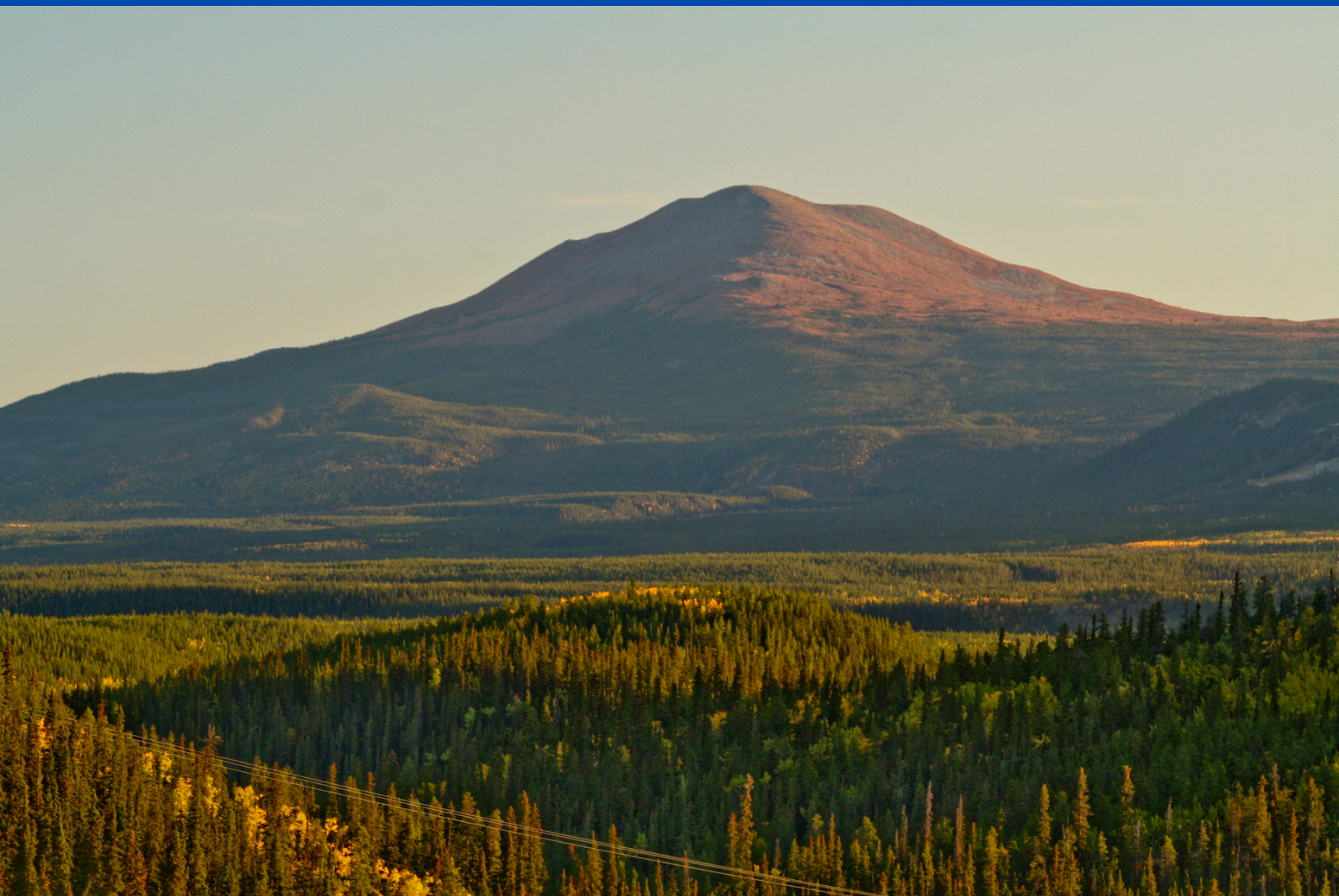# NORTHERN DIALOGUES: REMOTENESS AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN RURAL AND NORTHERN CANADA

FONDATION CANADIENNE POUR LA REVITALISATION RURALE

CANADIAN RURAL REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION

Yukon University

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

YUKON UNIVERSITY, WHITEHORSE, YUKON
MAY 21 - 24, 2024

WELCOME!

Dear Conference Delegates,

On behalf of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, I am pleased to welcome you to Whitehorse, Yukon, and the Northern Dialogues Conference! Over the coming days, you'll hear diverse presentations from both our plenary and breakout speakers about the opportunities and challenges for sustainable livelihoods in rural, remote, and northern Canada. From our presenters and audience, there will be a mix of researchers, practitioners, and policy makers, all seeking to make rural and northern Canada stronger, more welcoming, and more resilient.

I look forward to spending the next three days with you. I would like to make a point of thanking our cohost, Yukon University, and all of our partners, sponsors, the conference organizing committee, staff, and volunteers at CRRF. We would not be gathered here if it was not for your unwavering support and tenacity to plan and implement such an event.

Sincerely,

Joshua Barrett
President
Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation/
Fondation canadienne pour la revitalisation rurale.
www.crrf.ca

FONDATION
CANADIENNE POUR LA
REVITALISATION RURALE

CANADIAN
RURAL REVITALIZATION
FOUNDATION

CONFERENCE THEME

REMOTENESS AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN RURAL AND NORTHERN CANADA

Northern and rural communities are experiencing intensified effects of global crises related to health, climate, and the economy. Turbulence, uncertainty, and transitions caused by these crises are felt in particular ways that exacerbate these issues in rural socio-cultural, ecological, and economic systems. In this context, remoteness is a factor that influences processes of social and economic development.

The conference addresses the intersection of remoteness and sustainable livelihoods framed across three interrelated themes:
1) Innovation and community development
2) Education, health, and social systems;
3) Culture, heritage, and wellbeing.

Through the event and other outreach activities, we will generate discussions on policy and development practice in and for communities by leveraging the insights of researchers, policy makers, practitioners, Indigenous leaders, and community members who live in the provincial and territorial north. We hope that the dialogue generated is informative, thought-provoking, and useful for your work.

Check out details of all the outreach activities here, or by scanning below.

THANK YOU TO PROGRAM SUPPORTORS AND ORGANIZERS!

Kyle Rich

Associate Professor, Brock University

Amanda Graham

Yukon University

Kristin Catherwood Mantta

Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

Patrick Brouder

Thompson Rivers University

Joelena Leader

University of Saskatchewan

Audrey Giles

University of Ottawa

Agnieszka Pawłowska- Mainville
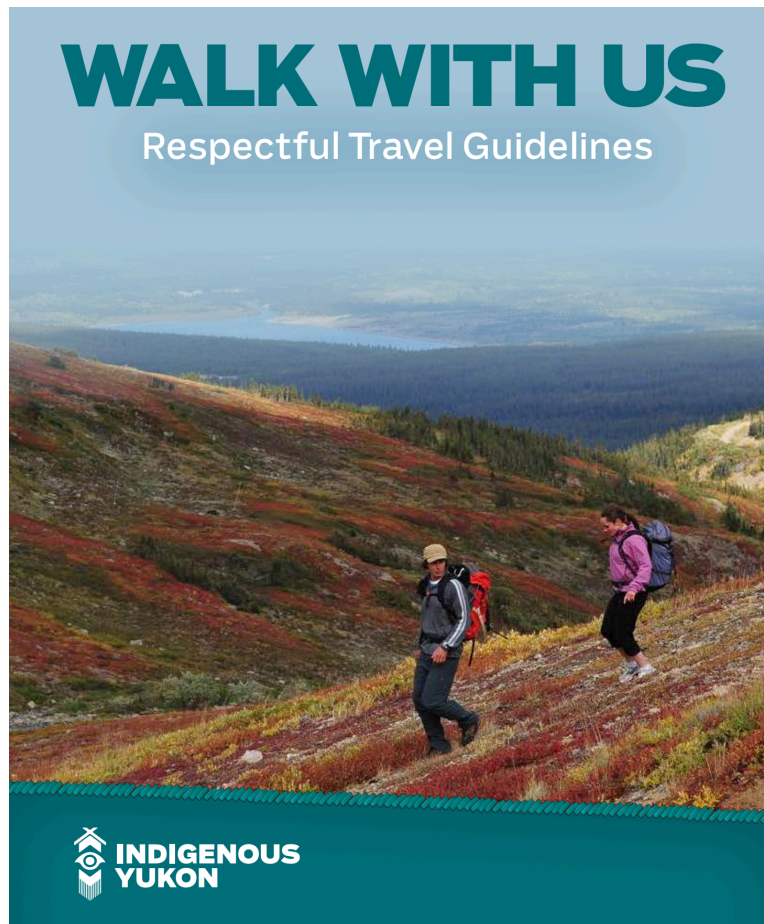
University of Northern British Columbia

Plenary

WALK WITH US - RESPECTFUL TRAVEL GUIDELINES

The Yukon is home to 14 distinct First Nations and 8 language groups. These guidelines have been shared by First Nations Knowledge Keepers to teach all people about how to show respect when travelling through the Yukon. Our land is beautiful and our water is clean. Our land is everything. We are the stewards of this land and we all have a responsibility to care for this land for future generations. We honour our ancestors who shared their teachings with us so that we can now share them with you. We care for this land — the plants, water, air and animals — by showing it respect and treating it as an equal. As you travel through our beautiful homelands, we invite you to Ná t'sin t'ra "hold everything up in respect" - Northern Tutchone.

Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association

Plenary

State of Rural Canada 5: Inclusive and Sustainable Futures for Rural and Northern Communities

The State of Rural Canada, now in its fifth iteration, is a nationwide report on the most pertinent issues facing rural, remote, and northern Canada. With contributions from every province and territory, the report continues to be a source of knowledge from sea to sea to sea. Each chapter shares the rural context in the region included before elaborating on specific rural themes of particular relevance to the region. In this session, speakers will share an overview of the State of Rural Canada report before hearing insights from a few of the chapter authors contributing to the fifth State of Rural Canada report.

Sarah Breen | Sarah is the Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development at Selkirk College and an Adjunct Professor with the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at University of Guelph. Her research interests include economic development, infrastructure and services, natural resource management, resilience, and policy – all with a rural lens. Sarah's work ranges from applied projects with a range of community partners in the Kootenay region of SE BC to national projects with colleagues across Canada.

Sean Markey | Sean is a professor and certified planner with the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University. Sean's research concerns issues of local and regional economic development, rural and small-town development, nature-first planning, and sustainable infrastructure. He has published widely in academic journals and has co-authored/edited numerous books. Sean continues to work with municipalities, non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities, and the business community to promote and develop sustainable forms of community and regional development.

Dr. Heather Hall | Heather is an Associate Professor and the Academic Director of the Master of Economic Development and Innovation program at the University of Waterloo. She holds a PhD in Geography and specializes in economic development and technology impacts in rural and Northern areas. Her work influences policies in Canada and internationally, and she leads significant research projects such as Remote Controlled. Heather also co-authored Planning Canadian Regions, 2nd Edition, and chairs the Northern Policy Institute's Research Advisory Board.

Amanda Graham | Amanda is the Chair of the School of Liberal Arts at Yukon University. She was the first graduate of Yukon College's Northern Studies Diploma and then embarked on a Masters in Northern History at Lakehead. In 1992, while still working on her thesis, she joined Yukon College as the second managing editor of The Northern Review, the first Canadian multidisciplinary journal of the arts and social sciences of the North published north of 60. She became a senior editor of the Northern Review in 2002.

Plenary

Becoming: The Story of YukonU, Canada's First University North of 60.

This session will feature YukonU's transition from a community college to a university through the lens of reconciliation, as one way to re-imagine research and program development. In particular, it will highlight how the university's plan for reconciliation through re-education draws from Indigenous pedagogical practices and is designed to honour and uphold the dream of Yukon First Nations leaders for "a university in the Yukon," Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow, 1973. The panelists will address the university's efforts to align Yukon University's Research Centre into the faculties, develop a culture of ethical research more broadly, and the university's path to build new degrees.

Dr. Shelagh Rowles |
Provost and Vice-President Academic – Yukon University

Gā̀gala-X̱iX̱ətko Nadia Joe |
Associate Vice-President, Reconciliation – Yukon University

Dr. Fiona Schmiegelow |
Dean, Applied Science and Management – Yukon University

Moderator: Joelena Leader |
Assistant Professor at the Edwards School of Business and Managing Director of the BRIDGE Knowledge Centre

Event Program

Tuesday, May 21st

Time	Activity
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm	New Researcher Forum Northlight Innovation, 2180 2nd Avenue
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Opening Reception MacBride Museum, 1124 Front Street

Wednesday, May 22nd

Time	Activity
7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University
8:00 – 9:00am	Morning Refreshments
9:00 – 9:45 am	Welcome and Opening Plenary Session
9:50 -11:00 am	Morning Sessions I
11:00 - 11:30 am	Refreshment break
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Morning Sessions II
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	Afternoon excursions leave from Yukon University Bus loop outside main entrance *Note: Bring what you need with you for the day when you get on the morning shuttle to the university. Excursion transportation can accommodate small packs and will be locked when occupants are not in them.

Thursday, May 23rd

Time	Activity
7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University
8:00 – 9:00am	Morning Refreshments
9:00 - 10:00 am	Plenary Session - State of Rural Canada
10:10 - 10:50 am	Morning Sessions 1
11:00 - 11:30 am	Refreshment Break / Poster Presentations
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Morning Sessions II
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 - 2:10 pm	Afternoon Sessions
2:10 -2:40 pm	Refreshment Break / Poster Presentations
2:40 - 4:10 pm	Workshops
4:10 pm – Group A 4:40 pm – Group B	Shuttle Yukon University to Sternwheeler Hotel
6:15 - 9:30 pm	Conference Banquet Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, 1171 Front Street

Note: The *Outdoor Fireweed Community Market happens from 3:00-7:00 pm every Thursday during the summer months at Shipyards Park – 100 Ogilvie St. (15-minute walk from the hotel and a five minute walk to the banquet venue).*

Day 4: Friday, May 24th

Time	Activity
7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University
8:00 – 9:00 am	Morning Refreshments
9:00 -10:20 am	Morning Sessions
10:20 - 10:50 am	Refreshment Break
10:50 - 12:20 pm	Workshops
12:20 - 1:00 pm	Closing Plenary Session – YukonU Administration
1:15 pm – Group A 1:45 pm – Group B	Shuttle Yukon University to Sternwheeler Hotel
Lunch on your own.	

*All times in Yukon Standard Time

**Exact times subject to change

***Morning sessions in the Main Room will be available virtually

Detailed Conference Program

Tuesday, May 21st – Welcome!	
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm	**New Researcher Forum** Northlight Innovation, 2180 2nd Avenue
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	**Welcome Reception** MacBride Museum, 1124 Front Street

Wednesday, May 22nd - Morning Sessions I				
7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	**Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University**			
8:00 am – 9:00 am	**Morning Refreshments**			
9:00 am – 9: 45 am	**Opening Plenary Session:** **Walk with us – Respectful Travel Guidelines – Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association**			
9:50 am – 10:10 am	Room 1: Unveiling the Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Valuation, Promotion, and Opportunities for Northern, Rural, and Remote Communities Agnieszka Pawłowska-Mainville, Kristin Catherwood Mantta, and Dariusz Brzostek Delivery: In person	Room 2: The 5Cs Framework for Local Economic Recovery & Resilience Heather Hall and Tara Vinodrai Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Braiding Food Systems: Co-Constructing Sustainable Seed Systems with Northern Ontario First Nations Charlotte Potter, Silvia Sarapura, Paul Benalcazar, Annette Peltier-Flamand, and Corina Thompson Delivery: Virtual	Room 4: Breaking path dependency? Factors to enhance capacity for rural local governments in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada Joshua Barrett Delivery: In person

10:15 am – 10:35 am	Room 1: Documenting the community engaged work of a Youth Advisory Committee in rural Alberta Maria Mayan, Matt Ormandy, and Alexa Ferdinands Delivery: In person	Room 2: Urbanism in the North: Lessons from Prince George Rylan Graham Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Telemedicine Benefits and Challenges in Rural and Remote Pediatric Cardiology Vanessa De Coppi, Nancy Lightfoot, and Emily Donato Delivery: Virtual	Room 4: Resilient Recreation in Rural Yukon Caroline Sparks Delivery: In person
10:40 am – 11:00 am	Room 1: Provincial Sport Organizations' Perspectives on Rural and Remote Communities in Ontario Dante Losardo and Kyle Rich Delivery: In person	Room 2: Moving In, Moving On & Moving Up: Exploring Population Movements to and from Rural Canada Sydney Whiting, Lars Hallstrom, and Stacey Haugen Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Co-designing Accessible Sport, Recreation, and Leisure Opportunities with Ugpi'ganjig and the Town of Heron Bay, New Brunswick: Lessons from the Recreaplex Julia Frigault, Colleen Gauvin, and Jackie Oncescu Delivery: Virtual	
11:00 am – 11:30 am	**Refreshment Break**			

Wednesday, May 22nd - Morning Sessions II

11:30 am – 11:50 am	Room 1: Addressing labour shortages through newcomer attraction in rural Ontario and British Columbia John Dale and Ryan Gibson Delivery: In person	Room 2: Remote controlled: The impacts of disruptive technologies in the Ontario agriculture sector Heather Hall, Tara Vinodrai, and McKenzie Huneke Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Inuit Community Knowledge Sharing in Recreation Leila Kelleher, Qumangaapik Arnatsiaq, and Sherri Branscombe Delivery: Hybrid	Room 4: Past and Present Informing the Future: A Case Study of Cultural Heritage Tourism in Louisbourg, NS Nicole Breedon Delivery: In person

11:50 am – 12:10 pm	Room 1: Learning from One Another: A comparative analysis of labour market needs and corresponding skills in Northern Ontario, Yukon and Nunavut Amanda Thompson Delivery: In person	Room 2: Placing Remoteness: A Critical Topography Dr. Jessica Becking Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Multiple Logics in Rural Municipal Recreation: The Case of Cochrane and Timiskaming Districts Tammy Borgen-Flood and Kyle Rich Delivery: Virtual	Room 4: The Role of Intermediary Organizations in Supporting Rural Arts Education Dr. Tiina Kukkonen Delivery: In person
12:10 am – 12:30 pm	Room 1: Innovative training strengthens capacity for recreation across Canada's North Caroline Sparks Delivery: In person	Room 2: Katewe'ka'tijik etek Ewipkek: Sustaining the Mi'kmaw Eel Fishery in Flat Bay Avery Velez Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Closing the Gap: How 2+1 Roads can Save Time, Lives, and Money William Dunstan Delivery: Virtual	Room 4: Small Town Museums in Southern Manitoba and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Impacts and Responses Doug Ramsey Delivery: In Person
12:30 - 1:30 pm	**Lunch – Yukon University Cafeteria**			
1:30 pm	**Afternoon excursions leave from Yukon University bus loop outside main entrance** *Note: Buses will not return to the hotel prior to excursion departures. Bring what you need with you for the day when you get on the morning shuttle to the university. Excursion transportation can accommodate small packs and will be locked when occupants are not in them.			

Thursday, May 23rd - Morning Sessions I

7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University		
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Morning Refreshments		
9:00am – 10:00am	Plenary Session – State of Rural Canada 5		
10:10 am – 10:30 am	Room 1: Tribal Canoe Journeys in the Salish Sea: Well- being, ancestral knowledge and techniques, Indigenous Resistance and cultural resurgence. Alexandre Dantas e Sousa Delivery: In person	Room 2: A Community-Based Research Approach to Boating Safety in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region Audrey Giles, Nia Contini, Gordon Geisbrecht, Tyrone Raddi, Manny Kudluk, Jody Illasiak, Ashley Jacobson, and Mary Gordon Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Empowering Manitoba: Community Broadband Initiatives, Digital Adoption, and Priorities for Digital Transformation in all corners of the Province. Wayne Kelly, Joel Templeman, Fallon Brooks, and Kalin Contois Delivery: Hybrid
10:30 am – 10:50 am	Room 1: Engaging Indigenous children to co-create a culturally relevant tool for mental wellness Shonagh McCrindle, Dr Nancy Young, and Mary Jo Wabano Delivery: In person	Room 2: The Institutional Framework for Digital Transformation in Resource Development: Exclusion of Rural Voices Sean Markey, Laura Ryser, Greg Halseth, and Keith Storey Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room "Eeyou ᐽᒋᐃᐦ Meechum is Everything" Finding ᒉᐦ ᐱ�L̇Ꮒ᙮ᐃᐦ Miyo Pimâtisiwin ᐽᒋᐃᐦ Meechum: The Good Life of Food in Eeyouch Ways of Knowing Stephen Penner Delivery: Virtual
11:00 am – 11:30 am	Refreshment Break / Poster Presentations		

Posters:

Home on Borrowed Land: Residential land leasing and housing attainability in the Northwest Territories
Chris Van Dyke

Exploring Northern Attitudes: "Main Street Town Square" Pedestrian Pilot Project in Downtown Whitehorse
Cathy Wan Yi Lin and Sara Epp

Rural Equity in Emergency Planning: A Public Health Agenda
Danica Fitzsimmons, Amanda Mongeon, & Keltie Hamilton

Risk Tolerance & Risk Perception in Rural and Remote Populations: A Scoping Review
Danica Fitzsimmons and Danylo Kostirko

Small-scale Rural Food Production & Supply: A New Opportunity to Preserve an Old Way of Life
Cara Shan

Repurposing existing skeletal spatial structure (SkS) system designs using the Field Information Modeling (FIM) framework for generative decision-support in future construction projects
Reza Maalek

Achieving Connectivity: Applying the Rural Connectivity Models to the Manitoban Broadband Ecosystem
Kalin Contois and Fallon Brooks

Accelerating Community Energy Transformation
Tamara Krawchenko

Leveraging technology to enhance Indigenous children's voices: the Aaniish Naa Geigii Children's Health and Wellbeing Measure
Shonagh McCrindle, Dr Nancy Young, and Mary Jo Wabano

Thursday, May 23rd - Morning Sessions II

11:30 am – 11:50 am	Room 1: Insights into the Acculturation Experiences of Newcomer Healthcare Workers in Rural Northern Ontario Vivien Ugwu and Kyle Rich Delivery: In Person	Room 2: Permanently Temporary: The Precarity of Migrant Labour in Prince Edward Island Eliza MacLauchlan Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Reflecting Rural Realities in Federal Programs and Policies: The Centre for Rural Economic Development at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Darroch Harrop Delivery: Virtual	
11:50 am – 12:10 pm	Room 1: Experiences and Implications of Hosting Friends and Relatives in Whitehorse Tom Griffin and Sarah Marsh Delivery: In person	Room 2: The contributions of Indigenous-led conservation and land-based livelihoods to resilient communities and environments in the Dehcho Region, Northwest Territories Emalee A. Vandermale Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room A community-based resiliency assessment framework for Gender- Based Violence in the Yukon Aja Mason, Sara McPhee-Knowles, Jordan Aslett, and Lisa Kanary Delivery: In person	
12:10 pm – 12: 30 pm	Room 1: Privileging YFN voices in Education: One (caucasian) teacher's humble journey realizing 'Indigenizing' is just another colonial buzzword Gwyneth Kovachik-MacNeil Delivery: In person	Room 2: First Nation Perspectives on Healthy Aging Mark Christopher, Liris Smith, and Elder Jerry Soltani Delivery: In Person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Co-designing Community Sport and Recreation Provisions in Rural and Remote New Brunswick Jackie Oncescu and Julia Frigault Delivery: Virtual	
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	**Lunch - Yukon University Cafeteria**			

Thursday, May 23rd - Afternoon Sessions I

1:30 pm – 1:50 pm	Room 1: Power & Pride: Supporting Women Two Spirit, and LGBTQ+ Individuals to Stand for Rural Municipal Government Tara Howse Delivery: In person	Room 2: Remote Craft: Three Cases of Design Intrusions and Social Marginalization in Artisan Communities Cynthia Lawson Jaramillo Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room First Nation people on Indian (Act) reserves face barriers from different education access Shirley Thompson Delivery: Virtual	
1:50 pm – 2:10 pm	Room 1: Rethinking Rural Recreation in the Yukon Aggie Weighill Delivery: In person	Room 2: How do youth in Breton, Alberta understand and navigate their food environments? Alexa Ferdinands, Matt Ormandy, and Maria Mayan Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Vitamin D in the North Dr. Andy Roebuck Delivery: In person	
2:10 pm – 2:40 pm	**Refreshment Break / Poster Presentations**			
2:40 pm – 4:10 pm (Workshops)	Room 1: Understanding Social and Political Attitudes in Rural Canada via Ethnography: Interim Reflections on Method, Purpose and our Initial Findings Clark Banack, Dionne Pohler, and Laticia Chapman.	Room 2: Remote Controlled: Technology Adoption, Economic Development and the Future of Work in the Canadian Mining Industry Heather Hall, Kelly Vodden, Sarah Breen, Joelena Leader, Leanna Butters, Mackenzie Crabbe, Brady Reid, and Laura Stern	Room 3: Hybrid Room Unveiling the Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Valuation, Promotion, and Opportunities for Northern, Rural, and Remote Communities Agnieszka Pawłowska- Mainville, Kristin Catherwood Mantta, and Dariusz Brzostek	

4:10 pm – Group A 4:40 pm – Groups B	**Shuttle Yukon University to Sternwheeler Hotel**
6:15 pm - 9:30 pm	**Conference Banquet** **Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, 1171 Front Street**

Note: The outdoor Fireweed Community Market is held from 3:00 pm-7:00 pm every Thursday during the summer months at Shipyards Park – 100 Ogilvie St. (15 minute walk from the hotel and a 5 minute walk to the banquet venue).

Friday, May 24th - Morning Sessions

7:50 am – Group A 8:20 am – Group B	**Shuttle Sternwheeler Hotel to Yukon University**		
8:00 am – 9:00 am	**Morning Refreshments**		
9:00 am - 9:20 am	Room 1: "We need healthcare aides so bad": Students' critical reflections on a tuition assistance program in rural Alberta Matt Ormandy, Alexa Ferdinands, Lesley Hodge, and Maria Mayan Delivery: In person	Room 2: Heart Failure Screening in Moose Factory, Ontario: Early Results and Lessons Learned to Facilitate Early Intervention and Specialist Cardiology Care in the James and Hudson Bay region Dr. Sam Petrie Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Navigating Healthcare Access in Northern British Columbia: A Scoping Review for Remote, Rural, and Indigenous Communities Julia Campos Climaco Delivery: Virtual	

9:20 am - 9:40 am	Room 1: Examining the impact of the Tłı̨chǫ Highway on food security and other determinants of health and wellbeing in Whatì, NWT Sarah Jones and Garra Dryneck Delivery: In person	Room 2: Emergent and regional: networked climate governance across rural and remote Northern British Columbia Sinead Earley and Sarah Korn Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Exploring Food Hubs as a vehicle for building resilient local food systems Sarah Breen, Lindsay Harris, and Damon Chouinard Delivery: In person	
9:40 am – 10:00 am	Room 1: Regional Policy in Multi- Level Sport Governance in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut: History and Implications Britta Peterson, Sofia Pantano, Audrey Giles, and Kyle Rich Delivery: In person	Room 2: "What I Love": Expressing community well-being through the art and words of the children of Cape St. George Kelly Vodden and Nina Tourette-Retieffe Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Indigenizing and Decolonizing Data Collection on Houselessness Linda Bernicki Delivery: Virtual	
10:00 am – 10:20 am	Room 1: Inclusivity of Structural Functionalism: An Auto-Photovoice of Barriers for People with Mobility Issues Across Downtown Whitehorse Yukon Jeffrey Lazeo Delivery: In person	Room 2: Navigating Housing Systems in Rural, Regional, and Remote Canada: Uncovering Leverage Points for Sustainable Solutions Trishtina Godoy-Contois Delivery: In person	Room 3: Hybrid Room Comparison of Rural Towns With and Without Railway Lines Prescott C. Ensign Delivery: Virtual	
10:20 am – 10:50 am	**Refreshment Break**			

10:50 am – 12:20 pm (Workshops)	Room 1: Food Security Challenges and Opportunities in Rural Yukon Communities Michelle Watson, Simone Rudge, Sarah McPhee-Knowles, Kim Rumely, Aili Fraser, Kari Johnston, and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation	Room 2: Putting feminist and participatory research to work in the Yukon: lessons learned from Yukon Women in Trades and Technology Monica Batac, Liz Peredun, and Ruth Wilson	Room 3: Building Capacity in Northern Saskatchewan through Higher Education and Global Partnerships Emmy Stavostrand Neuls Delivery: Virtual ******** Using community data to tell local stories about rural community development Michel Frojmovic, Jayme Jones, Rachel Lewis, and William Dunstan Delivery: Virtual (1 hour Session)	Room 4: Place-based Philanthropy's impact and Potential for Community and Economic Development in Rural and Northern Canada Alex Petric, Ryan Gibson, Sean Markey, & Kelly Vodden
12:20 pm – 1:00 pm	**Closing Plenary – Becoming: The Story of YukonU, Canada's First University North of 60**			
1:15 pm – Group A 1:45 pm – Group B	**Shuttle Yukon University to Sternwheeler Hotel**			
	Lunch on your own			

Presentation Abstracts

Day One – Morning Sessions I

Time: 9:50 am –10:10 am

Title: Unveiling the Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Valuation, Promotion, and Opportunities for Northern, Rural, and Remote Communities

Presenters: Agnieszka Pawłowska- Mainville, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC); Kristin Catherwood Mantta, Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation; and Dariusz Brzostek, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

The workshop will delve into the intricate relationship between Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), soundscapes, memory, and the methods of ICH valuation. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the significance of ICH in various spheres, emphasizing its role in preserving cultural diversity, fostering community identity, and contributing to sustainable development and comprehensive decision-making in resource-exhaustive projects and legal contexts. The workshop aims to equip participants with practical guidelines linked to incorporating valuation measures into own activities based on themes related to soundscapes, oral traditions, land-use studies, environmental assessments, economic development, and community well-being. The workshop is designed for Indigenous communities, community members, heritage professionals, educators, industry, cultural enthusiasts as well as community leaders interested in understanding, and safeguarding cultural heritage and languages in northern and remote regions. It will involve a combination of presentations, case studies, hands-on activities, and group discussions; participants are encouraged to share their experiences and insights to enrich the collective understanding of the intricate relationship between soundscapes, memory, and living heritage. Expected outcomes: (1) increased awareness of the importance of preserving ICH in a globalized context; (2) enhanced understanding of 'living heritage' in northern, rural, and remote areas; (3) participants will have a concrete plan to begin identification and incorporation of ICH into their research, work, and community initiatives to better value cultural heritage elements in diverse spheres. Workshop Duration: 90 minutes

Title: The 5Cs Framework for Local Economic Recovery & Resilience

Presenters: Heather Hall, University of Waterloo; Tara Vinodrai, University of Toronto

Over the last decade, the concept of rural resilience has captured the attention of rural researchers, practitioners and policymakers. While rural resilience can be described as a "fuzzy concept" (Markusen 2003) with roots in ecology, as McManus et al. (2012:22) argue, "[a]t the heart of the notion of resilience is the idea that there is something about a local community that enables it to cope with changing circumstances." Between May 2020 and July 2021, we worked in partnership with the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on rural economic development and the responses needed for recovery. Through this research, we developed the 5Cs framework to understand local economic recovery and resilience in response to economic disruption.

The 5Cs include the importance of Context, Capacity, Creativity, Collaboration, and Connectivity. While our research emerged from a global health emergency, local economic disruptions are becoming increasingly common in the face of climate emergencies, technological change, and economic restructuring, as well as shifting rural development policies and geo-politics. In this presentation, we argue the 5Cs framework is well-suited for understanding local economic recovery and resilience and provide insights for both theory and practice.

Title: Braiding Food Systems: Co-Constructing Sustainable Seed Systems with Northern Ontario First Nations

Presenters: Charlotte Potter, University of Guelph; Silvia Sarapura, University of Guelph; Paul Benalcazar, University of Guelph; Annette Peltier-Flamand; and Corina Thompson

Cold weather and harsh northern climates combined with colonial oppression, racism and marginalization experienced by Indigenous communities in Canada have limited the capacity and presence of food growing in Northern Ontario First Nations. Climate and land-use change and natural resource exploitation threaten local food systems (hunting, fishing, gathering), while rising food and transport costs impact access to purchased foods in northern communities. Responding to calls from First Nations leaders for greater support for food production to complement existing food systems, Braiding Food Systems is a three-year collaborative research project (University of Guelph, Wiikwemikong Unceded Territory, Nokiiwin Tribal Council, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs). Four Ontario communities (Pic Mobert, Fort Williams, Rocky Bay, Wiikwemikong) will collaborate to 'rematriate' Indigenous seeds and food growing practices while learning through action to build capacity and strengthen Indigenous food sovereignty and food security. This presentation outlines activities, progress and outcomes from year-one of this research project, describing the relationship building process and actions taken to ensure equity and collaboration in research. We will present our workplan and strategy for year 2 and 3, proposed approach to data collection, capacity strengthening, and sustainability; and key considerations for collaborative research.

Title: Breaking path dependency? Factors to enhance capacity for rural local governments in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

Presenters: Joshua Barrett, University of Guelph

Path dependency, often coinciding with the downloading of various responsibilities with reduced funding from higher levels of governments during the neoliberal era, has led to capacity challenges for rural local governments to pursue sector diversification activities. Despite these challenges, research has indicated that, through entrepreneurial efforts, breaking path dependency is possible. Drawing from Staples Theory, Evolutionary Economic Geography, New Public Management and New Localism as well as primary data from key informant interviews, this paper identifies five factors that influence the capacity of rural local governments to break path dependency. In doing so, it identifies a relationship between New Localism and local governments, and its potential as a bridge for rural economic development. These findings are important, as they contribute to the limited but growing literature related to New Localism and its potential applications for rural local governments in Canada to facilitate economic development.

Time: 10:15 am –10:35 am

Title: Documenting the community engaged work of a Youth Advisory Committee in rural Alberta

Presenters: Maria Mayan; University of Alberta; Matt Ormandy, University of Alberta; and Alexa Ferdinands, Athabasca University

This presentation reports on preliminary data collection with members of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) in a rural Alberta community. This qualitative community-based participatory research project seeks to identify potential for youth action to implement health promoting policy and practice in their community. Data have been collected through semi-structured interviews and participant observation with members of the YAC. Qualitative data analysis has been conducted using qualitative content analysis. All participants were interviewed once each over a four-month period, and the research team attended YAC meetings to conduct participant observation and collaborate with participants.

The presentation explores four phases of the YAC: 1. The establishment of the YAC in summer 2023, 2. The development of Committee goals and priority areas for implementing health promoting policy, 3. Actions taken by the YAC to influence health promoting policy for youth, and 4. Identifying and responding to barriers to youth action. Findings may inform health promoting policy and practice change at the municipal level and may be transferable to other community contexts. Following principles of community-based research, participants have been engaged in all aspects of the research project including policy advocacy.

Title: Urbanism in the North: Lessons from Prince George

Presenters: George Rylan Graham, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)

Cities of the future will be increasingly structured to be more compact and dense, and where mobility is centred on the use of transit, cycling, and walking. Such characteristics are important in building more sustainable and resilient communities. However, these characteristics are less typical of urban areas in Canada's North. Instead, Canada's Northern cities tend to be more dispersed and decentralized, and previous development patterns have been largely oriented around the automobile. This presentation shares the findings from research based in the context of Prince George – British Columbia's "Northern Capital." Based on a survey of the community to gauge neighbourhood preferences, this research will share insight regarding the challenges of implementing plans for "urbanism in the North." Moreover, this presentation will highlight opportunities to create an urban future - but how any plans to do so must be grounded in a Northern context.

Title: Telemedicine Benefits and Challenges in Rural and Remote Pediatric Cardiology

Presenters: Vanessa De Coppi, Laurentian University; Nancy Lightfoot, Laurentian University; and Emily Donato, Laurentian University

Canadian pediatric cardiology patients living in rural and remote areas face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services that are disproportionately greater than those in urban areas. Such barriers to care result in delayed diagnoses and treatment, unnecessary transportation, inferior healthcare outcomes, financial strain, and separation from family. Telecardiology has the potential to improve access to care for these patients. The goal of this research was to understand the impacts of telecardiology on (a) access to care, and (b) health outcomes for pediatric patients in rural and remote areas of Canada, including patient and caregiver perceptions and experiences, as well as social, financial, and health system outcomes. Whittemore and Knafl's (2005) integrative review methodology was used to synthesize a diverse range of existing literature about the application of pediatric telecardiology in rural and remote settings. The theory of access proposed by Penchansky and Thomas (1981) guided this study to understand the degree of fit between patients and their caregivers, and telecardiology. The results of this research indicated that telecardiology improved access to specialist services for pediatric patients living in rural and remote underserved areas. By reducing the need to travel for specialist services, telecardiology allowed for timely diagnoses and treatment decisions, better health outcomes, and reduced direct and indirect costs for patients and their families. There was a high upfront financial investment required for the technology and specialized equipment used in telecardiology. Over time, telecardiology can result in reduced hospitalization rates and more effective use of healthcare resources. Barriers to its integration into the healthcare system include insufficient technological infrastructure in rural and remote areas, high initial telemedicine program costs, lack of health literacy, provider licensure challenges, and billing and reimbursement issues. Future policies must prioritize investments in rural healthcare infrastructure and address regulatory challenges to ensure equitable access to telecardiology.

Title: Resilient Recreation in Rural Yukon

Presenters: Caroline Sparks, Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon

Through much of the last century, recreation was regarded as a "public good." However, shifts towards cost-recovery and facility-based services have derailed the vital role that recreation can play in promoting individual health and community well-being. Public health restrictions put into place during the pandemic amplified the need for resilient recreation during times of social and economic hardship.

Recent research in rural Yukon portrays resilient recreation as relying less on facilities and providing greater access to self-led recreation. Outdoor rinks, trails, sport courts, and picnic shelters are not as costly as indoor pools and arenas and provide spaces for recreation regardless of the time of day. Self-led activities provide opportunities to participate in recreation regardless of age, ability or means.

The Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon takes a purposeful approach to supporting rural communities to engage their citizens in active, healthy lifestyles. The focus is on recreation that is inclusive, accessible, and "lighter" or less of a burden on community resources. Recognize how this approach contributes to resilient recreation and ultimately contributes to Yukoners' health and well-being.

Title: Provincial Sport Organizations' Perspectives on Rural and Remote Communities in Ontario

Presenters: Dante Losardo, Brock University; and Kyle Rich, Brock University

Actors in Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) play an important role in the implementation of sport policy and the development of sport participation opportunities in diverse community contexts. In this study, we examine PSO actors' understandings of rural and remote communities and how these understandings impact sport policy at the regional level. We employed an instrumental case study methodology. Data were collected through document analysis of organizational strategic plans and semi-structured interviews with 12 decision-makers from PSOs in Ontario. Data were then analyzed using thematic analysis.

Preliminary findings indicate that while the needs of rural and remote communities were not necessarily reflected in the formal policies of PSOs, many organizations provided additional resources and training opportunities to support these regions. Additionally, actors from PSOs acknowledged and considered biases held towards rural/remote communities and the role that these biases played in policymaking, for example, related to hosting championships/events. By investigating the viewpoints of PSO actors, we shed light on how institutional factors impact the development of sport participation opportunities in rural and remote areas. Our research highlights the theoretical and practical implications of regions for sport governance within the province of Ontario, and how rural and remote communities are positioned within this organizational field.

Title: Moving In, Moving On & Moving Up: Exploring Population Movements to and from Rural Canada

Presenters: Sydney Whiting, The Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy; Lars Hallstrom, The Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy; and Stacey Haugen, The Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy

While more immigrants and refugees are settling in rural and smaller places across Canada, through provincial and national settlement policies and dispersal efforts, immigration continues to be a largely urban phenomenon. Movements to and from rural communities are largely understudied and the impacts are not well understood. In this presentation, we discuss the findings from a year-long research project that explored rural-urban population movements in Canada within a broader context of rural decline and ever-growing human displacement. Funded by a SSHRC Connections grant, the project organized and facilitated three scenario planning workshops across rural Canada with local decision-makers and practitioners working with newcomers in the local area. Held in Lethbridge, AB, Antigonish, NS, and Prince George, BC, the workshops fostered participant-led discussions around rural-urban mobility, immigration and resettlement policies, and the rural experience. Across the workshops, participants emphasized that while immigration can be beneficial for both newcomers and rural communities, they stressed the need to shift Canada's transactional and siloed approach to immigration to one that is more relational, holistic, and attentive to local realities. In order to include a federal/national perspective, this project also includes the results from a comparable workshop to be held in Ottawa in spring 2024.

Title: Co-designing Accessible Sport, Recreation, and Leisure Opportunities with Ugpi'ganjig and the Town of Heron Bay, New Brunswick: Lessons from the Recreaplex

Presenters: Julia Frigault, University of New Brunswick; Jackie Oncescu, University of New Brunswick; and Colleen Gauvin, Mi'gmaq Elder, Ugpi'ganjig

Research suggests that sport, recreation, and leisure (SRL) has historically and currently been sites of inequality, racism, and colonialism in Indigenous peoples being unable to participate in predominantly Eurocentric SRL opportunities. The Mi'gmaq community members of Upgi'ganjig (Eel River Bar First Nation) are no exception and have experienced barriers that prevent them from participating in SRL in northern New Brunswick (NB). The most noted constraints were unwelcoming SRL facilities, fear of judgment, and a lack of information on available programs/services. To confront these challenges, the Reimagining Access to Sport, Recreation, and Leisure (RASRL) team used human-centred design and community-based participatory action research to bring together Ugpi'ganjig Elders and staff from the Town of Heron's Bay Recreaplex to co-create solutions to address the barriers that prevented Elders from accessing and participating in the Recreaplex's programs. Through a collaborative co-design experience, a Mi'gmaq Elder and Recreaplex staff organized a bus trip to the Recreaplex to connect Elders and staff while learning about SRL opportunities available at the facility. This presentation aims to share the findings of this co-designed process and how it can support a sense of belonging and dignified access to community recreation facilities for Indigenous peoples in northern NB.

Day One – Morning Sessions II

Time: 11:30 am –11:50 am

Title: Addressing labour shortages through newcomer attraction in rural Ontario and British Columbia

Presenters: John Dale, University of Guelph; and Ryan Gibson, University of Guelph

This research investigates labor shortages and challenges in rural Ontario and British Columbia. It engages diverse stakeholders from various economic sectors including newcomers (both new Canadians and rural residents), rural businesses, and economic development agencies. The study focuses on various newcomer groups that contribute human capital, such as newcomers from urban areas, immigrant newcomers, and temporary migrants.

The goal is to better-understand the issue and propose innovative solutions by capturing the experiences of individuals integral to rural life. This approach aims to identify actionable policies and strategies for attracting, retaining, and welcoming newcomers to support rural business in their efforts to meet evolving employment needs.

Title: Remote controlled: The impacts of disruptive technologies in the Ontario agriculture sector

Presenters: Heather Hall, University of Waterloo; Tara Vinodrai, University of Toronto; and McKenzie Huneke, University of Waterloo

Advances in technology, like smart farming, precision agriculture and genetic advancements, have the potential to fundamentally reshape the future of work and the development of rural communities across Canada. Interest in technology in the agriculture sector is being driven by several global trends, including meeting the growing global demand for food, responding to the impacts of climate change, and the growing attention to food security and food safety. Little is known, however, about the adoption of technologies in the Ontario agriculture sector and the impacts on rural communities. To address this gap, this project has explored emerging technologies in the Ontario agriculture sector and their impacts on the future of work and economic development through key informant interviews with industry experts, farm operators, and technology producers. This presentation will summarize findings from this research including the technology bring adopted, the potential impacts (including opportunities and challenges) on workforce development and business development as well as innovative responses to these impacts.

Title: Inuit Community Knowledge Sharing in Recreation

Presenters: Leila Kelleher, Parsons School of Design; Qumangaapik Arnatsiaq, Recreation Director, Hamlet of Igloolik (Nunavut); Sherri Branscombe, Humber College (Ontario)

The 25 Inuit communities of Nunavut exclusively rely on fly-in access, limiting opportunities for knowledge and skill-sharing in recreation. One exception is the Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut (RPAN) yearly training conference with participants from across the Territory. Based on our involvement in previous conferences, we observed a desire to exchange knowledge and experiences that embraced an Inuit-specific approach that could be applied to recreation in the North.The recreation leaders observed that practices and trainings from southern Canada may not always be applicable in the unique context of Nunavut.

In 2019, we facilitated the process to share Inuit- and Nunavut-specific practices and traditions for planning recreation events and sports tournaments. In this presentation we will discuss the process we used to facilitate identification and synthesis of best-practices in Nunavut recreation. We produced a physical resource that could be used in the planning of events and tournaments in the North. The resource was offered in four languages, and designed with artwork that was conceptualized by the Indigenous leaders. The decks were distributed to the leaders and training on how to use the cards was delivered at the 2022 RPAN conference. In this presentation, we will discuss the process of creating, developing, and using the card decks in day to day work as a recreation leader.

Title: Past and Present Informing the Future: A Case Study of Cultural Heritage Tourism in Louisbourg, NS

Presenter: Nicole Breedon, Rural Development Institute (RDI)

The importance of leveraging Cultural Heritage for the sake of knowledge preservation and exploration into the tourism sector cannot be understated. The Fortress of Louisbourg is an excellent example of rural tourism, as it continues to attract tourists from across Canada and beyond despite its remote location on Cape Breton Island. The Fortress was first declared a National Historic Site in 1928, but the partial reconstruction of this French Fortress is what attracted tourists to this municipality in the 1960s. In 2017, Dr. Amy Scott from the University of New Brunswick, in partnership with Parks Canada, established a bioarchaeological field school at Louisbourg to address ongoing coastal erosion, allowing students to build their bioarchaeological skills. Secondarily, ongoing bioarchaeological excavations have been supported and highlighted by Parks Canada to enhance the overall tourist experience.

Throughout the 2023 bioarchaeological field season, surveys were administered to 30 tourists inquiring about their Fortress experience, and interests and values as tourists in Canada. Of these 30 guests, 96.7% indicated it was important for people traveling in Canada to visit Cultural Heritage sites, like the Fortress. These research findings exemplify how investments into local Cultural Heritage may provide communities opportunities to enhance economic development through tourism.

Time: 11:50 am −12:10 am

Title: Learning from One Another: A comparative analysis of labour market needs and corresponding skills in Northern Ontario, Yukon and Nunavut

Presenters: Amanda Thompson, Conference Board of Canada

This project, undertaken for Canada's Future Skills Centre, drew in various Indigenous, government, and post-secondary partners from Northern Ontario, Yukon and Nunavut. It features a labour market analysis and economic forecast for each region from 2024 to 2045, as well as descriptions of the in-demand skills and key challenges to workforce and skills development in these northern regions. This is complemented by an analysis and showcase of training and skills development initiatives across the regions.
The presentation will disseminate some of the occupations and skills that will be in demand across these northern regions in the coming years as well as key challenges to sourcing these skills from within these northern regions. It will also discuss solutions that are currently being implemented across the regions to support labour market participation and skills development. This includes best practices for training initiatives that support skills development for populations living in rural and remote communities and for groups traditionally under-represented in the labour market in some sectors including Indigenous people and women.

Title: Placing Remoteness: A Critical Topography

Presenters: Dr. Jessica Becking, Independent Researcher/Trent University

The concept of the remote is a perilous one, particularly in the face of sustainability. The remote conceptually implies an inherent placelessness, it is that which is not here and, as such, is often conceived of as a terra nullius, a place that is empty, and therefore a place susceptible to colonization. "Empty places" are places where we can build wind farms, quarries, and mines, places where we can incise humanity into deep time with little thought for the landscape and the culture that covers it. Sustainable livelihoods and sustainable communities in remote contexts require a deep and nuanced understanding of place and the heritage and cultural significances that makes it a place for those who are local to it. Through the discussion of 3 "remote" wind farms and the communities impacted by them, this talk will explore the concept of "remoteness" and its relationship to sustainability and place, and open up, for reflection, how we can co-create futures that are sustainable, Northern-led and mindful of the depth of culture that surrounds us.

Title: Multiple Logics in Rural Municipal Recreation: The Case of Cochrane and Timiskaming Districts

Presenters: Tammy Borgen-Flood, Brock University; and Kyle Rich, Brock University

Despite the recognized benefits of municipal parks and recreation services, research on their delivery in rural and northern areas remains scarce. Given the challenges faced by rural municipal governments in attempting to provide these essential services with less resources, understanding the factors that influence the delivery and policy of municipal recreation is vital for enhancing citizens' quality of life. In this research, we draw from a case study of Cochrane and Timiskaming Districts. Data were collected through document analysis and analyzed using a deductive analysis process informed by institutional theory. The research explored the logics (i.e., beliefs and assumptions related to policy) that underpin decision-making regarding recreation service delivery in Northeastern Ontario. The findings highlighted that multiple logics drive field-level practices within municipal recreation. We suggest that policymakers strategically align their ways of operating with these logics to gain resources required to develop and implement programs. In conclusion, we highlight a need for municipal recreation organizations to develop policy that is aligned with their respective municipal governments. We will offer both practical and theoretical implications of our work.

Title: The Role of Intermediary Organizations in Supporting Rural Arts Education

Presenter: Dr. Tiina Kukkonen, Queen's University

Across Canada, the arts have emerged as a key strategy for revitalizing and sustaining rural communities, namely by developing the creative sector and nurturing the wellbeing of community members. Supporting youth mental health and creative skill-building through arts education is particularly critical, in this sense, as the vitality of rural communities depends significantly on retaining a thriving youth population.

Access to arts education for youth, however, is not consistent across Canada, particularly in the realm of school-based arts education. This issue is exacerbated in rural and remote communities experiencing additional barriers, such as the costs and distance involved with going on field trips, ordering art materials, and offering teacher professional development in the arts. In these circumstances, rural schools might seek out the help of a third-party intermediary organization to facilitate partnerships with artists, funding bodies, and other entities to support arts education. In this presentation, I will present key findings from my doctoral research that illustrate how intermediary organizations support rural schools by a) identifying existing community assets to support the growth of arts education and b) offering key resources, guidance, and partnership facilitation to assist them in developing arts education initiatives.

Time: 12:10 am –12:30 am

Title: Innovative training strengthens capacity for recreation across Canada's North

Presenters: Caroline Sparks, The Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon

Communities across Canada's North are small and isolated. Geography, climate, small populations, high transportation costs, and a shortage of qualified staff are barriers to delivering recreation (Sparks, 2011). Yet, meaningful and culturally-relevant recreation programs and services are essential to physical and mental health and social well-being.

Recreation delivery across the North is hampered by a shortage of skilled staff. Qualified staff are hard to recruit while local residents cannot access industry certification, on-the-job training, nor the post-secondary education needed to establish careers in recreation. The Recreation North Training Program was developed to address these challenges.

Evaluation (Frank, 2018; Riessner, 2020) has found the Recreation North Training Program to be a valuable alternative for Northerners. Core competencies for working in the recreation field are developed through interconnected, micro-learning events. Training is delivered through weekly conference calls, online content and discussions, and the application of learning to work settings. Remote delivery and the use of tools appropriate to the availability of technology and bandwidth; a strong learner-centred approach; and a focus on local community and culture contribute to a training experience that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the diversity of participants from across Canada's North.

Title: Katewe'ka'tijik etek Ewipkek: Sustaining the Mi'kmaw Eel Fishery in Flat Bay

Presenters: Avery Velez, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus)

Kataq, the Mi'kmaw term for American eels, are a core part of Mi'kmaw culture across Mi'kma'ki (Mi'kmaw territory), and particularly for Mi'kmaq in the community of Ewipkek (Flat Bay, NL). As a community, Ewipkek was founded around ready access to kataq, which have been important to Mi'kmaq for food, social, ceremonial, and medicinal reasons since time immemorial. Today, the katew (eel) fishery remains crucial to Ewipkekewaq Mi'kmaw cultural identity but it has been threatened by restrictive legislation, plummeting stocks, and climate change, putting the sustainability of the local katew fishery at risk. Following an Indigenous methodology and conversation-based story-gathering, this paper tells the story of Ewipkekewaq Mi'kmaw katew fishing, explains the threats to its sustainability, and explores whether and how recognition of Ewipkekewaq Mi'kmaw Aboriginal rights to the fishery could provide an avenue to promote and protect the cultural and ecological sustainability of the Ewipkekewaq Mi'kmaw katew fishery into the future. This work is more than a theoretical exploration of fisheries rights and responsibilities in an unrecognized community; it is a contribution to Ewipkek's ongoing struggle for cultural survival in the face of destructive colonial legislation and policy.

Title: Closing the Gap: How 2+1 Roads can Save Time, Lives, and Money

Presenters: William Dunstan, Northern Policy Institute

In 2023, Northern Policy Institute published a report concluding that 2+1 roads offer a more cost-effective approach to upgrading major highways in Northern Ontario than highway twinning. 2+1 roads are three-lane roads with one lane in each direction and a passing lane alternating direction every few kilometres, along with a median barrier separating the two directions of traffic. The 2+1 model offers similar safety benefits to highway twinning but is less expensive because it does not require the construction of a second, parallel road. By offering more frequent and safer passing opportunities and reducing the number of road closures due to collisions, 2+1 roads can also improve traffic flow on transportation routes that are critical for rural and northern communities and national supply chains. Tested and proven internationally, 2+1 roads can represent the ideal road configuration on highways across rural and northern Canada where traffic levels are too high for a two-lane road but too low to justify the cost of a divided, four-lane highway. Drawing on the NPI publication, this presentation will discuss how 2+1 roads work, their advantages over alternative road configurations, and the locations where they tend to work best.

Title: Small Town Museums in Southern Manitoba and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Impacts and Responses

Presenters: Doug Ramsey, Brandon University

This paper reports on the findings of a survey small town museums in southern Manitoba in 2021 and 2022. A total of 23 completed surveys were received. In addition, 16 other museums responded that they could not respond due to issues related to COVID-19 and other operational difficulties. The survey asked respondents (directors, volunteers) a series of questions about the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on operations, and how they responded to these impacts. The findings suggest resilience in the face of change, but also point to larger issues facing rural and small town museums across southern Manitoba: eroding volunteer base, aging facilities, and rising costs. The paper concludes with recommendations for rural and small town museums (and other tourist destinations) to enhance opportunities in heritage preservation through local institutions.

Day Two – Morning Sessions I

Time: 10:10 am –10:30 am

Title: Tribal Canoe Journeys in the Salish Sea: Well- being, ancestral knowledge and techniques, Indigenous Resistance and cultural resurgence.

Presenters: Alexandre Dantas e Sousa, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)

This research examines the Tribal Canoe Journeys (TCJ) among the Coast Salish of the Salish Sea, exploring their impact on cultural resurgence, heritage preservation, and well-being. This study highlights the intricate relationship between cultural practices and Indigenous knowledge systems, underscoring the canoe's role as a vessel for ancestral wisdom and community cohesion, focusing on the construction and use of traditional canoes. The TCJ, evolving to incorporate modern navigation alongside traditional wayfinding, exemplifies the dynamic nature of cultural adaptation, challenging static perceptions of Indigenous cultures. This adaptive resurgence facilitates the intergenerational transmission of knowledge and enhances community well-being by fostering a deep sense of identity, belonging, and resilience. Through participatory observation and interviews with paddlers and master carvers, the research intends to understand how these journeys serve as a platform for Indigenous resistance and cultural revival, asserting sovereignty and reconnecting individuals with their heritage and the natural world. The findings may contribute to understanding the critical role of cultural practices in promoting mental and social well-being within Indigenous communities, highlighting the TCJ as a powerful expression of cultural identity and continuity.

Title: A Community-Based Research Approach to Boating Safety in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region

Presenters: Audrey Giles, University of Ottawa; Nia Contini, University of Ottawa; Gordon Geisbrecht; Tyrone Raddi; Manny Kudluk; Jody Illasiak; Ashley Jacobson, and Mary Gordon

Tragically, boating-related fatalities are a major contributor to loss of life in Inuit Nunangat. In 2019, a group of researchers and knowledge holders from the University of Ottawa, University of Manitoba, and the Inuvialuit Settlement Regions (ISR) received funding from Transport Canada to improve boating- and cold-water related incidents in the ISR. This work has included using a community-based approach to adapting existing programs (Cold Water Survival, Kids Don't Float, Pleasure Craft Operator Card), piloting them, refining them, and developing local instructors to deliver them. It has also included providing each community with safety equipment to meet their self-identified safety needs. In this presentation, we will provide an overview of the work that we have done and highlight our successes and challenges.

Title: Empowering Manitoba: Community Broadband Initiatives, Digital Adoption, and Priorities for Digital Transformation in all corners of the Province.

Presenters: Wayne Kelly, Rural Development Institute (Brandon University); Joel Templeman, Fallon Brooks; and Kalin Contois, Rural Development Institute (Brandon University)

Digital technologies are critical to sustainable livelihoods in rural, northern and remote Canada. The Rural Development Institute (RDI) and Internet Society Manitoba Chapter (ISOC MB) are partnering on an initiative that explores digital challenges related to connectivity and digital development in rural, northern and remote Manitoba.

Our study employs a multifaceted approach, investigating digital infrastructure, community broadband initiatives, digital adoption, and digital capacity-building practices. Within rural, northern and remote contexts, our objectives include identifying and learning from successful and unsuccessful community-based connectivity initiatives and establishing an inventory of digital services in underserved areas.

Integral to our project is the creation of a podcast series that amplifies the voices from all corners of Manitoba, showcasing their digital journey. This platform allows community members, policymakers, and digital service providers to share experiences, challenges, and successes, contributing to a rich digital transformation narrative across the province.

Our presentation will discuss the challenges and opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and knowledge sharing in addressing the digital divide and potential within rural, northern and remote communities.

Title: Engaging Indigenous children to co-create a culturally relevant tool for mental wellness

Presenters: Shonagh McCrindle; Dr Nancy Young & Mary Jo Wabano

The purpose of this study was to identify concepts of health and well-being important to Aboriginal children and youth. These concepts were necessary for the development of a culturally appropriate measure of health. METHODS: First Nation children and youth were engaged via relevant cultural teachings, a photography exercise combined with a community bicycling tour, and detailed discussions of health and well-being using photovoice. The process was guided by a conceptual model: the Medicine Wheel. The participants placed their photos on a wall mural and identified their most important concepts. These concepts were synthesized through expert consensus into items and reviewed by the broader community. RESULTS: The participants ranged in age from 8.2 to 17.7 years (mean age=12.3). Through innovative methods, children and youth identified 206 concepts representing the 4 quadrants of the Medicine Wheel: emotional, spiritual, physical and mental. These concepts were refocused, in collaboration with the community, to create a new 60-item measure of health and well-being that was primarily positive in focus. CONCLUSION: This study demonstrates the success of implementing a unique process of photovoice in combination with bicycling and informed by an Aboriginal framework. The results confirm the distinct conceptualization of health and well-being in this population and underscore the necessity for a culturally appropriate measure. This study also produced a first draft of the Aboriginal Children's Health and Well-being Measure (ACHWM).

Title: The Institutional Framework for Digital Transformation in Resource Development: Exclusion of Rural Voices

Presenters: Sean Markey, Simon Fraser University; Laura Ryser, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC); Greg Halseth, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC); and Keith Storey, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Digitalization will fundamentally change the relationship between rural and remote resource communities and resource industry labour. As with past innovations, the expectation is that some digitalization technologies will reduce labour requirements in traditional resource-related occupations while others will increase requirements in new ones. How this will play out geographically is uncertain, but it has the potential to significantly change the relationship between rural and remote resource communities and resource industry labour. This paper maps out the current state of the institutional framework for supporting the digital transformation (e.g. Industrial Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data analytics, cloud-based computing, digital twins, virtual and augmented reality, autonomous and unmanned aerial vehicles, robotics, and blockchain) in resource development across Canada. A review of industry journals over the past decade suggests that resource-based industries, governments, and universities in Canada are lagging behind other jurisdictions, but are becoming engaged in getting ready to implement digitalization strategies in resource development. However, these collaborative institutional frameworks have not yet incorporated the voices of rural labour and communities to support a just transition, with such changes having important community development and policy implications regarding the distribution of benefits from public resources from rural regions.

Title: "Eeyou ᒉᒋᐅᐳ Meechum is Everything" Finding ᒉᕝ ᐱᒸᒉᔲᐅᐳ Miyo Pimâtisiwin ᒉᒋᐅᐳ Meechum: The Good Life of Food in Eeyouch Ways of Knowing

Presenters: Stephen Penner, University of Winnipeg

Indigenous Nations have been calling for action to assure that their National food systems are protected, and though these calls are clear, those same systems remain existentially tested. The historical, environmental, economic, and socio-cultural effects challenging these food systems are evidenced in Eeyou Istchee, a Cree Nation located in Northern Québec. These uninvited disruptions have altered the way the Eeyouch wish to eat and have resulted in a host of negative outcomes.

The aim of this work was to better understand and localize how a Cree framed food system conceptualizes protection, food security and provides for well-being in Eeyou Istchee. Specific objectives were to: 1) learn how Eeyou Cree communities define healthy foods; 2) understand the relationship between the Eeyou Cree food system and individual food security; 3) understand how experiences in the colonial construct shaped contemporary Eeyou ᒉᒋᐅᐳ meechum miyo pimâtisiwin (The Good Life); and 4) develop a contextually grounded framework for an Eeyou Cree Food System as a basis to support future strategies. Eight main themes emerged. Amongst them where an understanding that Eeyou ᒉᒋᐅᐳ meechum lies in Eeyouch experience; is seen in socio-cultural health; and includes a culturally safe framework.

Day Two – Morning Sessions II

Time: 11:30 am –11:50 am

Title: Insights into the Acculturation Experiences of Newcomer Healthcare Workers in Rural Northern Ontario

Presenters: Vivien Ugwu, Brock University; and Kyle Rich, Brock University

This study explores acculturation processes in a rural community in Northern Ontario that has received newcomer healthcare workers. The research focuses on the interplay of professional adaptation, social integration, and community dynamics in rural contexts. Grounded in theories of acculturation and adopting a constructivist approach, it employs a case study methodology. Data collection involved document analysis and semi-structured interviews with the newcomer healthcare workers, their colleagues, and local community members. Data were analyzed with thematic analysis.

With 12 interviews completed, preliminary analysis points to a strong work ethic among these workers and an inclination for church participation, more so than other community activities. This suggests a pattern of selective social integration. Co-worker insights highlight these workers' professional adaptability and commitment, further enriching our understanding of the acculturation processes in rural healthcare settings. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of newcomer healthcare workers' adaption in rural and remote healthcare settings and highlights implications for policy and community support. Insights from this research can inform strategies to foster more inclusive and supportive environments for essential healthcare professionals, thereby enriching healthcare services in rural areas.

Title: Permanently Temporary: The Precarity of Migrant Labour in Prince Edward Island

Presenters: Eliza MacLauchlan, University of Prince Edward Island

Labour migration is a global phenomenon that is acutely felt in small and rural jurisdictions. The agriculture and seafood processing industries in Prince Edward Island heavily rely on migrant workers from around the world to meet their labour needs. As permanently "temporary" residents, migrant workers' employment is considered essential. However, their employment is precarious, and they have little opportunity to obtain permanent residency in Canada. This presentation draws on ethnographic fieldwork with migrant workers in rural Prince Edward Island and will provide an understanding of the realities of those that produce our food. I will discuss the experiences of migrant workers working and living on Prince Edward Island and examine possibilities for other subnational jurisdictions.

Title: Reflecting Rural Realities in Federal Programs and Policies: The Centre for Rural Economic Development at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Presenters: Darroch Harrop, Manager, Policy Development, Centre for Rural Economic Development, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Rural Canada encompasses diverse populations with intersectional identities and realities that should be considered in policy and program making. This presentation will highlight the work of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Centre for Rural Economic Development (CenRED) in working across federal departments and agencies to help ensure that the needs and realities of rural Canadians are taken into account in all stages of the policy and program lifecycle. CenRED's approach involves collaborating with actors internal and external to government to connect and build knowledge about rural Canada, to mobilize this knowledge to action, and to assess progress in advancing economic and social development in rural Canada. This presentation will outline the functions of CenRED's staff, and the multi-faceted work they do to help ensure federal policies and programs work for rural Canadians.

Title: Experiences and Implications of Hosting Friends and Relatives in Whitehorse

Presenters: Tom Griffin, Toronto Metropolitan University; and Sarah Marsh, Manager, Industry Services, Department of Tourism and Culture, Government of Yukon

In this qualitative study, 54 Whitehorse residents shared their experiences in structured-interviews in spring 2023 of hosting out-of-territory friends and relatives. Participants were 76% female, 28% immigrants, between their early-20s to mid-70s, with 56% having lived in the Yukon for 10 years or less. Many participants were keen to share their community with friends and relatives and spent effort encouraging them to visit. Participants felt a responsible yet often stressful duty to provide a positive experience, reciprocating visitors' investment. Hosting pushed many beyond their usual routine, visiting attractions and restaurants, inspiring visits to regional destinations, and justifying increased spending.

Guests' presence, abilities, and interests meant curating tailored itineraries, caused hosts to alter their experiences of the familiar through fresh eyes, and refreshing their own attachment to the Yukon. For (im)migrants, sharing their community justified their move to guests, benefiting ongoing relationships. Guests also supported hosts, for example childcare, purchases, and emotional support. Finally, several revealed they encouraged guests to consider migrating to the Yukon, offering them support. Through hosting, Whitehorse residents not only enhance individual well-being, but also contribute to resilient tourism demand, community reputation, newcomer settlement, community cohesion, pride and cultural vitality, with meaningful policy implications.

Title: The contributions of Indigenous-led conservation and land-based livelihoods to resilient communities and environments in the Dehcho Region, Northwest Territories

Presenters: Emalee A. Vandermale, Thompson Rivers University

Many rural and northern Indigenous communities in Canada are pursuing innovative Indigenous-led conservation partnerships with Crown governments as critical alternatives to Western conservation and extractive industries that disrupt their land-based livelihoods. Indigenous-led conservation describes various initiatives, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and Indigenous guardians. These are characterized by Indigenous leadership in the governance and stewardship of their ancestral territories, guided by localized knowledge and priorities. All new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas are in northern regions with high natural resource value and where Indigenous communities experience land access challenges, causing various community concerns. Indigenous-led conservation offers unique opportunities to bolster land-based livelihoods that address these challenges. This talk examines Indigenous-led conservation and land-based livelihoods in the Dene Métis community, Fort Providence, Northwest Territories, which is located adjacent to Canada's first official Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, Edéhzhíe. Guided by Indigenous methodologies, I present the analysis of 21 semi-structured interviews with Elders, knowledgeable land-users, and community members. While tourism development is currently limited, participants are hopeful about Edéhzhíe's contributions to sustainable economies, cultural resurgence, and environmental stewardship in the Dehcho Region. Participants demonstrate that Indigenous-led conservation and tourism can challenge colonial, capitalist land-use regimes and foster community and environmental resiliency.

Title: A community-based resiliency assessment framework for Gender-Based Violence in the Yukon

Presenters: Aja Mason, Yukon Status of Women Council; Sara McPhee-Knowles, Yukon University; Jordan Aslett, Yukon University; and Lisa Kanary, Yukon University

Gender-based violence (GBV) data is a problem in rural, remote, and northern (RRN) contexts because minimal GBV data are collected, and GBV is underreported. Furthermore, confidentiality limitations prevent the use of existing data. As a result, people living in RRN contexts have reduced access to GBV-related services and experience increased likelihood and severity of GBV incidences. This ongoing project proposes a unique solution. By demonstrating the relationship between a community's capacity to mitigate, prevent or respond to GBV, and an individual's associated level of risk related to GBV within the community, we aim to circumvent existing data constraints. Using an intersectional framework, our GBV resiliency assessment matrix will use key indicators derived from reliable data at the community level. We plan to create an online interactive dashboard that will enable users to assess the resiliency associated with a particular community and provide standardized policy and social service recommendations regarding community-specific ability to mitigate GBV. The primary audience for this project is the Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Board who will use this tool to assess the impact of resource extraction projects. In this presentation, we will provide an overview of the Yukon context, explain the need for the community-level approach, and describe the project's intended outcomes.

Title: Privileging YFN voices in Education: One (caucasian) teacher's humble journey realizing 'Indigenizing' is just another colonial buzzword

Presenters: Gwyneth Kovachik-MacNeil, Lakehead University

Westernized education has subjugated and marginalized Yukon First Nation (YFN) knowledge systems, ignoring contemporary sociopolitical, economic, language, health, and ecological issues facing YFN communities. It has been an act of objectification, a discourse in deficits, and a violent act which strips away the spiritual, emotional, ecological, and physical traditions. Education needs to prepare YFN students to examine the structures in place so they can be vocal, and actively work to help build up their communities rather than passively accepting whatever circumstances exist because of colonial structures. Education can contribute to the disruption and dismantling of colonial dispositions that are structural and symbolic forms of violence, acknowledge and challenge the epistemologies which have shaped the colonial-YFN relationship, and foster conversations necessary for the future. Education can, and should, provide a space allowing for the active participation of Yukon youth in reconciliation, and begin to reclaim space for diversity, equity, and inclusion. This presentation aims to provide a starting point for questioning systemic racism and colonial power relations at play in the education system that deligitemize YFN ways of knowing, being, doing, and growing, with important implications for how Western-educated and non-YFN educators teach, study, and conduct themselves in a Yukon context. I hope to spark discussion around how education can empower youth through their education so they can contribute to building a future that honors the true heritage of the Yukon, privileges YFN ways of knowing, being, and doing, and facilitates peacebuilding. I also hope to begin unraveling what the role of the educator is - particularly those of us who are visitors on stolen lands - while helping build relationships with social action at their core. This session will be narrative in nature. I will be utilizing stories that have been shared to me by my students about their heritage - their histories - and their interactions when navigating a colonial system, originally designed to eliminate their way of life. Their stories continue to shape how I think about and conduct work in a contentious setting alongside my YFN students, and how my work contributes - or could contribute - to the privileging and empowerment of YFN youth.

Title: How do youth in Breton, Alberta understand and navigate their food environments?

Presenters: Alexa Ferdinands, Athabasca University; Matt Ormandy, University of Alberta; and Maria Mayan, University of Alberta

Food environments (FEs) refer to the physical, social, economic, and political contexts in which people access, eat, and learn about food. FEs are increasingly being acknowledged as key determinants of youths' eating behaviours in Canada. However, FE research to date has largely been adult-driven and urban-centric. Little is known about how youth understand and navigate rural FEs. This gap may hinder the potential for health-promoting change. As such, this study aims to examine how rural youth understand and navigate their FEs.

We are conducting a qualitative study with a high school in the rural village of Breton, Alberta. We are interviewing youth to explore topics such as where and how they learn about food and nutrition, including how they internalize "healthy eating" messaging. Together we will examine how these areas intersect with other public health issues, like weight stigma, mental health, and climate change. Preliminary findings will be shared in this presentation.

This research will create space for rural youth voices in a field where they have previously been inadequately engaged. Place-based descriptions of FEs from youths' standpoint can inform the development of youth health promotion interventions, which may be scaled up for use in rural communities across Canada.

Title: Co-designing Community Sport and Recreation Provisions in Rural and Remote New Brunswick

Presenters: Jackie Oncescu, University of New Brunswick; and Julia Frigault, University of New Brunswick

Evidence suggests participation in community sport and recreation (CSR) can reduce the effects of poverty and improve the health and well-being of equity-owed residents. However, rural communities often face challenges associated with limited access to critical services, including healthcare and social infrastructure, scarcity of public transportation, larger distances to centralized service centres and limited broadband internet connections, further compounding the difficulties in enhancing participation in CSR for equity-owed rural residents. Rural CSR providers also encounter difficulties implementing and integrating sport and recreation policy goals, such as access and inclusion, due to a lack of knowledge, staff, developed and managed recreation resources and services, and funding. To confront these challenges, New Brunswick's Reimagining Access to Sport, Recreation and Leisure program used human-centred design and community-based participatory action research to bring together equity-owed rural residents, CSR providers and poverty reduction stakeholders to co-create design, implement and evaluate innovative community tactics meant to address barriers to participating in rural CSR. This presentation aims to share the findings of this co-designed collaborative process and the lessons learned when addressing social and economic inequities in rural and remote communities in New Brunswick.

Day Two – Afternoon Sessions I

Time: 1:30 pm –1:50 pm

Title: Power & Pride: Supporting women, Two Spirit, and LGBTQ+ Individuals to Stand for Local Government

Presenters: Tara Howse, Howse Business Solutions

Despite the public belief that it's important for women to be elected to government and that women can positively impact policy, actions, and decisions, the gender imbalance continues to persist at all levels of government in Canada. For members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, that imbalance is even greater.

This project reviewed barriers to women and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals from running in local governments in rural communities and simultaneously engaged and supported youth in learning about politics and government. A key takeaway from this project is just how impactful rural governments can be in influencing positive change in their community.

Title: Remote Craft: Three Cases of Design Intrusions and Social Marginalization in Artisan Communities

Presenters: Cynthia Lawson Jaramillo, Parsons School of Design, The New School

For millennia, indigenous communities have engaged in craftsmanship, which, if observed through a contemporary lens, would be recognized as designing. However, a significant shift occurred in the 1970s when designers began inserting themselves into these societies, luring them with promises of improved livelihoods. Despite being hailed as conduits to "modernity" and access points to new markets, these designers, even if unintentionally, established exploitative business models that detach the creative essence of crafting from the community, relegating artisans to mere inexpensive labor.

In this presentation, I will shed light on several such instances, delving into how these imposed models perpetuate social marginalization. These dynamics epitomize what Colombian scholar Alfredo Gutiérrez terms as design south(s), a phenomenon even observable in ostensibly geographically "northern" regions.

Drawing on my fieldwork research with traditional and indigenous communities in Guatemala, the United States, and Sápmi (northern Finland), I will describe the craft activities within each community and the impact of design and designers on both support and marginalization. In the context of an exploitative artisan sector, I contend that it is the very remoteness of these communities that should position them at the center of sustainable futuring, and not marginalized at its periphery.

Title: First Nation people on Indian (Act) reserves face barriers from different education access

Presenters: Shirley Thompson, Natural Resources Institute (University of Manitoba)

To resolve the housing crisis on reserves, educational opportunities are needed on Indian reserves to educate First Nations people to become skilled housebuilders, architects, engineers, designers, housing managers and emergency managers. Educational opportunities for housing education are limited on Indian reserves, starting in secondary school, without carpentry, welding, mechanic and other apprenticeship programs, which occur in most schools off-reserve. These on-reserve secondary school systems limited offerings impact postsecondary admission, often requiring students to wait until 21 years to be admitted as mature students.

Low postsecondary participation rates for First Nations people on reserves indicate barriers to access. These reserves are under the Indian Act and under federal jurisdiction, but public colleges and universities are subsidized by the province. Most Indian reserves are large distances from universities and colleges, but distance and remote learning provides possibilities for access. Manitoba recently in 2023/24 started four learning hubs on 63 Indian reserves- this provides limited access but shows the possibilities. Postsecondary education is also very expensive with in-person education cohort on-reserve costing twice or three times that of Canadian tuition rates, as public universities and colleges can charge cost-recovery and make profit on Indian reserves.

Title: Rethinking Rural Recreation in the Yukon

Presenters: Aggie Weighill, Vancouver Island University

Despite the essential role of recreation in the health and well-being of individuals and communities and the rural nature of Canada, rural recreation has received limited attention from researchers (Weighill et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aimed to explore pandemic impacts on residents and recreation delivery and document how recreation can assist with pandemic recovery.

Using a participatory rural appraisal approach, data were collected in five communities through eight modified world cafes and 28 key informant interviews. Analysis was conducted following the principles of qualitative description using a deductive thematic approach that focused on the primary questions of the study.

Three narratives emerged from the data: (a) recreation funding and programs are focused on youth, (b) physically active recreation has been defined as sports or fitness, and (c) indoor recreation facilities are necessary for all communities. In contrast, it was found that (a) most engaged in outdoor recreation and on-the-land activities, (b) outdoor facilities and infrastructure would meet most community needs, (c) programs should promote social connections and wellbeing, and (d) there is a need for physical and social experiences across the lifespan.

Title: First Nation Perspectives on Healthy Aging

Presenters: Mark Christopher, Yukon University; Liris Smith, Yukon University; and Elder Jerry Soltani

The Canadian population is aging rapidly. Statistics Canada projects that the proportion of the Indigenous population over 65 years old will increase from 9% (2021) to 18% in 2036. This speaks to the need for culturally sensitive ways to support Indigenous Elders to live longer, healthier lives.

The Canadian Frailty Network (CFN) has developed the research-informed AVOID Frailty model, with five core elements; Activity, Vaccinate, Optimize medications, Interact, Diet and Nutrition. This research project was inspired by conversations with Yukon Elders following a presentation about the AVOID model in November 2022. Feedback indicated that the current model is not culturally appropriate and consultation with Indigenous peoples is required to improve the model's culturally relevance.

Recruitment is facilitated in partnership with Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's' Circle. We are conducting semi-structure interviews with Yukon Indigenous participants, aged 55 years and older. Researchers gain perspectives on what healthy aging means and obtain feedback on the components of the AVOID model.

This research aims to take a strengths-based approach to understand Indigenous perspectives on healthy aging within a Yukon context. Research findings will help CFN revise and adapt the AVOID Frailty Framework through an Indigenous lens, to support healthy aging among Indigenous communities.

Title: Vitamin D in the North

Presenters: Dr. Andy Roebuck, Yukon University

There is considerable need for focused mental health and neuroscience research in the North. Research and approaches developed elsewhere often fail to consider or otherwise address the unique needs and resiliencies of Northern communities. This is particularly concerning as environmental, social, and cultural factors are known to contribute to overall mental wellness and neurological health. We're currently developing a research program to look at the impacts of vitamin D on mental wellness and neurological health in the North. Most individuals think of vitamin D in the context of bone health, however, there are also well-established connections between vitamin D and the health of the nervous system. As vitamin D is produced following exposure to sunlight, Northern communities are particularly at risk from deficiencies. This talk will briefly describe the connection between vitamin D and mental wellbeing and discuss areas of upcoming research.

Title: Understanding Social and Political Attitudes in Rural Canada via Ethnography: Interim Reflections on Method, Purpose and our Initial Findings

Presenters: Clark Banack, University of Alberta; Dionne Pohler, University of Saskatchewan; Laticia Chapman, University of Alberta

We are proposing a Panel made up of three separate 15–20-minute presentations (one by each of the authors noted above) drawn from our ongoing SSHRC-funded project that employs ethnographic methods, including periods of intense, short-term immersion, interviews, and participant-observation at local events in six selected communities across rural Canada, to explore the roots of political, social, and economic attitudes of rural citizens.

This project responds broadly to the significant body of recent political science research investigating rural attitudes, much of it relying on positivist methods that, we argue, do not fully capture the reasoning, meaning-making, and personal interpretations of rural citizens experiences in their communities.

Our approach works to highlight the social element of meaning-making and pays particular attention to the community itself as a space where people "make sense" of – that is, develop opinions and attitudes about – events in and beyond their communities.

Our overarching goal is to provide a more nuanced exploration of the diversity of social and political attitudes that exist in rural communities as well as the way they are connected to future development opportunities in these regions. Descriptions of the presentations follow in the "additional comments" section below.

Title: Remote Controlled: Technology Adoption, Economic Development and the Future of Work in the Canadian Mining Industry

Presenters: Heather Hall, University of Waterloo; Kelly Vodden, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus); Sarah Breen, Selkirk College; Joelena Leader, University of Saskatchewan; Leanna Butters, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus); Mackenzie Crabbe, University of Waterloo; Brady Reid, University of Waterloo; Laura Stern, Selkirk College

Major mining companies around the world are investing in new technologies, autonomous equipment, and remote-controlled operations. There is also a growing movement to understand how these technologies are changing the mining sector and, as a result, the ways in which the mining industry interacts with individuals and communities (McNab and Garcia-Vasquez 2011). Little is known, however, about the adoption of technologies in the Canadian mining sector and the impacts on mining communities. To address this gap, Remote Controlled is a 5-year project exploring technology adoption in the Canadian mining industry and the impacts on the future of work and economic development. This panel will summarize findings from four case study regions across the country Newfoundland and Labrador; Northern Ontario; the Kootenays in British Columbia; and the Yukon. More specifically, it will provide insights on the technologies being adopted, the potential impacts (including opportunities and challenges) on workforce development and business development as well as innovative responses to these impacts.

Title: Unveiling the Significance of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Valuation, Promotion, and Opportunities for Northern, Rural, and Remote Communities

Presenters: Agnieszka Pawłowska- Mainville, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC); Kristin Catherwood Mantta,Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation; and Dariusz Brzostek, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

The workshop will delve into the intricate relationship between Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), soundscapes, memory, and the methods of ICH valuation. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the significance of ICH in various spheres, emphasizing its role in preserving cultural diversity, fostering community identity, and contributing to sustainable development and comprehensive decision-making in resource-exhaustive projects and legal contexts. The workshop aims to equip participants with practical guidelines linked to incorporating valuation measures into own activities based on themes related to soundscapes, oral traditions, land-use studies, environmental assessments, economic development, and community well-being. The workshop is designed for Indigenous communities, community members, heritage professionals, educators, industry, cultural enthusiasts as well as community leaders interested in understanding, and safeguarding cultural heritage and languages in northern and remote regions. It will involve a combination of presentations, case studies, hands-on activities, and group discussions; participants are encouraged to share their experiences and insights to enrich the collective understanding of the intricate relationship between soundscapes, memory, and living heritage. Expected outcomes: (1) increased awareness of the importance of preserving ICH in a globalized context; (2) enhanced understanding of 'living heritage' in northern, rural, and remote areas; (3) participants will have a concrete plan to begin identification and incorporation of ICH into their research, work, and community initiatives to better value cultural heritage elements in diverse spheres.

Day Three – Morning Sessions I

Time: 9:00 am –9:20 am

Title: "We need healthcare aides so bad": Students' critical reflections on a tuition assistance program in rural Alberta

Presenters: Matt Ormandy, University of Alberta; Alexa Ferdinands, Athabasca University; Lesley Hodge, ; and Maria Mayan, University of Alberta

This presentation reports on findings from a community based participatory research project in Drayton Valley, Alberta. The research team conducted informal interviews and 3 focus groups with health care aide students and recently certified health care aides (n=10) who received tuition assistance through a municipally funded initiative. We sought to answer the research question, what are the experiences of health care aide students enrolled in a tuition assistance program in a rural municipality?

Using qualitative content analysis we identified 4 themes: 1) building community connection, 2) impacts on confidence, 3) appreciative critique of the program, and 4) ambivalence about the health care aide profession.

These themes are situated within the community context of a rural oil and gas industry and the gendered and exploited profession of health care aides. This research builds on 3 years of community based participatory work with the Town of Drayton Valley and local students to evaluate the municipally driven tuition assistance program. Findings build on a limited body of collaborative work with practicing health care aides and may inform post-secondary tuition assistance policy at municipal and provincial levels.

Title: Heart Failure Screening in Moose Factory, Ontario: Early Results and Lessons Learned to Facilitate Early Intervention and Specialist Cardiology Care in the James and Hudson Bay region

Presenters: Sam Petrie, TRANSFORM HF, University Health Network

The Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) and the University Health Network (UHN) worked in collaboration to co-develop a heart failure (HF) screening pathway to bring cardiovascular care closer to home for residents in the Hudson and James Bay region. Building on an established partnership and guided by WAHA's principles and values, the pathway was implemented and executed over 6 months.

Canadian Cardiovascular Society guidelines were applied to a WAHA maintained patient roster. 37 patients were identified as at-risk for HF and further refined down to 28 patients through clinical and co-ordination considerations (such as kidney function and previous follow-up for cardiovascular complaints). Each qualifying patient was contacted by a WAHA nurse clinical coordinator and invited to be screened through brain natriuretic peptide (BNP) testing. 26 of 28 patients agreed to be screened (93% conversion rate). 24 of 26 patients completed their bloodwork. 7 patients were then identified for rapid in-community follow-up, by UHN cardiologists, within two weeks of their positive screen. 4 patients were seen, and 2 were enrolled in a remote management program for HF. This screening pathway increases the capacity of WAHA and UHN teams to provide coordinated, continuous care, focused on prevention and early intervention of HF.

Title: Navigating Healthcare Access in Northern British Columbia: A Scoping Review for Remote, Rural, and Indigenous Communities

Presenters: Julia Campos Climaco, Northern Centre for Clinical Research (NCCR)

The ongoing scoping review investigates the medical journeys from remote, rural, and Indigenous communities in Northern British Columbia, focusing on barriers and facilitators people encounter and the present state of the literature. The central question is: What is known about the pathways and challenges to healthcare access for people from remote, rural, and Indigenous communities in Northern British Columbia, including barriers and facilitators to these medical journeys? The region is characterized by geographic, cultural, and systemic factors contributing to healthcare disparities. Preliminary findings highlight the complexities of healthcare delivery, notably the reliance on emergency services for primary care due to geographic and logistical challenges, inadequate integration of services and shortage of healthcare professionals. Regarding Indigenous populations, cultural and linguistic barriers and structural racism deepen the challenges and restrict healthcare services. As the scoping review advances, it will concentrate on determining gaps and identifying areas where further study is required to establish a comprehensive understanding of the documented pathways to healthcare access and the persistent challenges. This will inform future research directions to explore innovative solutions and improvements in healthcare accessibility for remote, rural, and Indigenous communities in Northern British Columbia.

Time: 9:20 am –9:40 am

Title: Examining the impact of the Tłįchǫ Highway on food security and other determinants of health and wellbeing in Whatì, NWT

Presenters: Sarah Jones, Carleton University; and Garra Dryneck, Research Coordinator, Tłįchǫ Government

This community-based research investigates the impacts of the Tłįchǫ Highway on food security, including the traditional and market food systems, and other determinants of health and well-being for community members in Whatì, NWT. Previously only accessible by air or winter road, Whatì gained all-season road access to Yellowknife and Alberta when the Tłįchǫ Highway opened in November 2021. Tłįchǫ Government is required to report on health and well-being impacts of the Tłįchǫ Highway on Whatì, including change in harmful behaviours associated with drugs and alcohol, traffic accidents, safety for women and other vulnerable groups, and harvesting success rates and availability of traditional foods. Additionally, as the Tłįchǫ Highway provides all-season road access to the community, the Whatì community store is no longer eligible for a subsidy on retail foods and essential items through the Nutrition North Canada program. Loss of the subsidy has changed how the community store brings goods into Whatì and prices of food and other essential items at the store. This presentation will share initial findings on the impacts of the highway on the community from interviews with community members in Whatì, including initiatives to address food insecurity and other health and well-being impacts.

Title: Emergent and regional: networked climate governance across rural and remote Northern British Columbia

Presenters: Sinead Earley, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC); and Sarah Korn, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)

Cities and municipalities have emerged as important actors in climate governance, building capacity and leverage through networks. 'City networks' have led to increased agency for local governments at national and international scales but fail to represent rural and remote geographies. In response, the Northern British Columbia Climate Action Network (NorthCAN) emerged out of a desire to generate rural-to-rural connections that linked across public and private sectors. This research examines NorthCAN as a regional and multi-sector organization with the goal of accelerating low carbon transitions in Northern BC. It is informed by data collected via survey and qualitative interviews with highly active NorthCAN members. Our discussion explores the barriers and opportunities at play in this case of networked climate governance, in conversation with key themes that emerged: policy mobility, procedural justice, and community-centered transition.

Title: Exploring Food Hubs as a vehicle for building resilient local food systems

Presenters: Sarah Breen, Selkirk College; Lindsay Harris, UBCO & Kamloops Food Policy Council; Damon Chouinard, Central Kootenay Food Policy Council

Food systems around the world face unprecedented threats from climate change to global distribution and supply chain issues. At the local level challenges range from the accessibility and affordability of local food to limited capacity for production, aggregation, and distribution. These challenges can be particularly acute in rural, remote, and northern communities. In the face of these threats and challenges, alternative food networks are emerging as an opportunity to build more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable local food systems. Across British Columbia, community food hubs have emerged as one form of alternative food networks. This presentation will summarize the first year of a project exploring the role(s) that food hubs play within local food systems, investigating BC's unique approach to food hubs and if and how food hubs contribute to food system resilience. Findings will include emerging patterns and trends from a provincial food hub community of practice, as well as an in-depth exploration of two case study regions - the Kootenays and Kamloops regions. While the research is taking place within British Columbia, the presentation will include food hub examples from other jurisdictions, and a discussion focused on potential applicability and transferability of findings to remote and northern communities.

Time: 9:40 am –10:00 am

Title: Regional Policy in Multi- Level Sport Governance in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut: History and Implications

Presenters: Britta Peterson, University of Ottawa; Sofia Pantano, University of Ottawa; Audrey Giles, University of Ottawa; and Kyle Rich, Brock University

Much contemporary sport policy is focused on policy at the national (Parent et al., 2018;) and municipal (Oncescu & Fortune, 2022) levels, or in relation to community sport organizations (Rich & Misener, 2019). As such, Rich and colleagues (2023) identified a gap concerning the significance of regional actors and their implications on both institutional arrangements and policy implementation within Canadian sport governance literature. Further, very little research has examined sport policy within the Territorial North. The exploration of these gaps can play a significant role in understanding policy implementation and the agency of sport policy makers at regional levels within multi-level sport governance systems in Canada. Therefore, as part of a broader national study to explore the involvement of regional policy in sports institutions and comprehend how it affects organizational fields within multi-level sport governance systems, we collected and analyzed over 150 documents related regional policy from the Yukon, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories (NWT). In this session, we will present a critical analysis of relevant sport policy implementation in the Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut between 2002 and 2023. Our findings contribute to discussions concerning regional sport governance within the Canadian context, and specifically highlights the intersection of sport and territorial policy.

Title: Regional "What I Love": Expressing community well-being through the art and words of the children of Cape St. George

Presenters: Kelly Vodden, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus); and Nina Tourette-Retieffe, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus)

The "What I Love" initiative was a collaboration between Benoit First Nation, professors, and students at three universities, and teachers and students at Our Lady of the Cape School, NL. The goal was to encourage the community to reflect on what they love about their community, suggesting key community strengths and aspects of community well-being. The presentation will provide an overview of various aspects of the initiative, including an art workshop with Grades 4 to 6 students, community art exhibit, and community leader's meeting to reflect on the children's work. Some key observations included the high value children place on their natural environment, together with the presence of friends and family. Key community services were also recognized. Children and adults alike expressed feelings of love for the community's coastal and forested landscape and the feelings of calm, peace, and joy that it brings them. The community's small size and social bonds, including willingness to help one another were also noted, as well as the absence of technology in the children's artwork. Community leaders expressed the importance of such learning opportunities, adding that children's voices are often excluded in planning for and working towards community futures.

Title: Indigenizing and Decolonizing Data Collection on Houselessness

Presenters: Linda Bernicki, Rural Development Network (RDN)

RDN's presentation will provide participants with an insight into the co-creation of a culturally appropriate data collection tool that is community informed, built, and understands best practices to engage with Indigenous communities. We will share our journey about Indigenizing and decolonizing data collection on houselessness through co-creating a First Nations-focused and led, culturally informed, adaptable data tool that will estimate houselessness in communities. Our presentation will also discuss the historic and current state of displacement, inaccurate, misrepresented, and misinformed data collection surrounding Indigenous Peoples across Canada. We will discuss why current data collection tools do not resonate with Indigenous communities due to their largely colonial frameworks. We will provide insights and knowledge around transforming the way communities should collect and share data that includes Indigenous People - under the ethical framework of The Fundamentals of OCAP. Our team will share how our project has consulted with First Nations Peoples and communities across Canada to inform the co-creation of the data collection tool. Participants will gain an understanding of the importance of culturally appropriate data collection methodologies that resonate with First Nation Peoples and communities. As well as the importance of "By Indigenous, For Indigenous" projects.

Time: 10:00 am –10:20 am

Title: Inclusivity of Structural Functionalism: An Auto-Photovoice of Barriers for People with Mobility Issues Across Downtown Whitehorse Yukon

Presenters: Jeffrey Lazeo, Yukon University

This research addresses the potential lack of awareness of structural bias towards able-bodied people to encourage social stability using autoethnography and auto-photovoice.

The project idea stems from the researchers' experiences walking in downtown Whitehorse as they pondered what mobility barriers are faced every day by people living with mobility issues in Downtown Whitehorse that able-bodied people take for granted.

The goal is to increase awareness and acknowledgment of mobility barriers by exploring the benefits and challenges of working with auto-photography and by connecting the researcher themselves to the work by exploring their positionality concerning mobility limitations and their community.

Visually displaying examples of photographed barriers should invite viewers to feel more connection to the subject matter and think critically about mobility awareness. It is important to look at the researcher's world through the researchers' eyes because a picture is only worth a thousand words only after it has been subject to analysis.

Title: Navigating Housing Systems in Rural, Regional, and Remote Canada: Uncovering Leverage Points for Sustainable Solutions

Presenters: Trishtina Godoy-Contois, Athabasca University

This exploratory study investigates the housing ecosystem in Canada's rural, regional, and remote communities to identify leverage points and challenges for sustainable housing. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including literature review, case studies, and field research with community stakeholders, we aim to enhance housing affordability, accessibility, and sustainability through local innovations and community-led planning. Our findings highlight regulatory constraints, the impact of material transportation costs, and the potential for local design solutions to create adaptable, sustainable, and culturally responsive housing. Insights inform a practical guide for communities, offering strategies for navigating regulatory environments, adopting sustainable building practices, and implementing successful housing initiatives. This research contributes to rural housing development discourse, emphasizing local adaptation for resilient communities.

Title: Comparison of Rural Towns With and Without Railway Lines

Presenters: Prescott C. Ensign, Wilfrid Laurier University

Prior to 1990 the Canadian National (CN) and Canadian Pacific (CP) railways owned and operated hundreds of short distanced branch lines that provided rural and northern communities across Canada with freight transport to and from there mainlines. However, changes in federal government policy permitted CN and CP to sell, salvage or abandon thousands of kilometers of unprofitable branch lines with no guarantee of continued service to these communities. Although this change would benefit CN and CP - eliminating the cost of serving shippers in low density areas that required federal subsidies – it would create economic hardship for the remote areas served by the branch lines. Over the past three decades what happened to these towns at the "end of the line"? How did some manage to keep running their short line railways? What happened to others that did not? Did it make a difference with or without rail service? This presentation offers some comparative case studies that suggest answers to these and other questions.

Time: 10:50 am –12:20 am (WORKSHOPS)

Title: Food Security Challenges and Opportunities in Rural Yukon Communities

Presenters: Michelle Watson, Yukon Food Security Network; Simone Rudge, Tum Tums Meats; Sarah McPhee-Knowles, Yukon University; Kim Rumley, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate; Aili Fraser, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate; Kari Johnston, Hanes Junction Food Association/Sha Shäw Corporation; and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation.

Northern and Indigenous rural communities in the Yukon face unique food security challenges as a result of higher costs of living, fewer services, loss of traditional practices and remoteness. Food in Place will discuss some of these challenges drawing on a recent paper published by Dr. Sara McPhee-Knowles and David Gattensby as well as anecdotal evidence collected through community engagement sessions. The vulnerability of these communities also presents an opportunity for innovative food programming and community driven food systems change. This is demonstrated by the success of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate's Rural Nutrition Program in addressing food security while creating a culture around food and wellness. Other potential community-driven initiatives are explored such as the building of community wild meat processing facilities in rural communities that would reduce barriers to using wild meat in community food programs. We will also explore opportunities to increase innovation through targeted funding streams that will allow rural communities to step into their full potential as leaders in food systems change.

Title: Putting feminist and participatory research to work in the Yukon: lessons learned from Yukon Women in Trades and Technology

Presenters: Monica Batac, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology/McGill University; Liz Peredun, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology; and Ruth Wilson, University of Toronto

Conversations about the Yukon's sustainable social and economic development rarely intentionally account for or address issues facing women and gender diverse populations. This panel brings together executive directors and researchers from one feminist, gender equity organization: Yukon Women in Trades and Technology (YWITT). We share individual learnings, research and/or program examples, and organizational innovations using feminist and participatory research methods in a recent project, Doing It Right, funded by Future Skills Canada. These approaches enable researchers and organizations to prioritize community members' voices and agency, working towards concrete actions for collective action and social change. This self-reflexive sharing and group dialogue focuses on how we conceptualize and operationalize feminist and participatory approaches in our work, particularly around process and planning. We share methodological and pragmatic priorities, dilemmas, and issues to make visible the value orientations driving research and project choices and decisions to advance much needed research and collective action with women and gender diverse communities in the North. We welcome practitioners, community members, and researchers to join us to reflect on the ways feminist and participatory research helps advance the needs and concerns of some of the territory's most underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

Title: Building Capacity in Northern Saskatchewan through Higher Education and Global Partnerships

Presenters: Emmy Stavostrand Neuls, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

The joint Master of Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas (GENI) was created with the intent to build capacity for northern and Indigenous communities with relevant programming and learning to encourage sustainable futures. The program is delivered through a partnership between Johnson Shoyama Graduate school of Public Policy at the University of Saskatchewan, and the Centre for Sami Studies at UiT the Arctic University of Norway. The GENI program was built with the lessons provided by the Master of Northern Governance and Development (MNGD) that had launched after wide consultation with Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous communities and northern stakeholders (Conference Board of Canada, 2016). The conversation with a wide range of stakeholders identified the core elements of the program and focussed on the opportunity to share between northern and Indigenous communities in effort to build local knowledge capacity to deal with northern challenges and opportunities. The GENI program provided a larger global programmatic scope and expanded the regional focus to include all the Circumpolar North. Learning is facilitated by providing comparative international lessons across the Northern region and among Indigenous communities, and through two intense in-person international community-based field schools (GENI Study Plan, 2020).
With the unique development, delivery and focus, the GENI program provides lessons for higher education institutions, governments and practitioners working to ensure the sustainability and wellbeing of northern communities. The paper will highlight three lessons from the GENI program and partnerships 1) relevant programing for local, remote, and northern communities, 2) building partnerships for improving program delivery and opportunities; and 3) embracing innovation in higher education to support Northern communities. Sharing lessons support the continued commitment to building thriving northern and Indigenous communities.

Title: Using community data to tell local stories about rural community development

Presenters: Michel Frojmovic, Jayme Jones, Rachel Lewis, and William Dunstan

Data has emerged as a key asset for informed decision-making in social planning and economic development. However, rural and small communities face unique challenges due to both limited availability of credible data and the capacity to use it. This moderated panel will explore the role of the Community Data Program (CDP) in bridging this data gap. Hosted by the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), the CDP focuses on acquiring data for Canada's smallest geographies and building local capacity to use data to track and report on community well-being. The CDP enables rural and small communities to better understand local demographics, collect insights on the characteristics of local employers; examine local labour force trends; and take stock of local housing markets. The breadth of credible and detailed data available at the community-level for rural and remote Canada may be surprising to some, but understanding the data needs of municipalities big and small has been the CDP's mandate for close to 15 years.
The panel is tailored towards community planners, policymakers and practitioners involved in social and economic development initiatives, interested in leveraging local-level data. Drawing on their experience of accessing and leveraging data available from the CDP, members of the panel will refer to specific data tables, maps, and infographics available from the CDP catalogue. The panel will explain how to make better use of an existing membership in the CDP, or to understand the value of joining the largest non-profit membership-based initiative designed exclusively to address the data needs of Canadian municipal and community sector organisations.

Title: Exploring the impact and potential of place-based philanthropy for community development in rural and northern Canada

Presenters: Alex Petric, University of Waterloo; Ryan Gibson, University of Guelph; Sean Markey, Simon Fraser University; and Kelly Vodden, Memorial University (Grenfell Campus)

We share results from research exploring the role of place- and community-based organizations in rural Canada.

Gibson & Petric will share findings from interviews with community foundation representatives from rural British Columbia and Ontario. Community foundations are place-based philanthropic organizations that generate investments for community development. Canada has around 200 community foundations, with many in rural areas. Gibson & Petric will discuss foundation roles in countering wealth outflows in a globalized economy and driving community economic development.

Markey will share a case study from Northwest BC's Skeena watershed exploring impacts of community-based environmental organizations. This work highlights the role of ecosystems of local organizations in meeting environmental management needs and filling structural gaps in community development. Other reflections will explore opportunities/barriers for government involvement and the potential for community-based environmental organizations to support reconciliation efforts.

Vodden will share findings from the Atlantic Canada PhiLab hub regarding trends in philanthropy in Atlantic Canada. This work will cover recent research into philanthropy's role in supporting climate action, environmental non-government organizations (ENGOs), and food sovereignty & security initiatives in rural regions.

Following presentations, the session will include responses from local representatives and a discussion about the potential of place-based organizations in rural/northern Canada.

Poster Presentations

Home on Borrowed Land: Residential land leasing and housing attainability in the Northwest Territories

Chris Van Dyke, University of Guelph

Delivery: Poster in person

In the Northwest Territories, the practice of leasing land from the government evolved out of the territory's settler colonial roots, and in many communities little has changed. However, this unique practice has received little academic attention. This study explores the evolution of government land policy in the NWT from the Dominion Lands Act to "Land is Life," and lays out the spatial trends and economic impacts of residential land leasing in the territory. While residential land in the largest communities in the NWT is by and large situated within the typical Canadian framework of privately-owned, fee simple land, the same cannot be said for the territory's smaller communities, where more than five hundred households continue to lease their land directly from the Government of the Northwest Territories. Residential land leasing impacts majority-Indigenous communities the most, resulting in many residents paying the government a yearly fee to lease their own land. In a territory experiencing a housing crisis, the attainability of land becomes a key piece to the puzzle, and the current system, while beginning to evolve, merits critical attention.

Small-scale Rural Food Production & Supply: A New Opportunity to Preserve an Old Way of Life

Cara Shan, Athabasca University

Delivery: Poster in person

This research project investigates the untapped potential of small-scale rural food production and supply as means to realize sustainable livelihoods in rural Alberta. Against the backdrop of rural population decline and agricultural corporatization, our study aims to identify, assess, and promote viable, socially embedded food system opportunities that help preserve a rural way of life. Employing a transdisciplinary approach, the research analyzes data to document various business models and technology options such as indoor farming in retrofitted buildings or purpose-built units, passive solar greenhouses, and heat recovery options. Interviews with innovative entrepreneurs, agricultural societies, First Nations and others explore factors influencing the success and challenges faced by small-scale farms, considering market potential, public policy, community support systems, etc. The project will culminate in a toolkit co-authored by Albertan subject matter experts and mobilized through the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies' "Rural Alberta Food Technology" initiative. The toolkit will be set within a broader context encouraging systems that maintain economic benefits within communities and increase tax bases, school enrolment funding, the ability to attract newcomers, etc. While building a resource, we are also building a community of practice and fostering co-operation and mutual aid that built rural Alberta.

Exploring Northern Attitudes: "Main Street Town Square" Pedestrian Pilot Project in Downtown Whitehorse

Cathy Wan Yi Lin, University of Guelph; and Sara Epp, University of Guelph

Delivery: Poster in person

In the summer of 2023, the City of Whitehorse piloted its first pedestrian-only zone on Main St between Front St and Second Avenue. The conversion of roadway and parking stalls into a pedestrian mall was met with mixed reception. While many urban centers in Canada and around the world have successfully pedestrianized parts of their downtown in an effort to revitalize street life and reduce reliance on private vehicles, these have been implemented in largely 'southern' or metropolitan contexts with higher population density and different mobility patterns compared to the Yukon. To further understand contextual and attitudinal differences in northern Canada, this study will explore the nuanced perceptions of the "Main Street Town Square" from Whitehorse residents and businesses through content analysis of official planning reports (City of Whitehorse) and social media commentary (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Reddit). It will identify the key concerns and priorities of various stakeholders and propose recommendations for implementing a context-responsive approach to "smart growth" urban planning in the North.

Achieving Connectivity: Applying the Rural Connectivity Models to the Manitoban Broadband Ecosystem

Kalin Contois, Rural Development Institute; and Fallon Brooks

Delivery: Poster in person

The ConnectedMB Project has undertaken the task to evaluate the history and results of rural connectivity methods in rural Manitoba. To do this, the project has incorporated existing Rural Connectivity Models from the Digital Readiness Project in BC (2021). This poster will provide complimentary in-depth material to the 15-minute virtual presentation by Dr. Wayne Kelly, as his presentation will include a portion of this framework. The models have been created to categorize the various options of community broadband projects that exist within a system that lacks meaningful leadership by government entities. In its previous application the models have been able to reveal the key factors of successful broadband projects, as well as challenges. In context to our project, the models are being applied in a similar manner to help evaluate community broadband projects and to identify intriguing stories for the podcast. In this project, the models have been crucial for initial mapping of broadband projects as we begin to identify patterns among the different models and will continue to help draw meaningful conclusions after the data collection process has been completed.

Rural Equity in Emergency Planning: A Public Health Agenda

Danica Fitzsimmons, Dalla Lana School of Public Health; Amanda Mongeon, University of Guelph; & Keltie Hamilton, University of Lethbridge

Delivery: Poster in person

Rural communities face unique disparities and vulnerabilities to emergency disasters, while getting disproportionately impacted by natural disasters - the most common disaster in Canada. Within the emergency management cycle, preparedness is a vital element that can mitigate disaster consequences and has a domino effect into every level of the emergency management cycle. However, rural preparedness has not received equitable attention, particularly within the macro levels of emergency disasters. For example, there is limited peer-reviewed research on rural emergency management with limited funding opportunities to address the knowledge gap. Within federal health reports, there are several mentions of rural unique vulnerabilities to disasters. Yet, there is not a rural specific action plan or framework to address and prevent the geographic inequities. The public health agenda presented, will address the complex facets of rural emergency preparedness, through a public health and health equity lens. The agenda will draw attention to how a lack of equitable attention and geographic isolation can amplify risk during and after a disaster. This agenda proposes three solutions to help rural health equity in emergency planning.

Repurposing existing skeletal spatial structure (SkS) system designs using the Field Information Modeling (FIM) framework for generative decision-support in future construction projects

Reza Maalek, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

Delivery: Poster in person

This study revitalizes skeletal spatial structure (SkS) systems for sustainable, customizable construction, focusing on Indigenous, rural, and northern communities. Leveraging advanced digital engineering, we repurpose SkS for modern needs, employing point cloud processing and the Field Information Modeling (FIM) framework for digital redesign. Our three innovative algorithms 1) enhance FIM with generative design, 2) automate as-built SkS modeling, and 3) optimize SkS for modular production, integrating AI techniques like support vector machines for decision-making and Bayesian optimization for modularization. Validated against real-world datasets, these algorithms address engineering and location optimization in under-served areas, demonstrating significant technological progress in construction. Importantly, this research facilitates practical, hands-on digital tool training, empowering communities to control their built environments. This educational approach fosters digital construction skills, allowing stakeholders to directly impact their housing and infrastructure, aligning with sustainable development, autonomy, and cultural sensitivity. This strategy underscores digital innovation's role in improving living conditions in marginalized communities.

Risk Tolerance & Risk Perception in Rural and Remote Populations: A Scoping Review

Danica Fitzsimmons, Dalla Lana School of Public Health; & Danylo Kostirko, Public Health Agency of Canada

Delivery: Poster in person

COVID-19 highlighted health equity as a critical concern for public health in Canada. With 20% of the Canadian population living in rural and remote places, geographic health equity is a cornerstone for achieving true health equity for Canadians. These communities face unique barriers to emergency management, while being disproportionally impacted by public health emergencies. Some of those unique impacts are related to risk perception and risk tolerance. Risk perception can be defined as people's judgements and evaluations of hazards; while risk tolerance is outlined as an attitude expressing that the risk is judged tolerable. Knowing population risk perception and tolerance, allows public health to provide better health promotion and protection efforts to reduce population health disparities. To identify how risk perception and tolerance is built in rural and remote populations regarding all-hazard threats, a scoping review was conducted in February of 2024. The search was inclusive of 10 years of literature (2014-2024), from five databases, that provided 57 results. Two authors screened the results, resulting in 30 preliminary included articles. Prospective results will be presented at the conference. Findings from this review will address three gaps in literature identified by the Canadian Government as priority knowledge gap and research needs.

Leveraging technology to enhance Indigenous children's voices: the Aaniish Naa Geigii Children's Health and Wellbeing Measure

Shonagh McCrindle, CHEO Research Institute; Dr Nancy Young, CHEO Research Institute; & Mary Jo Wabano,

Delivery: Poster in person

In 2009, Wikwemikong First Nation needed a culturally relevant measure of wellness to produce data to inform local decision-making. They partnered with local scientists from Laurentian University and engaged Indigenous children directly to identify relevant content for the measure. Indigenous children's perspectives were prioritized in this process. An app was developed to administer the measure and automate reporting. The report is shared with the child to spark a strengths-based conversation. Local Health Workers can then share these deidentified data with their local leadership to better tailor programing to meet the need of the children. Indigenous communities and organizations have complete data sovereignty, detailed in agreements and consent forms. This collaboration led to the creation of Aaniish Naa Gegii: the Children's Health and Wellbeing Measure or ACHWM, based on the four quadrants of the Anishinaabe medicine wheel. The team developed a resource hub in tandem. The app is freely available across Canada. The ACHWM has always been intended to be relevant beyond one age range. We are adapting the ACHWM content for younger children (ages 4.0 to 7.9) and older youth (ages 19-29) and culturally adapting it to the communities in Wolastoqey and Iqaluit.

Accelerating Community Energy Transformation

Tamara Krawchenko, University of Victoria

The purpose of this presentation is to share information about the Canada First Research Excellence Fund project on Accelerating Community Energy Transformation (ACET) which is an initiative of the Institute for Integrated Energy Systems at the University of Victoria (IESVic). ACET focusses on energy transformation in small and medium sized communities. Three key aspects of ACET will drive transformational change: unique bottom-up approach to net-zero objectives through community engaged action and leadership; innovative place-based social, policy and economic development; translating learnings to community networks around the world. The purpose of the poster will be to raise awareness about the project and seek partners who may wish to be involved. Yukon University is one of the project collaborators.