): Strengthening intersectoral capacity to understand and respond to health impacts of resource development", aims to: (1) make evidence-based recommendations on the form and function of a cross-jurisdictional ECHO that will foster understanding of the complex dynamics of resource development and health, and; (2) trial and evaluate intersectoral strategies to address the cumulative determinants of health that interact over time and space, targeting actions and responses that cannot be achieved by the health sector alone.

The ECHO Network team has several key features: (1) our research team is informed by experienced health, environmental and social science researchers; (2) the research program is also anchored in four regional cases (New Brunswick, Alberta, British Columbia and Northern BC). In each regional case, knowledge-users have identified decision-support needs or issues that demand a better integration of environment, community and health impacts. The ECHO will provide a platform of integrative tools and processes that connect people to a network of information, practices and people in order to develop a shared perspective and more effective responses to the cumulative impacts of resource development. The research will involve four components, each linked to specific objectives, mentorship and capacity building processes over five years.

#### *Intersectoral Collaboration (Jasper Collaborative Team)*

Funding Source: Policy Wise Grant

Funding Amount: \$40,000

Project lead: Jill Konkin

Role of ACSRC: Co-Principal Investigator

Project Dates: September 1 2017 – September 1 2019

Description:

Inspired by the eight principles of the Canadian population health approach, healthcare and social services professionals in Jasper, AB began a paradigm shift fifteen years ago by setting up an intersectoral collaboration (IC) for community development through the implementation of the Jasper Collaborative Team (JCT). This collaboration now includes 36 partners. Jasper's model is one of the earliest ICs developed in Canada. It is the most comprehensive and enduring IC known worldwide. The focus of the Jasper IC is on wellness in all age groups in the community. To this end, the community delivery model is inclusive of acute and chronic care along with health promotion, maternal and child health, teen and senior health, and care of vulnerable populations.

Other communities have expressed interest in adopting the Jasper model. However, they require evidence from a systematic evaluation of long-term functionality and details of the developmental and implementation processes, and outcomes to take the next step. An earlier grant allowed for Stage 1 of this evaluation process to take place. Stage one (held in 2012 and 2013) helped identify validated





instruments to use in stage 2 of the evaluation process. Stage 2 (the subject of this grant proposal) of our evaluation will contribute knowledge to the theory and practice of intersectoral collaboration and has the potential to both inspire and inform other community collaborations in rural Alberta, if not across Canada.

#### *Rural Governance Research Network*

Funding Source: RPLC Network Grant

Funding Amount: \$20,000

Project lead: Work Groups not developed yet.

Role of ACSRC: unknown

Project Dates: 2017-

Description: A revised network based on the new SSHRC Guidelines.

#### *Rural Research Centres Research Network*

Funding Source: RPLC Network Grant

Funding Amount: \$20,000

Project lead: Work Groups not developed yet.

Role of ACSRC: unknown

Project Dates: 2017-

Description: A revised network based on the new SSHRC Guidelines.

#### *Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems*

##### **Knowledge Mobilization and Parks**

Funding Source: SSHRC Partnership Development Grant

Funding Amount: \$200,000

Additional Partnership Funding: \$232,587

Project lead: Elizabeth Halpenny

Role of ACSRC: Co-applicant

Project Dates: 2018-2020

Description:

Parks are considered one of the most effective approaches for protecting key ecological processes and slowing biodiversity loss. Ecological integrity and resilient planetary ecosystems are essential for supporting human life. However, parks play other essential roles such as provision of fresh water and source material for biomedical innovation; mitigation of the effects of climate change by reducing the impacts of disease migration, droughts and storm events; and delivery of restorative and developmental benefits to humans.



To ensure that parks can effectively accomplish these tasks, park managers need up-to-date, relevant, and rigorous information. Evidence-based management is a popular phrase currently employed by politicians and practitioners; however, access to 'evidence,' be it provided by social and natural scientists or local and Indigenous peoples, is an ongoing challenge. In the parks world, efforts related to knowledge mobilization (KM), or moving knowledge into active service, have largely focused on (a) using natural science research, and (b) achieving nature conservation rather than other park mandates such as the provision of recreation, social equity, and economic opportunities. Park agencies and other conservation organizations now realize that understanding how social forces affect and are affected by park management are as important as knowledge of natural systems.

Parks and protected areas are chronically underfunded arms of the public sector, thus lacking sufficient resources to engage in KM. Other public sectors, such as health, have leveraged their greater access to public funding to build sophisticated KM approaches, including research partnerships with universities. Globally, most park agencies have little capacity to produce in-house social science or ecological research, or conduct meaningful knowledge exchange with Indigenous and local communities. Thus strategic investment is needed to enhance park-related KM.

With the realization that park-related KM is needed for effective park management, and that human factors have been neglected, the goal of this project is *to enhance the generation and use of knowledge, especially social science, local and Indigenous knowledge, for parks and protected areas policy, planning, and management*. By extending established park agency-researcher relationships and creating new connections, this project will create a multidisciplinary, inter-institutional, cross-sectoral partnership to elevate park-related KM in Canada and globally.

To address the above goal we propose a series of activities. Research will include (a) systematic reviews of research literature, (b) surveys of conservation agency staff, and (c) case studies in AB, ON, BC, and the Yukon. 'Connections' activities will include (d) knowledge translation skills-building workshops for scholars, (e) review of park agency social science policy, (f) KM training for park personnel, (g) the creation of a Parks Research Network, and (h) exchange of ideas via conferences, workshops, articles, and electronic media.

## Continuing Grants

### *Pillar 1: Community, Planning and Policy*

#### *Boom/Bust in Canada: Tempering Canadian Experiences of Resource Dependency*

Funding Source: Cluster Grant

Project Lead: Leith Deacon

Role of the ACSRC: Co-Applicant

Funding Amount: \$ 81,322.00

Project Dates: April 2017 to April 2019



**Description:**

The central research goal is to examine the concept of resiliency within the context of RBCs to address the problematic relationship(s) between resource reliance, community well-being, and adaptive capacity. This will be addressed by using the Municipality of St. John's, NL, The Municipality of Yellowknife, NT and Yellowknife's Dene First Nation, NT as 'regional hubs' to begin to develop case studies to examine resource dependency in Eastern and Northern Canada. Using a series of qualitative semi-structured interviews, there are three objectives.

1. Theoretical: to investigate how an RBC that has been experiencing rapid growth (or decline) is able to adapt, prepare for, and become resilient to change (e.g. decreasing oil prices).
2. Practical: to work with the communities of St. John's, Yellowknife, and Yellowknives Dene First Nation to identify additional case study communities to conduct qualitative interviews to understand areas of resident concern to inform municipal policy to help ensure long-term resiliency of the community.
3. Empirical: to gain experience and understanding of RBCs in order to develop an 'online toolbox' of advice, experiences, and stories as a resource that is publicly and freely accessible to enable RBCs to improve their own resiliency, and in turn, the overall resiliency of the Canadian economy.

*Rural Policy Learning Commons Building Rural Policy through International Comparative Analysis*

Funding Source: SSHRC Partnership Grant

Funding Amount: \$2,493,435

Project lead: William Reimer, Brandon University

Role of ACSRC: Co-applicant, Member of the steering committee

Project Dates: 2014-2020

Description: Designing and implementing policy for rural and northern regions has long been a contentious issue, particularly since the challenges are variable and complex. Remote locations, lower populations, and place-based identities that characterize these regions create unique challenges compared with urban centres. The Rural Policy Learning Commons (RPLC) is designed to meet these challenges by networking international scholars with policy-makers and citizens -- in a manner that will expand and nurture future generations of policy analysts and practitioners. We will add to existing research knowledge, increase the opportunity for partners to exchange insights, build a cohort of highly qualified policy analysts, mobilize knowledge to the wider population, and increase our collective capacity to develop appropriate policy for rural and northern conditions.

The RPLC builds on these activities by adding research, exchanges, institutes, policy form, distance learning activities, and social media such as webinars and blogs to generate new policy insights and strengthen comparative research collaboration among faculty, students, practitioners, and policy-makers. Research and policy activities within the RPLC are guided by critically examining and advancing comparative policy analyses as applied to pressing rural and northern policy challenges and



opportunities such as climate change, food security, immigration and labour, natural resource development, and telecommunications.

### *Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

#### *Building Mental Health Resiliency for a Sustainable Campus Community*

Funding Source: University of Alberta Sustainability Enhancement Fund

Funding Amount: \$26,963

Role of ACSRC: Project Lead

Project Dates: 2017-2019

Description:

“Building Mental Health Resiliency for a Sustainable Campus Community” is a pilot project that is the first step to systematically understanding and supporting the mental health and wellness of students attending the University of Alberta, Augustana Campus and in rural communities more broadly at the high school level.. The long-term goal of this project is find innovative ways to decrease the prevalence of stress, anxiety and depression in undergraduate students, including the upstream factors that precede moving into post-secondary education.. As a first step to achieving this long term goal, the project will use an adapted health promotion model PRECEDE/PROCEDE (‘PRECEDE’ Predisposing, Reinforcing, and Enabling Constructs in Educational/Environmental Diagnosis and Evaluation and ‘PROCEED’ Policy, Regulatory, and Organizational Constructs in Educational and Environmental Development) to identify predisposing, enabling and reinforcing factors that may determine and influence mental health resiliency in the student population.

Expected outcomes include: 1) a systematic methodology for the identification of and increased knowledge of mental health resilience; 2) programming resources for, and evaluation of, proximal and distal drivers of mental health and wellness at the University of Alberta; and 3) evaluated resources for strategies to improve mental health and resilience at the undergraduate level that respond and build upon 1 & 2.

### **Projects Completed in 2017**

#### *Pillar 1: Communities, Planning and Policy*

#### *Beyond Infrastructure: Strategies to Support Adoption and Realize Benefits of Broadband in Rural Canada*

Funding Source: SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis Grants

Funding Amount: \$25,000

Role of ACSRC: Lead organization

Project Dates: 2017-2018

Description:





This research project aims to answer the question: "What programs and initiatives exist that effectively support broadband adoption in rural communities?" We aim to address the lack of comprehensive reviews of rural broadband adoption strategies by conducting a knowledge synthesis of the existing literature using a scoping review method. We will then organize the broadband programs and interventions included in our review based on their measured contribution to each of the seven community capitals (financial, political, social, human, cultural, natural, and built capital) to produce an investment guidebook for rural community decision makers. Our systematic and holistic approach to broadband research will provide sustainable recommendations for our academic and non-academic (i.e., rural residents, civil service employees) target audiences. We plan to facilitate opportunities for discussion amongst a diverse group of broadband stakeholders from across Canada during our project, including economic and community development coordinators, with the expectation that they will translate our work into meaningful action for their respective communities.

### *Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

#### *Human Rights Knowledge in Albertan Youth: Research Project*

Funding Source: Cost recovery through The Open Door Society

Funding Amount: \$4,000.00

Project partner: The Open Door Society

Role of ACSRC: Partner, design research methodologies

Project Dates: Summer 2017

Description:

This project examines youth understanding and knowledge of their human rights and how to best communicate these rights to youth. The goal is to create a rural roadmap for youth and human rights. The survey was completed in October of 2017.

#### *The Role of Parks and Natural Places in Rural Palliative Care: Experiences and Processes for Parks Engagement*

Funding Source: ACSRC is funder as lead organization within the Social Science Framework

Project Lead: Sonya Jakubec, Mount Royal University

Funding Amount: \$4,590.00

Project Dates: October 31, 2016 to October 31, 2017

Description:

Alberta Parks and Alberta Health Services (AHS) are interested in understanding how to better provide access for all those wishing to experience nature. With little data or collective understanding about the practical issues of rural palliative patient experiences of engaging with nature, a pilot exploration of the topic is required and an exploratory action approach is being taken in this study. This study aims to develop an understanding of what constitutes practical and meaningful engagement with parks for those receiving palliative care in rural communities, people who often have a deep affinity with the natural environment though may experience limited access to adapted transportation to get to parks.



Alongside developing a menu of experiences and processes for parks engagement for those receiving palliative care and their caregivers, this study will provide a pragmatic and participatory exploration of the barriers, and benefits perceived by the palliative patient, their caregivers as well as palliative care and parks management networks and volunteers.

## ACSRC Affiliated Grants Completed in 2017

### *Pillar 1: Communities, Planning and Policy*

*Intersections of Sustainability. Collaborative Research Network on Water Governance, Climate Change and Traditional Communities*

*Also included in Pillar 2: Communities and Ecosystems, and Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

Funding Source: KIAS Cluster Grant

Funding Amount: \$100,000

Project lead: M. Stewart-Harawira

Role of ACSRC: Lars has stepped back due to scheduling conflicts.

Project Dates: May 2015 - November 2017

Description:

This project establishes a collaborative transdisciplinary research network centered at the University of Alberta with a specific focus on the intersection of water governance, climate change, land development and the perspectives of rural and Indigenous communities. Objectives for the next three years are: 1) To identify new research questions that directly address societal challenges and opportunities; 2) To identify key applied/social/natural scientists to support the core social science research of the team; 3) To gain better understandings of the complex barriers, contradictions and tensions that confront communities in five overlapping areas: energy, land development, water quality and management, climate change, development models, and futures modeling; 4) To engage with community service learning agencies and the Faculty of Extension in developing programs for the training and mentoring of citizen scientists, and to train and mentor graduate students and new and emerging researchers; 5) To contribute to the development of new theories of change.

The parameters of this project during this period will be the Athabasca watershed, from the glacier to river, to the delta and to the Arctic. These parameters allow for interjurisdictional possibilities and takes into account overlapping geographical and civic boundaries in examining the processes and effects of change. This project led to a SSHRC PG LOI (PI – Makere Stewart-Harawira) in the early spring of 2018.

### *Pillar 3: Communities and Society*

*Navigation Partnerships: Connecting, Accessing, Resourcing and Engaging (N-CARE) Older Persons, Families and Communities*

Funding Source: Covenant Health Network for Excellence in Seniors Health and Wellness

Funding Amount: \$170,997



Project lead: W. Duggleby and B. Pesut

Role of ACSRC: Co-Applicant regarding methods and rural context; Camrose is a pilot site.

Project Dates: December 2015 to November 2017

Description:

An innovative patient-centered approach to improve the quality of life of older rural persons with advanced chronic illness has been developed to provide navigation services where specially trained volunteer navigators (in partnership with health care providers) advocate, facilitate community connections, coordinate access to services and resources, and promote active engagement of older adults with their community. This approach, developed by the research team led by Duggleby and Pesut is called Navigation Partnerships: Connecting, Accessing, Resourcing, and Engaging (N-CARE).

This project aims to work in partnership with Covenant Health Rural Care leaders and seniors to implement and evaluate N-CARE in Camrose and Killam, Alberta. The project research questions are: 1) what is the feasibility and acceptability of N-CARE with participants including community leaders? 2) what are contextual factors that hinder or facilitate the implementation of N-CARE? 3) what is the impact of N-CARE on increasing access to resources for older adults and their family caregivers; older adult and family satisfaction with N-CARE and quality of life, and volunteer and health care provider navigation self-efficacy and satisfaction?, 4) what is the cost of N-CARE? and 5) what is the best way to sustain and disseminate N-CARE within the Alberta health care system?



CENTRE OPERATIONS

Staff

Director: Lars K. Hallström, PhD.

Administrative/ Research staff and seasonal FTE

FTE based on a 35 hour work week	Summer 2017 FTE	# of staff (summer) 2017	Fall 2017 FTE	# of staff (fall) 2017	Winter 2018 FTE	# of staff (winter) 2018	Summer 2018 FTE	# of staff (summer) 2018
Director (0.6FTE)	0.6	1	0.6	1	0.6	1	0.6	1
Research Assistants	3.6	5	2.78	8	2.55	6	1.71	3
Event Coordinator	0.4	1	0.14	1				
Executive Assistant	.71	1	.71	1	.50	1	.50	1
CSL Students								
Research Associate			0.34	1	0.34	1	.34	1
Total Complement	5.31	8	4.57	12	3.99	9	3.1	6

**Summer 2017 (May 1 – August 31)**

Carole Preston – Executive Assistant  
 Landon Redelback – Research Assistant  
 Kachuri Rook – Research Assistant  
 Trish Macklin – Event Coordinator, Project Coordinator/Report Writing  
 Madison Pearson – Research Assistant  
 Nathanael Skagen – Research Assistant  
 April Heinrich – Research Assistant

**Fall 2017/Winter 2018 (Aug 31 – Dec 4; Jan 3 – April 11)**

Carole Preston- Executive Assistant  
 Teresa Callihoo – Executive Assistant  
 Kachuri Rook – Research Assistant  
 Trish Macklin – Event Coordinator  
 Landon Redelbeck – Research Assistant  
 April Heinrich – Research Assistant





Nathanael Skagen - Research Assistant  
Madison Pearson – Research Assistant  
Dareskedar Amsalu – Research Assistant  
Lauren Grosky – Research Assistant  
Clark Banack – Research Associate

**May 2018**

Darekedar Amsalu – Research Assistant  
April Heinrich – Research Assistant  
Landon Redelbach – Research Assistant  
Clark Banack, PhD. – Research Associate

**Communications/Marketing**

**Website:**

In this past year the website had 2090 unique visitors to the site.

**Newsletter:**

Since October 2015, the ACSRC has replaced its bi-annual paper newsletter with a monthly online newsletter. The newsletter currently has 859 subscribers.

Subscribers: 859

Open rate: 35%-50%

**Marketing:**

The ACSRC supports a select number of events and organizations that have a related mission and vision through monetary and/or in-kind sponsorship for marketing purposes.

In 2017, the ACSRC provided support to:

Rose City Roots, Camrose, Alberta (Value \$500)



## ACSRC OUTPUTS

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### Presentations

1. “Rural Broadband Programming beyond Infrastructure” SSHRC Connections Policy Workshop “Imagining Canada’s Future” Ottawa, ON. May 18, 2017
2. “The Battle River Watershed Alliance and ACSRC – An ECHO Hub” Knowledge to Action Weblogue (w/S. Skinner) May 25, 2017
3. “Revising the MGA, Jurisdictional Reform and Health Implications in Alberta” presentation to the Alberta Health System Population and Public Health Leaders Committee. June 7, 2017
4. Conference organizer and host, Rural Alberta Innovation Learning Commons. Olds College, Olds, AB. Sept. 2017.
5. “Why would youth want to live here” presentation w/T. Boast Radley at the Rural Alberta Innovation and Learning Commons, Olds College. Sept. 2017.
6. “Grant Writing Workshop” for rural communities. Pre-conference session at the 2017 Rural Alberta Innovation and Learning Commons. Olds, Sept. 2017.
7. “A Path Analysis Method to Inform and Support Rural Youth Engagement Initiatives” presentation at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation. Nelson, BC. Sept. 2017
8. “Global Perspectives on Programmatic Solutions to Bridging the Digital Divide” presentation at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation. Nelson, BC. Sept. 2017
9. “The Strategy Roadmap for Rural Youth Engagement” presentation at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation. Nelson, BC. Sept. 2017
10. Invited panelist, “Rural Initiatives for LGBTQ2S+ Communities in Rural Alberta” Status of Queer Conference – Rural Alberta Queer and Trans Conference. Camrose, AB. Oct 14, 2017
11. “Continuing Care in rural Northern Alberta” w/ S. Woodhead Lyons and E. Dymchuk presented at the Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) Winnipeg, MB. Oct. 19-21, 2017.
12. “Beyond Infrastructure: Strategies to Support Adoption and Realize Benefits of Broadband in Rural Canada” presented at the SSHRC 2017 Knowledge Summit. Ottawa, ON. Nov. 16, 2017
13. Keynote address, “The State of Rural Alberta: Where is it going?” Rural Gas Management AGM, Feb 21, 2018



14. “Regional Collaboration for Success” at the Workshop on Regional Centres and the Sustainability of Canada's Rural and Northern Landscapes May 10-11, 2018 at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay (presented by T. Macklin)

## Publications

1. “Employer Perspectives on Youth Employability in Rural Areas” in *Observatoire Jeunes et Société Newsletter* (Spring 2017) <http://www.obsjeunes.qc.ca/bulletins/>
2. “Rural Sustainability Plans in Canada: An analysis of Structure, Content and Influence” w/ G. Hvenegaard, J. Stonechild & N. Dipa in *Journal of Rural Studies* Vol. 56, November 2017. 132-142.

## Augustana Extended Education: Rural Outreach Courses

Augustana Extended Education (AEE) is the professional development provider of the U of A - Augustana Campus. Since its launch just three years ago, AEE has provided advanced education and training to over 300 elected officials, municipal administrators, NGO staff, economic development officers, rural planners, and community leaders from 63 rural Alberta communities. In addition, it has generated \$148,400 in revenue for the university.

2017-18 activities included:

- AEE’s flagship program, Sustainability 101 and the Certificate in Rural Sustainability, examines key features for building sustainable rural communities. Instructed in part by Augustana faculty Dr. William Foster, Dr. Lars Hallström, and Dr. Glen Hvenegaard, this program was offered for the fourth time due to high demand.
  - Dr. Lars Hallström delivered two sold out Grant Writing Workshops at Augustana, and another in Rimbey, AB.
  - AEE launched a new certificate program, Advanced Municipal Leadership. Developed and delivered by Doug Griffiths, best-selling co-author of *13 Ways to Kill Your Community*, this series of six, one-day short courses explores ‘Roles & Responsibilities’, ‘Strategic Leadership’, ‘Communication & Engagement’, ‘Planning & Action’, ‘Municipal Collaboration’, and ‘Change Management’.
1. Lars Hallstrom, Grant Writing, Rimbey, Alberta, June 14, 2017.
  2. Lars Hallstrom, Grant Writing, Augustana Campus , November 29, 2017.
  3. Lars Hallstrom Governance for Sustainability, Sustainability 101, Augustana Campus, December 6, 2017.
  4. Lars Hallstrom, Grant Writing, Cremona, Alberta, April 14, 2018.
  5. Lars Hallstrom, Grant Writing, Lloydminster, AB, May 12, 2018.
  6. Lars Hallstrom, Grant Writing, Augustana Campus , May 16, 2018.



## SERVICE

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Provost's Academic Advisory Council for Sustainability (2017-18)

*The Director Chaired this committee.*

Provost's Academic Team for Sustainability Initiatives (2016-18)

*The Director sits on this committee.*

FPG Performance Indicators Advisory Group (2016-17)

*The Director sits on this committee.*

"For the Public Good" Institutional Planning Advisory Committee (2016-17)

*The Director sits on this committee.*

Augustana Miquelon Lake Research Station Advisory Committee (2015 – present)

*The Director sits on this committee.*

Augustana Extended Education Committee (2014 – present)

*The Director sits on this committee.*

Rural Policy Learning Commons Evaluation Committee April 2014-present

*The Director sits on this committee.*

Community Needs Driven Research Network for Continuing Care in Alberta (2012-present)

*The Director assists with the identification of issues, challenges, practices with insufficient formal evidence, and areas that need information to inform practice in continuing care.*

Rural Alberta Business Centre (Camrose) Advisory Committee (2012 – present)

*The Director sits on this Committee.*

Community wide response to sexual assault (April 2017 – present)

The ACSRC is taking an organizational lead to develop a community wide response to sexual assault in Camrose. The project is partnered with the University of Alberta, Augustana Campus and the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services. This project is in the beginning phases of planning.





## Partnerships

### University of Alberta Partnerships

#### *Augustana Faculty*

Glen Hvenegaard, Professor, Environmental Science and Geography

Karsten Mündel, Director, Learning and Beyond & Professor, Global and Development Studies

Bill Foster, Associate Professor, Management

Jane Yardley, Assistant Professor, Physical Education

Rebecca Purc-Stephenson, Associate Professor, Psychology

#### *Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences*

John Parkins, Professor, Dept. of Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology (REES)

William Shotyk, Professor & Bocock Chair, Dept. of Renewable Resources

Debra Davidson, Professor, Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology

Brent Swallow, Professor, Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology

#### *Extension*

Mary Beckie, Associate Professor, Government Studies

Kevin Jones, Research Director City-Region Studies Centre

Kristof Van Assche, Professor, Planning, Governance and Development

Monica Gruezmacher, Adjunct Professor, Natural Resources and Development

Rob McMahon, Assistant Professor, Community Engagement

#### *Nursing*

Wendy Duggleby, Professor, Endowed Nursing Research Chair in Aging and Quality of Life

#### *Physical Education and Recreation*

Elizabeth Halpenny, Associate Professor, Physical Education and Recreation

Howie Harshaw, Professor, Physical Education and Recreation

#### *Science*

Robert Summers, Assistant Professor, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences

Leith Deacon, Environmental Planner, Development of Remote Communities



Sandeep Agrawal, Professor and Inaugural Director Planning Program, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

*Institute for Continuing Care Education and Research (ICCER)*

Sandra Woodhead Lyons, Executive Director

*Arts*

Andie Palmer, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Sourayan Mookerjea, Associate Professor, Sociology

*Law*

Cameron Jefferies, Assistant Professor, Law Faculty

*Engineering*

Evan Davies, Associate Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

*Education*

Dr Makere Stewart-Harawira, Professor, Department of Educational Policy Studies

Michael McNally, Assistant Professor, School of Library and Information Studies

*School of Public Health*

Nick Ashbolt, Professor, School of Public Health



## Financial Report:

Op+A1:F28en Projects	Project Dates	Total Award/Revenues	2017-18 Revenues	2017-18 Expenditures	Year End
RAIL Commons	2017-2019	\$ 73,343.00	\$ 73,343.00	\$ 44,643.00	\$ 28,700.00
UofA SEF	2017-2019	\$ 26,963.00	\$ 26,963.00	\$ 10,072.00	\$ 16,891.00
ECHO Node	2016-2021	\$ 277,591.00	\$ 74,900.00	\$ 46,459.72	\$ 28,440.28
<b>Closed Projects</b>					
SSHRC KS	2017-2018	\$ 24,800.00	\$ 24,800.00	\$ 25,158.00	\$ 358.00
<b>Total ACSRC Project Funding</b>			<b>\$ 200,006.00</b>	<b>\$ 126,332.72</b>	<b>\$ 73,673.28</b>
<b>Affiliated Projects (Co-App)</b>					
CIHR ECHO	2016-2021	\$ 2,083,753.00	\$ 416,750.60		
SSHRC PG - RPLC	2015-2022	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 357,142.86		
NESH-W	2016-2018	\$ 170,997.00	\$ 85,498.50		
PolicyWise Grant	2018-2020	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 20,000.00		
SSHRC PDG - AB Parks	2018-2021	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 66,666.67		
OMAFRA Seniors Grant	2018-2021	\$ 144,000.00	NA		
<b>Total Project Funding</b>		<b>\$ 5,138,750.00</b>	<b>\$ 946,058.62</b>		
<b>Projects Under Review</b>					
OHS Futures Grant (co-app)	2018-2020	\$ 45,000.00			
AB Parks Science Strategy	2018-2019	\$ 30,000.00			
SSHRC Connections Grant	2018-2019	\$ 36,849.00			
SSHRC PG LOI (co-app)	2018	\$ 20,000.00			
NCE KM LOI (co-app)	2018	NA			
			<b>Augustana</b>	<b>ALES</b>	<b>External Revenue</b>
<b>Annual Operating Budget</b>			\$ 45,422.00	\$ 17,397.00	\$ 10,150.00
		<b>HR</b>	\$ 36,422.00	\$ 12,397.00	
		<b>Operations</b>	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
<b>Expenditures</b>					
		<b>Program Expenditures</b>	\$ 12,242.00		
		<b>HR Expenditures</b>	\$ 30,584.00	\$ 17,397.00	
		<b>Benefits</b>	\$ 10,151.00	\$ -	-
		<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$ 52,977.00	\$ 17,397.00	\$ 10,150.00
<b>Exp/Revenues</b>			<b>-\$ 7,555.00</b>	\$ -	<b>\$ 10,150.00</b>
<b>Year End</b>			<b>\$ 2,595.00</b>	\$ -	\$ -