

ARDN ANNUAL REPORT



Creating Rural Connections

July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

VISION:

A strong sustainable network that is the leading source of trusted rural development research and learning.

MISSION:

To create a model of rural community development through collaboration in research and learning.

MANDATE:

The Alberta Rural Development Network will use the combined expertise of Alberta's post-secondary institutions to support rural development in Alberta and help rural communities grow through learning.

Table of Contents

About the Alberta Rural Development Network.....	1
Message from the Board.....	2
Message from the Premier.....	4
Message from the Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Technology.....	5
Message from the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.....	6
Message from the Executive Director.....	7
ARDN Working Groups	8
ARDN Post-Secondary Member Map.....	9
Year in Review.....	10
Evaluation as a Support to Innovation.....	15
ARDN Facilitation Summary.....	16
ARDN Facilitated Research Projects.....	17
ARDN Facilitated Networking Events.....	19
ARDN Financial Statements.....	22
The Year Ahead.....	24

ABOUT THE ALBERTA RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) is a partnership of the 21 publicly-funded, publicly-governed post-secondary institutions in Alberta, working together to support and enhance rural development. These institutions have combined their expertise, ideas and resources to help sustain Alberta's rural way of life.

The value of this network is that it draws on the strengths of diverse organizations, gathers and conducts extensive research, and perhaps most importantly, has deep connections in all regions of the province.

ARDN focuses on four key areas:

RESEARCH: ARDN facilitates the creation of rural development research. It enables rural communities to access and apply research related to rural development conducted by post-secondary institutions and other researchers. This research is posted on the ARDN website along with an interactive forum for discussion and may be presented at public events and in the ARDN newsletter.

EDUCATION: Adult education and training are key to strengthening communities. ARDN post-secondary members contribute educational leadership in their regions. ARDN identifies gaps in rural education and training, and works with its members to ensure that these needs are addressed.

COLLABORATION: Post-secondary members engage in high quality, collaborative, accessible rural development research. The Network fosters and promotes opportunities for partnerships and where applicable, provides financial and other support for rural research projects.

NETWORKING: ARDN provides networking opportunities for community leaders, post-secondary researchers and staff, and others with a stake in rural development. The Network helps its post-secondary members establish or strengthen collaborative relationships with individuals, organizations and communities in rural Alberta.

ARDN became fully operational in 2009 when it received funding from Rural Alberta's Development Fund. These funds enabled ARDN to hire staff, establish an office in Sherwood Park, and begin a three year project to help strengthen rural communities through working with Alberta's post-secondary institutions.

Contact ARDN

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Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A 2H5**

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

The significant work of dedicated volunteers has brought the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) to where it is today. It was no easy task to bring all 21 public post-secondary institutions together to work on a common goal and project – the ARDN is a first for Alberta – and to reconcile the different educational culture each brings to the table. But during our three formative years, we were able to sort out our differences; formalize our commitment in a signed agreement; craft a shared vision, mission and mandate; prepare a business plan; and secure funding to turn the vision into reality.

It was a pleasure to have this volunteer service formally recognized by Rural Alberta's Development Fund at ARDN's first Annual General Meeting in Calgary in October 2009.

This annual report captures the highlights of ARDN's first full year of operation, a year where we hired staff to implement the business plan and set up an office as a base to meet and begin establishing a network of people, organizations and communities who care about rural development.

Our Board's strategic planning meeting in January 2010 enabled us to reaffirm the values and principles with which we started ARDN, and examine what we needed to change or adapt now that we are up and running. At ARDN's June Board meeting, chair Roger Epp stepped down; vice-chair Rick Neidig was elected interim chair.

Two significant achievements for ARDN during 2009-2010 were the formation of a team of post-secondary representatives (called key contacts) and the organization of ARDN's first conference, *Creating Rural Connections 2010*, held in Lethbridge in May 2010. The key contacts not only enable us to have more people active in ARDN's work, but they are able to connect at many levels with key staff and researchers within the post-secondary institutions. They have been a valuable addition.

This past year, ARDN developed support criteria and facilitated the first research projects and networking events in Spring 2010. Our challenge in the coming year is to sort out how we can engage the different research strengths, different understandings, and different cultures of our member institutions to make this core area of our work successful.

Many other initiatives are now well underway. We had a good start in creating awareness of ARDN in the first half of 2010, but still need to ramp up our communications to establish ARDN as the go-to organization for rural development research in Alberta. We need to encourage more active collaboration, connections with communities and exchange of rural research results.

After relying solely on a volunteer Board of Directors for ARDN's first three foundational years, we are fortunate to have the experienced leadership of our executive director and staff to focus their energies on making the Network grow and prosper. We have also established a process for self-assessment so that we know whether ARDN's work is effective and makes a difference. Over the next

year, we need to increase our profile and connect with rural communities to determine if we are offering what they need.

Thank you to all the current and former Board members who started and developed the Network, to the key contacts who are strengthening the bonds among post-secondary institutions and the rural communities they serve, to the researchers who have enthusiastically come forward with projects and presentations, and to the ARDN staff for their commitment and dedicated work. Together with the communities we serve, we will foster the education, research, networking and collaborating that will enable rural Alberta to grow and thrive.



Roger Epp, Chair
ARDN Board of Directors

2009-2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Roger Epp, University of Alberta - Augustana Campus

Vice-Chair: Rick Neidig, Northern Lakes College

Treasurer: Robert Woodrow, University of Calgary

Secretary: Gerry Paradis, Red Deer College

Director: Jason Dewling, Lakeland College

Director: Peter Leclair, Lethbridge College

Director: Wayne Shillington, NorQuest College

Director: Tom Thompson, Olds College

Executive Director: Dee Ann Benard, Alberta Rural Development Network

Left to Right



MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE ED STELMACH PREMIER OF ALBERTA



On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the second Annual General Meeting of the Alberta Rural Development Network.

I would like to congratulate the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) for providing an interactive forum to promote discussion and share information on rural development throughout the province. In just a few short years, ARDN has become one of the key places to go to network, share and exchange information and support rural development projects across Alberta.

Like the ARDN, the Government of Alberta remains committed to supporting our rural communities as they grow and diversify. Through the Rural Connections: Community Broadband Infrastructure Pilot Program and the Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program, more than \$17 million has been approved for rural communities to promote economic activity and to improve access to high-speed broadband services across the province.

I thank the Alberta Rural Development Network for their dedication in working together with Government and other rural stakeholders to ensure that Alberta's rural communities remain connected and informed as they grow into flourishing communities.

Best wishes for a productive and successful meeting.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed', written in a cursive style.

Ed Stelmach

October 14, 2010



Premier of Alberta



MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE DOUG HORNER DEPUTY PREMIER MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY



In Alberta, we're fortunate to have several industries that sustain our province, among them agriculture, forest industries and energy. These industries not only support jobs and our prosperity, they also reinforce the need for a dynamic post-secondary education and training system.

Through Campus Alberta, Albertans have that system, and benefit from a variety of options to participate in lifelong learning right in their own communities. They're supported by an education system in which learning providers collaborate to deliver quality and innovative learning opportunities, available to Albertans in all corners of the province.

The Alberta Rural Development Network plays an important part in Campus Alberta and both share a commitment to making Alberta's Post-secondary institutions an integral part of rural areas and rural life. Together, we can continue to create valuable links in communities among Campus Alberta, municipalities and business.

We are also looking forward to working with you as part of Alberta's newly created research system, Alberta Innovates. Launched this year, Alberta Innovates is designed to help great ideas flourish from everywhere across Alberta, from the smallest towns to the largest urban centres.

Campus Alberta and Alberta Innovates are helping propel Alberta into the next generation economy, and the Alberta Rural Development Network will continue to play an integral role in helping us prepare future generations of Albertans for success.

I look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen rural Alberta into 2010-11.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Horner".

Doug Horner,

Minister



ALBERTA
ADVANCED EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

*Deputy Premier
Office of the Minister*

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



As Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, I am pleased to extend my greetings to the members of the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).

Agriculture is the largest renewable industry in Alberta and it remains a valued and essential part of our economy. The face of agriculture has changed over the years as producers deal with challenges facing their industry. However by working together, we can manage these issues and move towards revitalizing our province's agricultural industry.

Rural roots run deep in our province and Alberta has grown from a foundation based on the rural way of life. Agriculture and rural living are intertwined and a revitalized agriculture industry will continue to assist and support our rural communities.

Rural Alberta has vibrant and sustainable communities where families, individuals, organizations, businesses and governments are vital contributors to the growth, prosperity and quality of life of Albertans. The Government of Alberta remains committed to supporting our rural communities as they grow and diversify.

Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF) was incorporated as a not-for-profit company in 2006 to fulfill a commitment by the Government of Alberta to support rural communities, regional alliances and organizations in kick starting projects that would contribute to the betterment of rural Alberta. RADF is a significant source of funding available to communities and organizations to advance innovative projects in rural communities.

The Rural Alberta's Development Fund has supported communities and organizations across the province with \$74 million in funding to a variety of different projects and initiatives. Over the next 18 months, RADF will be accepting applications to distribute the balance of its funds, approximately \$30 million.

I would like to thank the ARDN for their work in connecting like-minded individuals who share a passion for rural development in Alberta. Like the RADF, I hope to hear about your future successes as well.

Best wishes on a successful general meeting.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jack Hayden'.

Jack Hayden,
Minister



ALBERTA AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

*Honourable Jack Hayden
MLA, Drumheller-Stettler*

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The first full year of the Alberta Rural Development Network was truly exhilarating. I feel extremely proud and privileged to be the executive director of this progressive and vibrant organization. Serving to bridge the gap between our member post-secondaries and rural Alberta's citizens and community-based organizations is both challenging and rewarding. Finding new opportunities to bring these parties together to network, collaborate, conduct research, and access education and training is gratifying.

There have been numerous challenges throughout this foundation-building year. My first two tasks were assembling a small team of capable professionals and setting up an office. Developing relationships with ARDN Board members, our member key contacts, and community-based organizations was imperative to our success and time well-spent. Together, we created and branded ARDN, and this has gone a long way towards establishing our credibility and role in the world of Alberta rural development. *Creating Rural Connections 2010*, our successful first conference, caught the attention of academics, government representatives and most importantly, rural Albertans.

The support from our member institutions, and in particular, ARDN Board members and key contacts, has been phenomenal. The staff members at ARDN have worked exceptionally hard to turn ARDN vision into reality; aiming for a target that often moves is challenging, but we move forward as a team. I truly appreciate the time and effort contributed by so many people to help make ARDN's first year successful.



Left to right: Paul Watson, Melissa St. Dennis,
Dee Ann Benard, Joy Vonk

With a firm foundation under us, I anticipate that 2010/2011 will be a break-out year during which the ARDN will progress by leaps and bounds. I expect that we will facilitate many new community-driven, collaborative rural development projects, and host or facilitate a plethora of networking events that will produce yet another cycle of promising rural research projects. I look forward to an even more successful year, and everyone's continued support.

Best Regards,



Dee Ann Benard

ARDN Staff

Executive Director: Dee Ann Benard

Executive Assistant: Joy Vonk

Research Director: Paul Watson

Research Coordinator: Monica Kreiner

Communications Assistant: Melissa St. Dennis

ARDN WORKING GROUPS

Accountability & Reporting

Chair: Wayne Shillington, NorQuest College

Vice-Chair: Trent Keough, Portage College

Ex Officio: Dee Ann Benard, ARDN

ARDN Staff Member: Paul Watson

ARDN Staff Member: Monica Kreiner

Consultant: Leslie Ayre-Jaschke

Community & Institutional Engagements

Chair: Jason Dewling, Lakeland College

Vice-Chair: Lars Hallstrom, University of Alberta - Augustana Campus

Secretary: Dietmar Kennepohl, Athabasca University

Ex Officio: Dee Ann Benard, ARDN

ARDN Staff Member: Paul Watson

Research Advisory

Co-Chair: Roger Epp, University of Alberta - Augustana Campus

Co-Chairs: Tom Thompson/Bob Wilson, Olds College

Member: Trevor Davis, Mount Royal University

Member: Derek Gratz, Red Deer College

Ex Officio: Dee Ann Benard, ARDN

ARDN Staff Member: Paul Watson

Communications & Website

Chair: Rick Neidig, Northern Lakes College

Ex Officio: Dee Ann Benard, ARDN

ARDN Staff Member: Joy Vonk

ARDN Staff Member: Melissa St. Dennis

Consultant: Andrea Collins, ROI Communications

KEY CONTACTS

The Key Contacts are members of the Community & Institutional Engagements Team

Alberta College of Art + Design, Denise Mullen

Athabasca University, Dietmar Kennepohl

The Banff Centre, Keith Archer

Bow Valley College, Rena Shimoni

Grande Prairie Regional College,

Marg McCuaig-Boyd

Grant MacEwan University, John McGrath

Keyano College, Cindy Amerongen

Lakeland College, Jason Dewling

Lethbridge College, Karen O'Dwyer

Medicine Hat College, Cathy Crockford

Mount Royal University, Trevor Davis

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), Stuart Cullum

Northern Lakes College, Monica Kreiner

NorQuest College, Elaine Soetaert

Olds College, Dan Fullerton

Portage College, Trent Keough

Red Deer College, Derek Gratz

SAIT Polytechnic, Greg Michaud

University of Alberta - Augustana Campus, Lars Hallstrom

University of Calgary, Gary Libben

University of Lethbridge, Dan Weeks



"It's all about building relationships, and that is why ARDN is such a good fit for us. The Network marks the first time all 21 Alberta post-secondaries have worked together and our work should have an impact across the PSI system. We are truly pioneers." – Keith Archer, The Banff Centre

ARDN'S POST-SECONDARY MEMBERS

Alberta College of Art + Design

Athabasca University

The Banff Centre

Bow Valley College

Grande Prairie Regional College

Grant MacEwan University

Keyano College

Lakeland College

Lethbridge College

Medicine Hat College

Mount Royal University

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

NorQuest College

Northern Lakes College

Olds College

Portage College

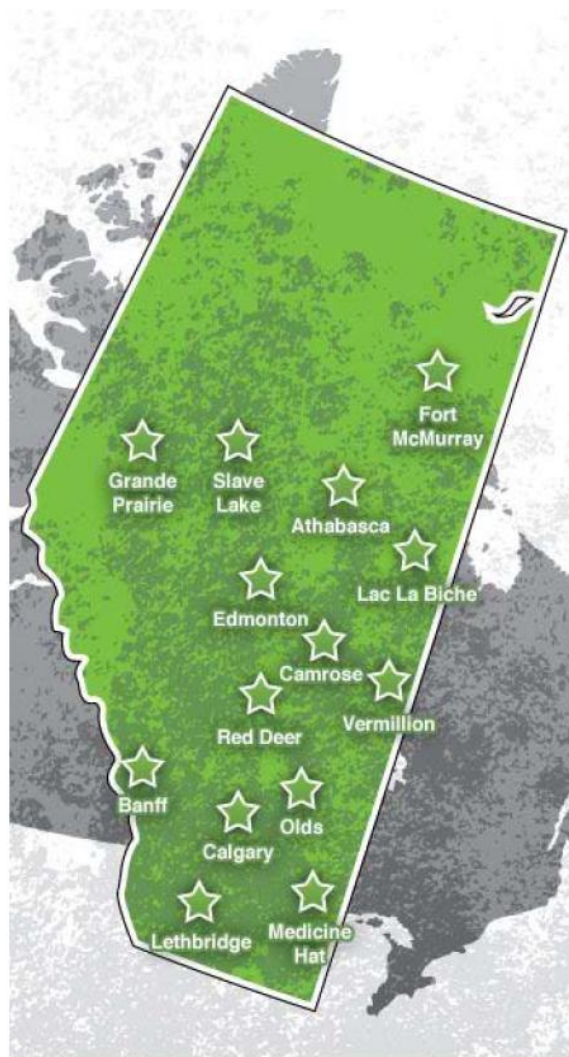
Red Deer College

SAIT Polytechnic

University of Alberta

University of Calgary

University of Lethbridge



YEAR IN REVIEW

How do you grow a community? You need a clear vision and goal, dedicated leadership, strategic planning, funding support and an infrastructure that provides resources for implementation. The same factors hold true for the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN).

Following three years of dedicated service by the ARDN Board of Directors to lay the foundation for the Network, the vision became reality in 2009-2010. After receiving \$5 million from Rural Alberta's Development Fund in Fall 2008, the fledgling organization was able to forge ahead.

On Solid Ground

Executive Director Dee Ann Benard was hired in April 2009 to set the wheels in motion. She hired Executive Assistant Joy Vonk in May 2009, and together they established an office in Sherwood Park. Research Director Paul Watson and part time Research Coordinator Monica Kreiner joined the staff in the Fall. The staff team works closely together to contribute ideas, develop and execute plans, and advance ARDN through a wide range of initiatives.



Clockwise from left: Joy Vonk, Paul Watson, Monica Kreiner, Dee Ann Benard

ARDN Working Groups

During this time, the Board of Directors was busy providing support and direction to the staff, and expanding to fulfill its objectives. Integral to this expansion was the formation of four working groups:

1. **Research Advisory Committee**, chaired by Roger Epp of the University of Alberta's Augustana Campus. This team's mandate is to be a catalyst for research on subjects relevant to Alberta's rural communities, produced by researchers in its member institutions and elsewhere.
2. **Accountability & Reporting Team**, chaired by Wayne Shillington of NorQuest College. This team's mandate is to assist with the development of accountability measures, periodic evaluation of progress, and reporting of results and impacts, both financial and otherwise.
3. **Communications & Website Team**, chaired by Rick Neidig of Northern Lakes College. This team's purpose is to assist with the development of the ARDN communications strategy and website.
4. **Community & Institutional Engagements Team**, chaired by Jason Dewling of Lakeland College. This team's purpose is to be the main liaison between institution members and ARDN; network and utilize contacts; identify strategic partnerships; and find ways to engage rural communities, partners and potential partners.

In 2009-2010, the ARDN Board and Research Advisory Committee worked with staff to develop criteria and a selection process for research projects.

The Accountability & Reporting Team worked with the executive director and a contractor to develop an accountability program based in part on outcome mapping (see page 15). Outcome mapping

focuses on a project's influence (both deliberate and unintended) during the project's progression, rather than on the direct deliverables.

The Communications & Website Team guided the development of promotional items, an e-newsletter and website in Fall 2009. In late November, a communications consultant, Andrea Collins, was contracted to work with ARDN on an on-going basis. Collins worked with the team chair and ARDN executive director to develop ARDN's first communications plan, presented to and approved by the Board in January 2010.



Rick Neidig & Dee Ann Benard

The Community and Institutional Engagements Team, formed in Summer 2009, has representation from all 21 post-secondary institution (PSI) partners. They helped guide the development of ARDN's first conference, *Creating Rural Connections 2010*, held in May 2010, and made recommendations on facilitating rural research. In July 2009, ARDN contracted consultant Leslie Ayre-Jaschke to assist with accountability and reporting.

Annual General Meeting

The first ARDN Annual Report was prepared and released at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at SAIT Polytechnic in Calgary on October 8, 2009. In addition to the AGM's formal business, there was a presentation by Ishbel Munro, executive director of Coastal Communities Network in Nova Scotia, who spoke about her organization and the positive impact of their Rural Communities Impacting Policy Project.

One highlight of the AGM was the presentation of a certificate by Rural Alberta's Development Fund Chair Bob Clark to ARDN's Chair Roger Epp in recognition of ARDN's commitment to collaboration, growth and improved quality of life in rural Alberta.



ARND's AGM - Left to right: Terry Keyko (RADF managing director), Rick Neidig (ARND vice-chair), Roger Epp (ARND chair), Bob Clark (RADF chair), Dee Ann Benard (ARND executive director), and Robert Woodrow (ARND secretary/treasurer)

Branding



In Winter 2010, a slogan and key messages were crafted and integrated into stationery items, a presentation folder, a brochure and flip card, three displays, a newsletter article, web text for post-secondary institution links, a news release, and a completely redeveloped website. At the same time, materials for the May conference were also under development; they included a brochure, a poster, a series of news releases and newsletter stories, and newspaper and radio advertising. Key materials were packaged for a major mailing sent to PSIs for distribution in March 2010; the new website was launched in April. In May, ARDN hired a communications assistant through the STEP program. Melissa St. Dennis will work full time in Summer 2010 and part time during the coming year.

Research

ARDN categorizes rural research into 13 broad topic areas (see page 16), and seeks out research projects to highlight on the ARDN website. Project descriptions are converted into plain language summaries and put on a searchable database on the ARDN website. Each project has its own forum for discussion. As of June 30, the forum had 84 projects and 79 participants.

ARDN Supported Projects and Events

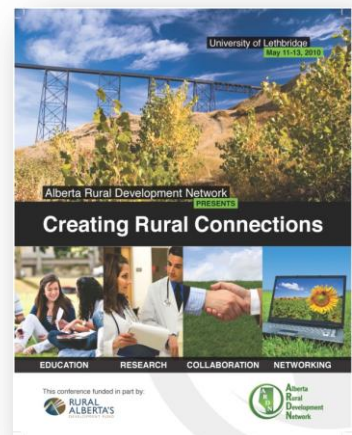
In Spring 2010, 12 projects from nine PSIs received up to \$10,000. A list of these projects is found on pages 17 and 18. Ten applications for research projects over \$10,000 were received and will be reviewed later in 2010.

During the same period, ARDN approved support for 14 networking events organized by seven member PSIs. Two of these events were held in June 2010: Outcome Mapping Orientation at NorQuest College in Edmonton and SimuNation (patient simulation education) at SAIT in Calgary. The remaining events will take place in Fall 2010. The complete list is found on pages 19 to 21.

A total of \$228,325 was invested in fiscal 2009-2010.

Creating Rural Connections 2010 Conference

ARDN planned and organized its first major conference, which was held May 11 to 13, 2010, at the University of Lethbridge. A call for presenters went out in January 2010 and received a huge response from researchers and others involved with rural development programs and projects. There were 47 presentations selected for keynote, concurrent and poster sessions on topics ranging from sustainable rural living to quality of life, governance and leadership to renewable energy and agriculture.



Keynote speakers included Mark Anielski, author of *The Economics of Happiness*; Roger Gibbins, president and CEO of Canada West Foundation; Doug Griffiths, MLA Battle River-Wainwright; Donna Finley, principal of Framework Partners Inc. and Ed Martsolf from Arkansas who spoke about *The Morrilton Miracle* that transformed his community. Martsolf's presentation was sponsored by the Farm Leadership Council.



The conference was well attended by nearly 200 delegates who included community and business leaders, post-secondary researchers and program staff, and representatives from all levels of government. Ample time was available for networking sessions and more than a dozen potential new collaborations emerged from the event. Media coverage of the conference helped put ARDN on the map; reporters from the daily newspaper and two television and three radio stations conducted interviews.

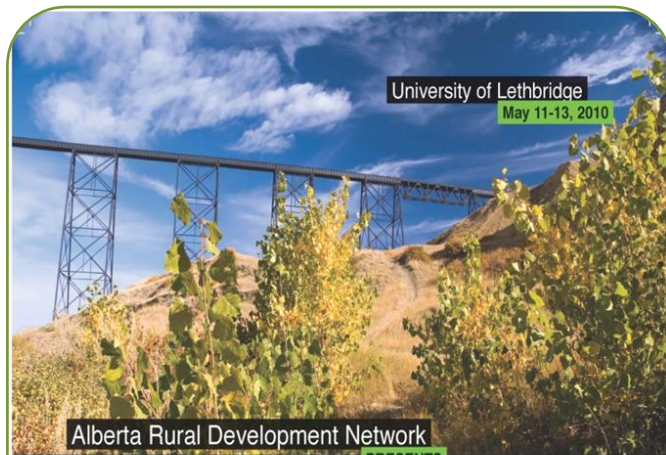
Summary

Fiscal 2009-2010 was instrumental in establishing an infrastructure and creating awareness of Alberta Rural Development Network. The Network staff and PSI leaders were immersed in the business of sharing and exchanging information, networking and collaborating, and supporting worthwhile projects related to rural development. In its first year of active operations, ARDN has earned the attention and respect of colleagues across Alberta. In the coming year, it must continue the momentum and fulfill the high expectations raised by its initial success.



"It's time for a network like ARDN. There was a disconnect in sharing post-secondary research. ARDN is pulling the information together so organizations like ours can access it or partner up."
– Michele Aasgard, Alberta Community and Cooperative Association


CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



University of Lethbridge
May 11-13, 2010



Alberta Rural Development Network
PRESENTS

Creating Rural Connections



EDUCATION RESEARCH COLLABORATION NETWORKING

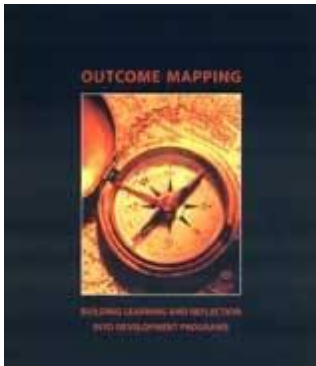
This conference funded in part by:


*Thank You to the
Farm Leadership Council
for Sponsoring Ed Martsoff*



EVALUATION AS A SUPPORT TO INNOVATION: USING OUTCOME MAPPING FOR PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION



The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) has been working with Evaluation Consultant and Lead Evaluator Leslie Ayre-Jaschke since July 2009.

ARDN uses an approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) called Outcome Mapping (OM). This evaluation method supports innovation, learning, and responsiveness to changing conditions. The International Development Research Centre developed OM in Ottawa; ARDN saw an opportunity to bring this evaluation strategy to Alberta for domestic rural development work.

OM focuses on the specific results of outcomes: changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities, or actions of the people, groups, and organizations with which a program works.

OM helps an organization tell its performance story. It recognizes that many events lead to change, linear and nonlinear. OM looks at the logical links between interventions and behavioural change, and demonstrates the contribution towards that change. OM enables a program to be accountable to its funders and other key stakeholders by establishing an evidence base for its contribution to change, while providing it with continuous feedback that supports innovation and responsiveness.

OM is one way to approach developmental evaluation: a method that is appropriate while a program is in the process of becoming a stable model. In this approach, the evaluator observes, documents, questions, and works with staff to collect and use data throughout the program so that the process itself and the strategies used can be assessed for how and why they were (or were not) successful.

There are three stages to Outcome Mapping: Intentional Design, Outcome Performance and Monitoring, and Evaluation Planning. Within those stages are the steps that guide program planners through the full process. The ARDN Accountability and Reporting Team worked through (and continues to work on) these stages through an interactive process.

By using OM, ARDN is developing a culture of “evaluative thinking” and seeing development as an opportunity for mutual influence and learning. This is different from a more traditional approach to evaluation that tends to look at change as a linear, cause-and-effect process (the logic model), where the ways that the inputs, outputs, and activities are expected to lead to the outcomes are not articulated.

ARDN’s Accountability and Reporting Team is using OM to continuously track progress through systematic data gathering, analysis, and reflection in three key areas: ARDN strategies, organizational functions, and the behaviour of partners. With OM, ARDN can monitor, learn, and be accountable as it moves toward fulfilling its mission—to *create a model of rural community development through collaboration in research and learning*.

ALBERTA RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

PROJECTS AND EVENTS SUMMARY

Up to June 30, 2010

Research Projects up to \$10,000

(by Post-Secondary Institution)

Bow Valley College	2
Lakeland College	1
Mount Royal University	1
NorQuest College	1
Northern Lakes College	1
Red Deer College	1
SAIT Polytechnic	1
University of Alberta	2
University of Lethbridge	2
Total Projects Approved	12
Total Amount Invested	\$112,925

Networking Events

(by Post-Secondary Institution)

Bow Valley College	3
Keyano College	1
NorQuest College	2
Northern Lakes College	1
Portage College	1
SAIT Polytechnic	2
University of Alberta	4
Total Events Approved	14
Total Amount Invested	\$115,400

Research Projects by Category

(Some projects fell under more than one category)

Aboriginal	1
Agriculture	2
Community and Business Development	7
Education	7
Employment	6
Environment	3
Governance	3
Health and Wellness	1
Seniors	1
Tourism	3
Training	7
Water	1
Youth	3



"ARDN's work supports communities. A community college's regional stewardship can provide Campus Alberta education that contributes to the economic stability necessary to help communities grow stronger." – Wayne Shillington, NorQuest College

ARDN FACILITATED RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) is directly involved in rural research. Through its post-secondary members, ARDN facilitates the establishment and implementation of rural research projects. In fiscal 2009-2010, ARDN supported 12 projects for up to \$10,000 for a total investment of \$112,925. Applications for 10 projects in the over \$10,000 category were received and are pending approval from ARDN's Board. A brief description of each of the projects in the up to \$10,000 category is below. These projects are all unique and aim to make a positive impact on rural communities. More information on each project is available on www.ardn.ca and will be updated as each project moves forward.

Bow Valley College

Employer Engagement in Adult Education in Rural Alberta and Smaller Communities within Bow Valley College Region: \$9,950.00

ARDN support for this project will help to increase the potential for industry and employers in smaller communities, and increase access to post-secondary education in rural Alberta.

The Coordination Challenge: Multiple Urban Post-Secondary Institutions Addressing Regional and Rural Issues: \$10,000.00

ARDN support of this project enables research to identify the best strategies and models for collaboration. This project focuses on institutions within the Calgary and Edmonton regions with respect to assessment and delivery of services in rural areas and smaller communities.

Lakeland College

21st Century Leader: Transitioning Knowledge, Wisdom, and Experience to the Next Generation: \$10,000.00

This investment will help develop and conduct a survey for Alberta's rural post-secondary presidents to draw out their leadership insights and share that information with others.

Mount Royal University

Revitalization of Rural Alberta Businesses: Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program: \$9,500.00

ARDN's support will help create a community-based economic strategy with a focus on nurturing and supporting businesses already in the community. This project includes a two day workshop, with sessions that provide individual assistance and training that will have positive long term effects on rural development.



NorQuest College

Workforce Development in NorQuest's Western Region – Needs Assessment and Potential Workforce Development Program Delivery Model: \$8,600.00

ARDN support will help NorQuest College enhance the development of businesses, non-profit organizations, governments, and communities within the Edson, Hinton, and Jasper regions. This project will research the need for NorQuest-provided workforce development opportunities.

Northern Lakes College

Supporting Grouard's Historical Interpretive Potential: \$10,000.00

ARDN support for this project will contribute to the construction of an interpretive centre in Grouard that will focus on illustrating the rich history of the community.

Red Deer College

Transportation Risk Assessment for Wildlife on the Queen Elizabeth II and Secondary Highways in the Red Deer Region: \$10,000.00

This project focuses on the research and construction of sites that will counteract wildlife collisions along busy rural highways that have high animal collision rates.



SAIT Polytechnic

Enhancing Greenhouse Sustainability Using Biofuels for Energy: \$10,000.00

ARDN's support helps benefit rural Alberta by exploring and verifying how green technologies can work together to prolong the growing season in greenhouse systems.

University of Alberta – Augustana Campus

Investigating Rural Senior Undergraduate Students: \$10,000.00

ARDN support contributes to this investigation

of whether or not third and fourth year undergraduates intend to return to their rural communities and use their education and training to become engaged and make positive contributions.



Recovering the Past – Discovering Heritage Tourism: \$4,875.35

This project will research the dinosaur bone collection expeditions that first brought the attention of the world's scientific community to the Boomtown Trail region. It will also convert the research into heritage tourism assets.

University of Lethbridge

An Assessment of the Use and Efficiency of Communications Technology in Developing and Maintaining Networks in Rural Communities: \$10,000.00

ARDN's investment will go towards an assessment of the current state of technology in terms of its use and effectiveness in the development and maintenance of networks serving as resources for rural communities.

Supporting Early Literacy Activities – A Community Approach: \$10,000.00

ARDN support will assist this project to pilot and implement early literacy strategies, supporting parents and daycare/playschool centres in immersing young children into literature-rich environments.

ARDN FACILITATED NETWORKING EVENTS

In order to foster networking opportunities and enhance rural development knowledge exchange, the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) offers financial and non-financial assistance to member post-secondary institutions. This assistance goes towards hosting rural development related meetings and events that are formed from or contribute to collaboration and networking among rural stakeholders. In fiscal 2009-2010, ARDN approved fourteen networking events for a total investment of \$115,400. More information about each event is available on www.ardn.ca and will be updated as each event moves forward.

Bow Valley College

Community Engagement in Post-Secondary Education Solutions: \$10,000.00

Strathmore, Okotoks, Cochrane, High River – Fall 2010

ARDN's support will help this event explore the readiness of rural communities to participate in increasing access to adult education and receive input from communities on what types of education is needed. These events will be held in Strathmore, Okotoks, Cochrane, and High River in Fall 2010.



Rural Health Workforce Development Event: \$10,000.00

Location to be Announced – Fall 2010

ARDN's support will help this event promote the development of the health care workforce in rural Alberta, find ways to increase access to rural education programs and services, and build links to stakeholders, government employers, and more.

Comprehensive Community Human Resource Profiles: \$6,000.00

Multiple Locations – Completed by August 31, 2010

ARDN will support this event's goal to meet with communities to produce eleven 'community human resource profiles' by August 31, 2010. Communities to be profiled include: Airdrie, Strathmore, Chestermere, High River, Okotoks, Cochrane, Canmore, Banff, Beiseker/Irricana, Crossfield and Black Diamond/Turner Valley. These profiles will form a base of information for communities, educators, government and other organizations on which to base service decisions focused on human development.

Keyano College

Unwrapping the Research: \$10,000.00

Fort McMurray – October 22 - 24, 2010

This conference will facilitate dialogue and learning opportunities among researchers and local residents. It also stimulates creative thinking about innovative opportunities.



NorQuest College

Outcome Mapping Orientation: \$4,350.00

Edmonton – June 17, 2010

This event enabled Alberta research and community development networks to build capacity by using Outcome Mapping to demonstrate the collective impact on community learning and economic development.

Putting Down Roots: Our Diverse Communities: \$10,000.00

Multiple Locations – November 26, 2010

ARDN's support contributes to this regional exchange for individuals and organizations that are focused on supporting newcomers through language programming, welcoming, and other social sciences. This event will take place via videoconferencing.

Northern Lakes College

Aboriginal Leadership and Governance Training in Rural Northern Alberta: \$10,000.00

Edmonton – Fall 2010

ARDN is supporting this event that will share information about current Aboriginal leadership training opportunities, identify unmet needs and gaps in existing opportunities, and work toward solutions.



Portage College

Portage College Community Social Work Program Mini Conference: \$8,100.00

Lac La Biche – August 21 - 22, 2010

This event is a conference for human services professionals and credits will be given to students from Northern Lakes College and Portage College who attend.



SAIT

Future Directions in Providing First-Responders with Protection from Workplace Trauma: \$10,000.00

Banff Centre – October 6 and 7, 2010

This gathering will help place Alberta in a leadership position in protecting first responders and other workers exposed to traumatic stress.

SimuNation: \$7,950.00

Calgary – June 7, 2010

ARDN's support enabled Patient Simulation educators from across Alberta to participate in an exchange of ideas and techniques designed to improve healthcare practices in Alberta through the use of highly realistic and sophisticated Patient Simulation.

University of Alberta

Framework for a Provincial Caregiver Strategy: \$10,000.00

Edmonton – October 22, 2010

Calgary – October 29, 2010

ARDN support will help bring family caregivers together with other organizations to assist in the development of a provincial caregiver strategy.



The Social Transformation of Rural Canada: New Insights into Community, Culture and Citizenship: \$2,440.00

*University of Alberta – September 30 to
October 1, 2010*

The purpose of this networking event is to convene a workshop of academic researchers from across Canada on the topic of social transformation in rural Canada. A premise for this workshop is a sense that something new is emerging from the spaces and places of rural Canada.

Building Mental Health Response Capacity in Rural Alberta: \$6,560.00

Vulcan – August 2010

This event will scope, assess, and begin the design of a Rural Alberta Mental Health Crisis Response program that links university-based researchers, the Canadian Mental Health Association and first response caregivers such as paramedics, police and firefighters.

Managing Alberta's Water – Linking Science to Citizens and Management: \$10,000.00

Red Deer – October 2010

This event will seek to develop collaborative relationships among the large universities in the province and the analytic needs of the Watershed Planning Advisory Councils. The event will raise awareness about the benefits and opportunities that social science research can bring to natural resource management.



ARDN gives us an opportunity to look at knowledge and learning as a commercial enterprise with a dollar value and a need for quality control. Rural Alberta is an incubator; it comprises dispersed communities operating in silos; there are few economies of scale. ARDN will enable us to form hand-in-glove relationships between learners and learning institutions." – Trent Keough, Portage College

ARDN FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The following financial statements were prepared in accordance with an audit conducted by Barbara L. Surry, CMA. In the statement of operations, the revenue from Rural Alberta's Development Fund represents the portion of a \$5,000,000 grant received this fiscal year. On page 23 the second column consists solely of the members' 'in-kind' contributions.

ALBERTA RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

JUNE 30, 2010

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 38,582	\$ 147,104
Accounts receivable	575	-
Goods and services tax receivable	5,809	496
Prepaid expense	<u>5,748</u>	<u>2,349</u>
	50,714	149,949
Property and equipment	<u>37,145</u>	<u>7,073</u>
	<u>\$ 87,859</u>	<u>\$ 157,022</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 7,026	\$ 2,963
Deferred revenue	<u>31,554</u>	<u>144,141</u>
	<u>38,580</u>	<u>147,104</u>
Net assets		
Unrestricted net assets	12,134	2,845
Net assets invested in property and equipment	<u>37,145</u>	<u>7,073</u>
	<u>49,279</u>	<u>9,918</u>
	<u>\$ 87,859</u>	<u>\$ 157,022</u>

ALBERTA RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2010

	Funded Contributions	Partner Contributions	Total 2010	Total 2009
REVENUES				
Rural Alberta's Development Fund Grant	\$ 612,587	\$ -	\$ 612,587	\$ 55,859
Partner Contributions	-	726,079	726,079	67,314
Conference registration fees	17,076	-	17,076	-
Interest	1,035	-	1,035	570
	<u>630,698</u>	<u>726,079</u>	<u>1,356,777</u>	<u>123,743</u>
EXPENSES				
Administration	30,945	-	30,945	2,317
Advertising and promotion	7,887	477	8,364	406
Amortization	9,961	-	9,961	1,864
Bank charges	571	-	571	8
Conference	72,513	10,745	83,258	-
Contract costs	93,823	-	93,823	-
Design & content	21,571	-	21,571	-
Insurance	2,526	-	2,526	151
Meetings	-	610,186	610,186	30,689
Memberships	1,210	-	1,210	-
Office expense	9,624	326	9,950	527
Professional fees	2,665	-	2,665	2,030
Rent	25,028	-	25,028	923
Research projects	10,000	-	10,000	-
Salaries and Benefits	282,826	-	282,826	41,134
Stakeholder consultation	-	41,826	41,826	-
Telephone	8,518	6,146	14,664	4,414
Training and conferences	5,922	15,525	21,447	500
Travel	-	33,910	33,910	24,275
Website	12,685	-	12,685	4,587
	<u>598,275</u>	<u>719,141</u>	<u>1,317,416</u>	<u>113,825</u>
Excess of revenues over expenses	\$ <u>32,423</u>	\$ <u>6,938</u>	\$ <u>39,361</u>	\$ <u>9,918</u>

THE YEAR AHEAD

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) business plan created a foundation for a system of on-going connectivity among those involved in rural development; year one of implementation saw a good start to putting the plan into operation.

In the coming year, we will continue with implementation, including finding new and better ways to share the knowledge of researchers from both post-secondary and rural development organizations. To help accomplish this, we will actively communicate with other provincial rural research based organizations. We also plan on expanding our contacts within rural communities by connecting with economic development associations, agricultural groups, municipalities and others. The key contacts at each member post-secondary are instrumental in identifying existing community connections and encouraging new relationships with their institutions and ARDN.

Some of our successful ventures from the past year, such as the ARDN conference, will recur; this year's conference will be held in April 2011 in Edmonton and is expected to attract up to 400 participants. Through our members, dozens of local and regional rural development related events will be held throughout the province, supported by ARDN.

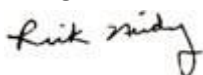
Last year, we invested in the first ARDN projects and networking events up to \$10,000 and these initiatives are all well underway. This year, we intend to facilitate more projects and networking events, as well as some larger projects. Project and event applications will continue to require initiation by a member post-secondary institution; we encourage other rural stakeholders to work in partnership with our post-secondary members to develop projects and submit applications.

In the coming year, ARDN will begin serious work on our long term sustainability plans. The post-secondary system as a whole is undergoing change and ARDN's path to sustainability will require an examination of where we fit in the vision and changing environment for rural development research and adult education as we move forward.

At this time, we are fortunate to have the support of Rural Alberta's Development Fund and we will demonstrate that their trust and investment in our work is achieving results. Moving forward, we also plan to form informal alliances to leverage other dollars wherever possible.

The long term sustainability of the Network is dependent on people: the Board of Directors, the key contacts at each member post-secondary, ARDN staff, the researchers and presenters who share their knowledge and information, the organizations that come forward to work with ARDN, and the individuals and organizations in rural Alberta. A network is only as strong as its connections, and ARDN is gaining strength as more people become active and involved.

Regards,



Rick Neidig
Interim Chair



Dee Ann Benard
Executive Director

*Alberta Rural Development Network
gratefully acknowledges the generous support of
Rural Alberta's Development Fund,
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Government of Alberta.*



**RURAL
ALBERTA'S**
DEVELOPMENT FUND

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