



Prairie conservation award highlights transdisciplinary work

"It was becoming clearer that environmental conservation was as much about understanding human behaviour as it was about understanding the characteristics of wildlife species," observes David Gauthier, reflecting on the work that has brought him awards and international recognition.

Gauthier is a professor of geography at the University of Regina and executive director of the Canadian Plains Research Center. He recently received a Prairie Conservation Award at a Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conservation conference in Calgary. The award committee noted Gauthier's significant contributions toward developing ecological classifications of Prairie habitats, for advancing the role of protected areas in conservation of Prairie habitats and wildlife and in fostering partnerships to develop strategies for grassland conservation.

After receiving the award Gauthier noted the importance of having the U of R and the Faculty of Arts as the "home base" for his research over the past 19 years. He also emphasized the importance of addressing in an integrated way all of the forces - social,

economic, political and ideological - that affect conservation issues.

Gauthier's interest in conservation grew out of his youthful fascination as to why places were different from each other, and why there seemed to be patterns to these differences. This led to studies in biogeography - trying to understand what factors affect animal population numbers and locations. His studies covered a variety of wildlife, including caribou, wolves and bears in mountain tundra environments near Kluane National Park in the Yukon Territory.

"That work in northern Canada made it very clear to me that what we had thought to be pristine, undisturbed environments were impacted in various ways by human activity," says Gauthier. "From a conservation perspective, that meant the vast majority of conservation issues that people were grappling with were by nature transdisciplinary." To reinforce the point, Gauthier quotes author and editor Alvin White: "The problems of life are all transdisciplinary; only the problems of specialists are specialized."

When Gauthier came to the University of Regina in 1985 his focus shifted to grasslands conservation. It also expanded to include more work with colleagues at universities, in research organizations, conservation organizations and government departments. As examples of the results of this teamwork, Gauthier points to the establishment of Grasslands National Park and the development of a comprehensive system for classifying ecosystems for Saskatchewan. In 1998 the growing number of individuals and organizations concerned about conservation issues formed the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan, which involves 25 partners. Gauthier was a founding member of the organization, which is developing national and international links.

"Working with Mexican, U.S. and Canadian colleagues, my students and I helped in developing a database of North American conservation areas that linked to the previous work on creating frameworks for classifying ecosystems," Gauthier explains. Much of his work, he adds, is based on student participation, primarily at the graduate level.

"Because of the transdisciplinary nature of most projects, students must be willing to build on their basic disciplinary strength - in Geography, for example - by taking courses in other disciplines." Gauthier notes that the research being done at the U of R offers students opportunities to travel and study abroad, and to "become global citizens." The work ranges from addressing issues of rural sustainable development with partners in Chile and Costa Rica, to studies of rural communities in southern Saskatchewan, and assessing the social dimensions of climate change here in Regina.

"An important lesson I've learned in addressing conservation issues, and that I try to pass on to students," Gauthier says, "is that each type of institution or organization and every individual has an essential contribution to make. Each contribution on its own is generally not enough to address problems that are by their nature transdisciplinary. Therefore," he concludes, "it's critical that we recognize and overcome our differences and work collaboratively."

CAMPUS LIFE CALENDAR

Wed., Mar. 24-Sun., Mar. 28
Fine Arts Subscription Series
"Our Country's Good"
A play set in 1789 Australia
8 p.m. Wed.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun.
University Theatre, Riddell Centre
Info/tickets: 585-5583

Thurs., Mar. 25 - 5:30 p.m.
Co-operative Education's 35th Anniversary Dinner
Celebrating its 35th anniversary and presenting the first annual Mantle-Blachford Award
Delta Regina Hotel
Info/tickets: 585-5528

March 25-26
Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy National Conference
Addressing the governance of the Canadian federation and how to make it more effective
The Regina Inn
Info/tickets: 585-5775

Fri., Mar. 26 - 4 p.m.
Fine Arts lecture
"Prague International Quadrennial of Scenography"
Speaker: Kathleen Irwin
Rm. 050, Riddell Centre
Info: 585-5557

Mon., Mar. 29 - 3:30 p.m.
Justice Studies lecture
"Anthem for a More Tolerant Tomorrow"
Speaker: Brian Burtch
Rm. 431, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4815

Wed., Mar. 31 - 3:30 p.m.
Humanities Research Institute workshop
Sessions that help you to apply for grants in the humanities
Language Institute Theatre
Info/Register: 585-4304

Wed., Mar. 31 - 7 p.m.
International Film Series
"Ballad of Narayama"
Japanese with English subtitles
Riffel Auditorium
Info: 585-4595

Thurs., Apr. 1 - 5:30 p.m.
U of R Vancouver Alumni gathering
An alumni reception for U of R grads living in Vancouver to meet the President and discuss campus news and initiatives
Granville Island Hotel, Vancouver, B.C.
Info/RSVP: 1-877-779-4723

Thurs., Apr. 1 - 12:10 p.m.
Coffee House Controversies
Informal talks given by Faculty of Arts professors
"Mind Candy: Popular Culture and the Way We Think About the World"
Speaker: Lynn Wells
Roca Jack's, 1939 Scarth St.
Info: 585-4226

April 2-3
Talking Fresh 2
A festival of writers and writing in celebration of National Poetry Month
Various locations at Luther College
Info: 585-5047

Fri., Apr. 2 - 8 p.m.
Fine Arts Subscription series
Motion ensemble
An eclectic mix of contemporary classical and experimental music
University Theatre, Riddell Centre
Info/tickets: 585-5500

Sat., Apr. 3 - 8:30 a.m.
Engineering Project Day 2004
Graduating students from the Faculty of Engineering will be presenting their final design projects
Ramada Hotel
Info: 585-4706

Mon., Apr. 5 - 10:30 a.m.
Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy presentation
Third annual budget review
Panelists: John Allan, Barbara Byers, Marilyn Braun-Pollon & Murray Mandryk
Gallery Building, College Avenue Campus
Info/Register: 585-5869

Wed., Apr. 7 - 4 p.m.
Sociology seminar
"Constructing Hegemonic Masculinity"
Speaker: Murray Knuttila
Rm. 420, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4443

For a complete calendar of events at the University of Regina visit our Web site at www.uregina.ca



New information system to be unveiled

This evening, the University of Regina's Co-operative Education Program will formally launch "Crossroads, Version 3.0" at a dinner celebrating the program's 35th anniversary. Crossroads is a Web-based information management system that makes it easier for students looking for jobs and employers seeking student employees to find each other. It also represents a productive public-private sector partnership between the U of R and McNair Business Development of Regina.

While the system will be launched officially this evening, students are already enjoying its benefits.

"Co-op students and new graduates really like the Web-based system because they can access job opportunities day or night," says Linda O'Halloran, manager of Co-operative Education and Student Employment Services at the U of R. "They can sort jobs by date, area, or whatever they want, which is a time saver. We're looking forward to the next phase, where employers will be able to retrieve their existing job postings, revise and resubmit them."

A short demonstration of Crossroads makes it clear that the partners have created an attractive product with many more features than can be listed here. O'Halloran says it enhances the way her office conducts business, and provides benefits to customers.

"The Co-op program needed a complete information management system that could

keep track of students, employers and work terms, and provide employers and students with self-serve access to information about jobs," says Doug McNair, president of McNair Business Development Inc. (MBD). The program's needs were greater than the available budget, however. That led to the creation of a partnership to develop the product that became Crossroads.

"When intellectual property is created - such as this product - the government institution usually retains the rights," explains Ken Sagal, assistant director of the U of R's Information Services unit. In this case, the U of R and MBD agreed to co-own the intellectual property they created together. In exchange for adding its resources to the development of Crossroads, the agreement allows MBD to market and license the product to other educational institutions. Once MBD recoups its investment, the partners will share the revenue from licensing fees from any additional sales.

During the development process, the U of R's Information Services seconded staff member, Peter Gervais, to work on-site at MBD. This approach to sharing enabled MBD, Information Services and the Co-op program to produce a better, more competitive product, McNair believes. It also allowed for the transfer of knowledge between the two partners.

"In Saskatchewan we often have to find

ways to do things differently," McNair says. "The Co-op program is one of the U of R's strategic assets. The big story here is the readiness of both parties to look at a new way to capitalize on that asset," he adds.

MBD's Brinley Werrett is co-ordinating the marketing of Crossroads, Version 3.0. Werrett joined MBD after receiving a degree from the U of R that included three co-op work terms. He's demonstrated the product for various institutions across Canada, four schools in the United States, and the University of Liverpool in the UK. SIAS's co-op and student employment services are using the product and Saskatchewan's Crown Investment Corporation is taking a good look at it as well. MBD recently opened an office in Minneapolis, Minn. to support the marketing effort south of the border.

"We're encouraged by the interest in the product," says McNair, "and I'm proud of the supportive relationship we've created with the U of R."

O'Halloran agrees. Without the support of Information Services or the expertise of MBD, the system would not have come to be, she states. "We also appreciate the partnership that made this system possible."

Co-operative Education and Student Employment Services can be found at: www.uregina.ca/coop_ses

To learn more about McNair Business Development, visit www.mcnaibd.com/crossroads/



On March 17, CBC television personality Evan Soloman delivered the School of Journalism's 24th annual Minifie lecture. Soloman is the co-host of CBC News: Sunday and the host of Newsworld's Hot Type, a weekly show about print culture. The Minifie lecture is named for James M. Minifie, one of Canada's most courageous and illustrious journalists, who began his academic career at Regina College, the forerunner of the University of Regina.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF REGINA

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS provisions of Procedure Bylaw No. 9004 provide the Mayor with the authority to approve proclamations.

NOW THEREFORE I, Pat Fiacco, Mayor of the City of Regina, do hereby proclaim the week of March 21 to 27, 2004 as

NATIONAL CO-OP EDUCATION WEEK in Regina, and in issuing this proclamation, ask our citizens to recognize this week.

Pat Fiacco
Mayor

We want to hear from you!

Tell us what you think of the U of R Update page

E-mail your comments to communications@uregina.ca

Faculty of Arts

of

Arts

Congratulates

The Faculty of Arts congratulates the University of Regina Coop Program and its students on a successful first 35 years. The Faculty has recently partnered with First Nations University and the Crown Investment Corporation to create a Pilot Aboriginal Arts Coop Program. We look forward to working with the University of Regina Coop in the near future in our creation of a permanent Faculty of Arts Coop Program.



Co-operative Education
Phone: (306) 585-4600
www.uregina.ca/coop_ses