

Usborne, ON

Twillingate, NF

Seguin, ON



Néguac, NB

Pic Mobert

Lot 16, PE

Benito, MB

Indian Brook, NS

Rhineland, MB

Springhill, NS

Okanese 82, SK

Blissfield, NB

Spalding, SK

Winterton, NF

Wood River, SK

Taschereau, QC

Hussar, AB St-Roch-de-Mékinac, QC

Ferintosh, AB Ste-Françoise, QC

Girouxville, AB Cap-à-l'aigle, QC

Tumbler Ridge, BC Armagh, QC

Mackenzie, BC St-Damase, QC

Port Alice, BC N. Plantagenet, ON

Upper Liard



Tweed, ON

Arctic Bay, NV

Carden, ON

This is booklet number 2 in the NRE “What Have We Learned” series

For information on other available booklets, please contact us at:

The New Rural Economy Project
Concordia University
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
1455 de Maisonneuve, West
Montréal QC H3G 1M8

Telephone: (514) 848-2139

Fax: (514) 848-4539

or via email at
nre@vax2.concordia.ca

or visit our website at
nre.concordia.ca

Booklet Contributors

Andy Bowers
Cindy Bryant
Mike Burns
Roger des Ormeaux
Marie-Odile Magnan
Isabelle Marceau
Andrea Sharkey
Sara Teitelbaum
Deatra Walsh
Anna Woodrow

Caution: These findings vary up to 8%!

When conducting a study that involves a sample, researchers are cautious about how they interpret the results. This is because they can never be certain that the findings will represent the whole population from which the sample was drawn.

For this survey, the ‘whole population’ is represented by the total number of households found within each selected NRE site. When you are reading these results, please keep in mind that any of these findings could vary by 8%.

WHAT DID WE LEARN IN 2001?

This is the fifth year of the New Rural Economy Project (NRE). It is an exciting time, since we are now reaping the fruits of our collaboration and hard work. This document is a small part of the harvest.

You will find two major sections in this booklet.



Ray Bollman (StatCan), Tom Beckley (UNB) and Bill Reimer (NRE)

- The NRE Household Survey 2001. This first section presents a selection of results from our household survey conducted last summer. From May to July, we knocked on doors in 21 of our NRE sites and spoke to people in just under 2000 households. They gave generously of their time and expertise to inform us about their community activities, household organization, challenges, and options regarding a range of rural issues. We have selected a few of the results so you can compare your community to others in your region and across the nation.

- The NRE in the Global context. This section fills you in on NRE events across the nation and around the world. Through its parent organization, the *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation* (CRRF), we enjoy the support of many other national and international groups. They help us understand how local events and challenges can be rooted in more global processes such as the changing demand for our resources, the introduction of new technologies, or the implementation of policies affecting economic and social programs.

Our collaboration is long-term. After four years of working together, we are enjoying a level of exchange that is exceptional for both our research and education objectives. I was particularly pleased to meet representatives from 15 of the NRE sites who joined us at the CRRF Annual Conference in Muenster, Saskatchewan last October. For three days we compared experiences, visited local projects, and enjoyed each others' company as we searched for new ways to improve the lives of rural Canadians. We invite you to join us this fall at our next meeting in Miramichi, New Brunswick (October 26th to 29th).

This booklet is prepared as part of our continuing discussion about the condition and future of rural Canada. We ask you to read it – not as a finished document – but as a basis for discussion. Let us know whether it makes sense from your point of view – whether it helps you understand what is happening in your community or whether we have overlooked something important. Write us a letter, give us a phone call at (514) 848-2139, e-mail us with your comments (nre@vax2.concordia.ca), or leave them on our web site (<http://nre.concordia.ca>). We will visit your community whenever we can – keep an eye out for us.

Dr. Bill Reimer
NRE Project Director

The NRE Project, Concordia University, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology,
1455 boul de Maisonneuve O., Montréal QC H3G 1M8

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE NRE 2001 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY TEAM

Wood River, SK

The Rural Municipality of Wood River is located in South Central Saskatchewan and encompasses the communities of Melaval, Lafleche, Woodrow and Thomson Lake. The community's main service center is Assiniboia but community members are very supportive of local amenities in order to preserve them for the future. Like other parts of rural Saskatchewan, the RM of Wood River acutely feels the effects of rural depopulation, wishing not only for a time when young people will be able to return to the rural way of life, but also for neighbours with which to share community. This thread of community and sense of neighbourliness give the RM a unique character, and promote high community involvement by residents.



Even in the face of tough times and a dry 2001 crop year, the RM of Wood River still has a strong spirit, a lot of self-determination and a desire for community members to get things done without outside assistance. Associations like the Lions' Club, Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Fire Fighters, etc., work towards strengthening the community. Along with bringing residents together, these groups provide necessary services and put on events that draw regional attention. The draw of Thomson Lake Regional Park is also a boon to the RM of Wood

River. The province's first regional park, Thomson Lake showcases the beauty of Southern Saskatchewan and brings vacationers and tourists to the area. A year-round settlement has grown around the Lake, which demonstrates the importance the local residents place on their ties to the surrounding environment.

The ability for the RM to promote tourist opportunities is also a supplement to the predominantly agricultural economy. We were warmly received by the people living in the RM of Wood River and although Wendy had a few car troubles and got stuck, she was never stranded. The neighbourliness of the community shone through as people went out of their way to help her. Karen Gerwing's assistance in scheduling our interviews was invaluable as was her sense of humour.



Wendy Moellenbeck
Site Researcher

Diane Martz
Site Coordinator



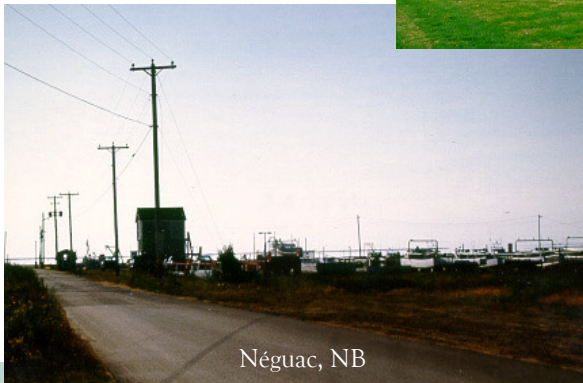
Cap-à-l'aigle, QC



Mackenzie, BC



Lot 16, PE



Néguac, NB



Springhill, NS

The NRE 2001 Household Survey



St-Damase, QC



Spalding, SK



Hussar, AB



Ferintosh, AB



Usborne, ON



Twillingate, NF



Rhineland, MB



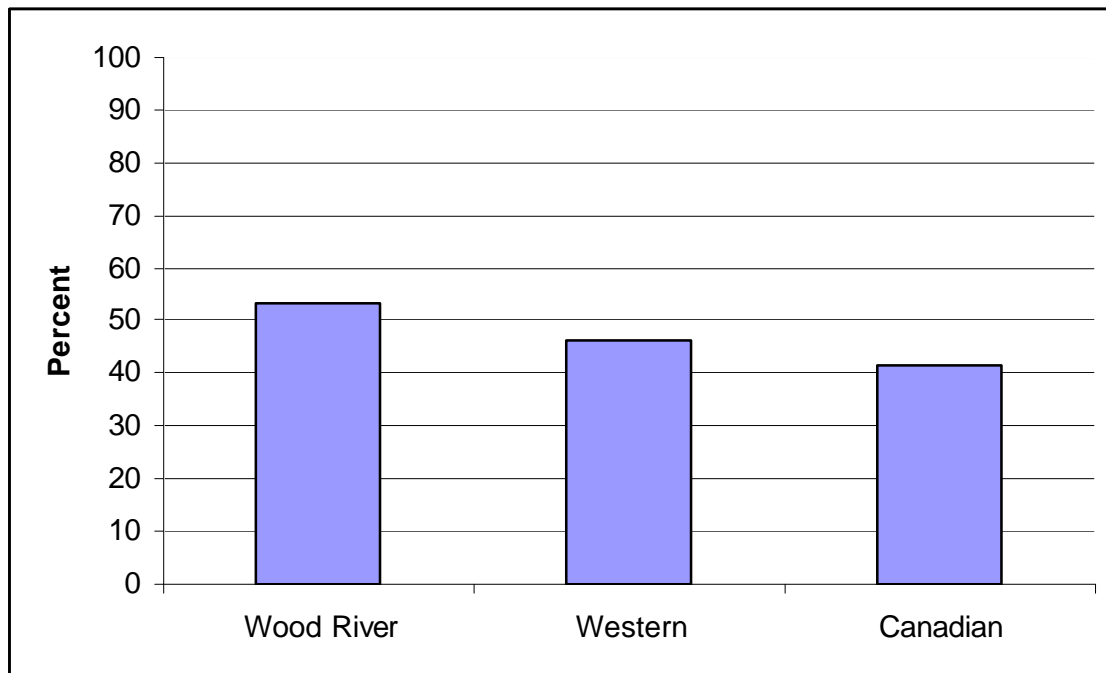
Carden, ON

Community Inclusion and Cooperation

One of the things that we tried to measure using the survey was ‘Social Cohesion’. By social cohesion, we mean the extent to which people respond collectively to achieve the outcomes they desire, and to deal with the economic social political or environmental stresses that affect them. It is difficult to measure this, but one way is to find out how residents feel about the cohesion within their community. Another way is to measure how the community works together to provide basic needs and services. This is discussed in the section titled ‘Doing Things for Ourselves and Others’.

Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements such as: “I feel like I belong in this community”, “I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency” and “I regularly stop and talk with people in my community”. The answers we received helped us to understand how the community viewed itself, and if they felt the community was able to work together to achieve success.

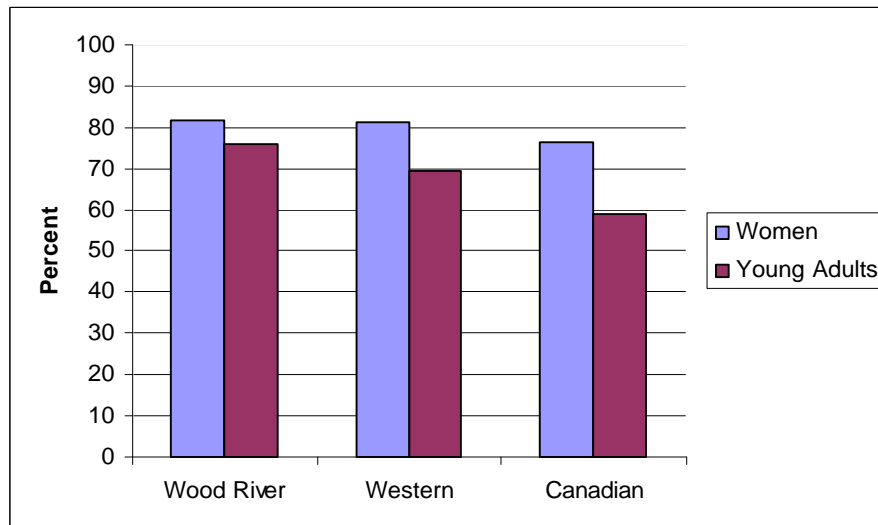
Perceived High Levels of Social Cohesion in the Community



In looking at the above bar chart we find that 53% of the respondents in Wood River feel that their community has a high level of perceived social cohesion compared to 46% for other Western NRE sites and 42% for the total Canadian sites.

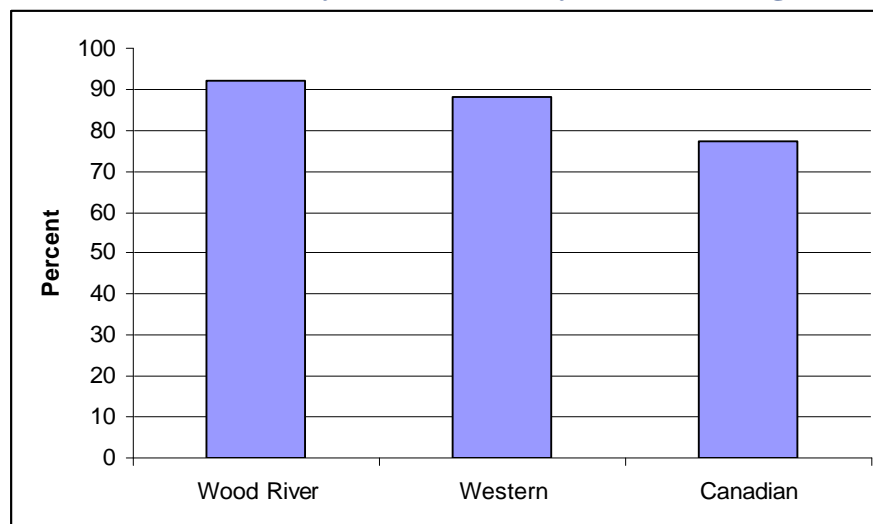
What this suggests is that a relatively high percentage of Wood River respondents feel as though they belong in the community and that the community has a sense of fellowship. This should provide a strong basis for initiating and developing local community activities in the future. Neighbourhood activities that bring people together such as community festivals and celebrations can also potentially increase the community’s social and economic well being.

Perception of Leadership Opportunities for Women and Young Adults



Residents of Wood River view their community as being open to leadership opportunities for both women and young adults. In the graph above, 82% of the respondents say that the community has leadership opportunities for women and 76% of respondents say that the same is true for young adults. Wood River respondents have similar notions on leadership opportunities for women when compared to other Western NRE sites and the total Canadian sites, yet slightly higher impressions for leadership opportunities for young adults.

Perceived Ability of Community to Work Together



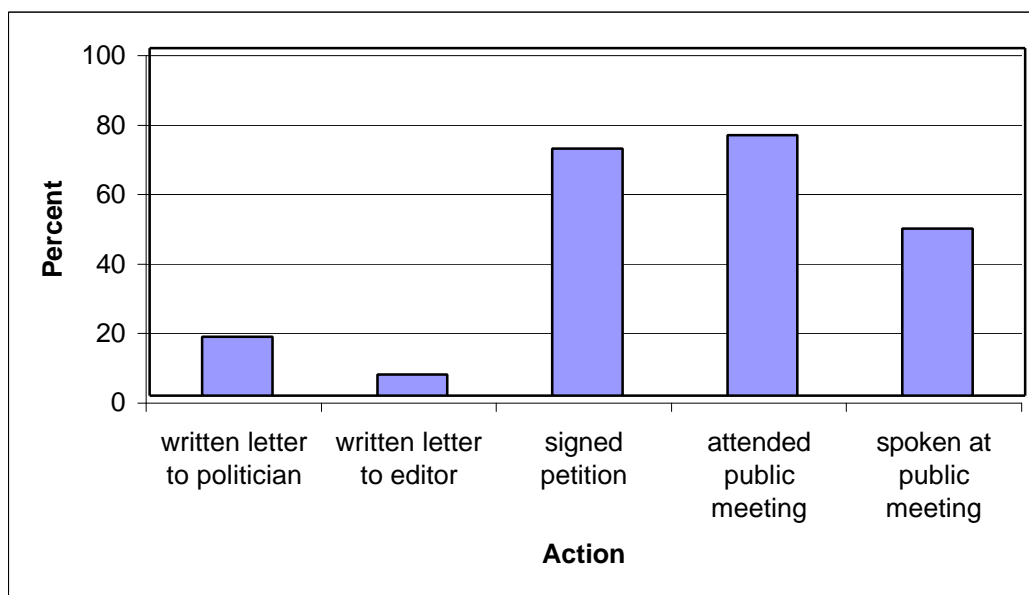
Residents of Wood River feel that community members are willing to work together towards a common goal. In the above graph, 92% of Wood River respondents agreed that the community was able to work together, in comparison to 88% of respondents in the other Western NRE sites and 77% of the total Canadian NRE sites. Wood River was one of the highest ranked communities within the total sample for perceived ability to work together.

What this data suggests is that Wood River is a community that is inclusive, a community that is able to cooperate and that the leadership abilities of both women and young adults within the community can possibly contribute to the community's ongoing success.

Taking Action in the Community

As part of the summer survey, we were very interested in how people express their concerns about community issues. To measure this, we asked respondents if they had written a letter to their Mayor, Provincial or Federal government representative, or to a newspaper editor. We also asked if they had signed a petition, attended or spoken at a public meeting in the 12 months previous to the interview.

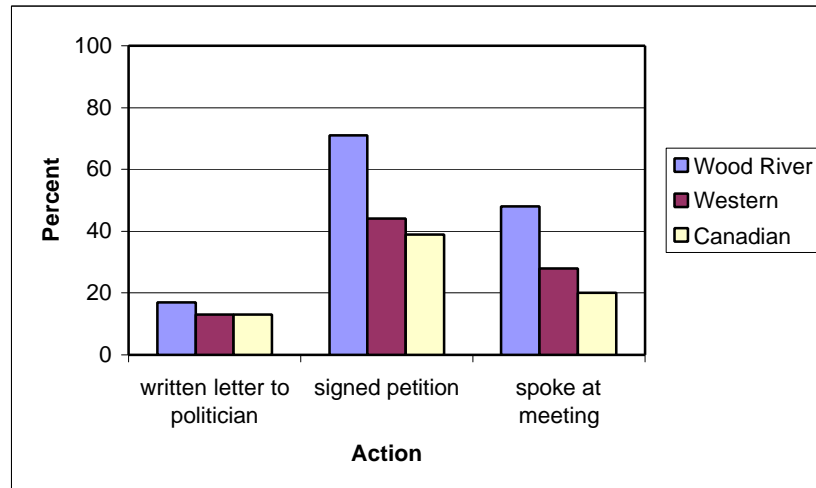
Action Taken in Wood River



As you can see from the above graph, the results show that in Wood River, 17% of respondents wrote letters to the Mayor, a Provincial or Federal representative and 6% wrote letters to a newspaper editor. Respondents in Wood River are more active in petition signing with 71% of respondents citing that they had signed a petition. 75% of respondents attended a public meeting and 48 % had spoken at a public meeting.

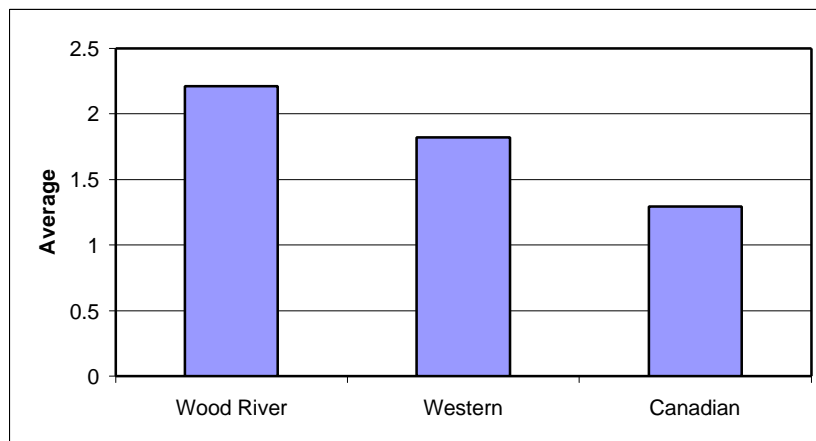
As can be seen in the graph below, the respondents in Wood River are much more active in signing petitions and speaking at meetings than other communities in the region, or in the rest of Canada.

Action in Wood River Compared to Western and Canadian Sites



In most cases, respondents were much more likely to attend and speak at meetings, or sign petitions than they were to write letters stating their opinion. Public meetings and petitions are excellent ways of sharing information, gathering public opinion, and reaching a consensus within a community. It is also important that other avenues are used to express opinion, especially those that inform external decision makers.

Average Number of Organizations per Person



In order to understand how a community works together, we measured how many voluntary organisations people within the community belonged to. These might be social clubs, religious groups, or any other type of organised meeting. We took an average per person of the number of groups attended, in order to make the comparison between communities shown in the graph above.

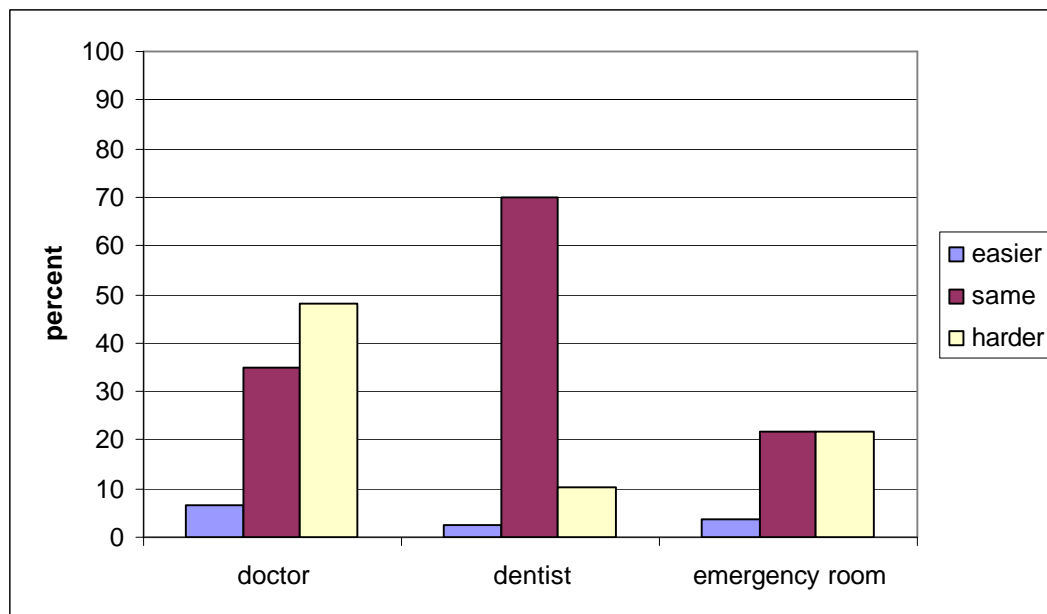
Small groups and communal activities, whether formal or informal, offer a value to the community. While the measure can never be perfect, the number of voluntary organisations that people belong to is a way of understanding the level of social cohesion in a community.

Services In The Community

The basic services that a community receives are key to the quality of life enjoyed by the members of that community. In order to understand them, we looked at the availability and use of basic services such as health care, education, safety and recreation. We asked people to rate if they considered the services to be good, and if they had improved or worsened in the last five years.

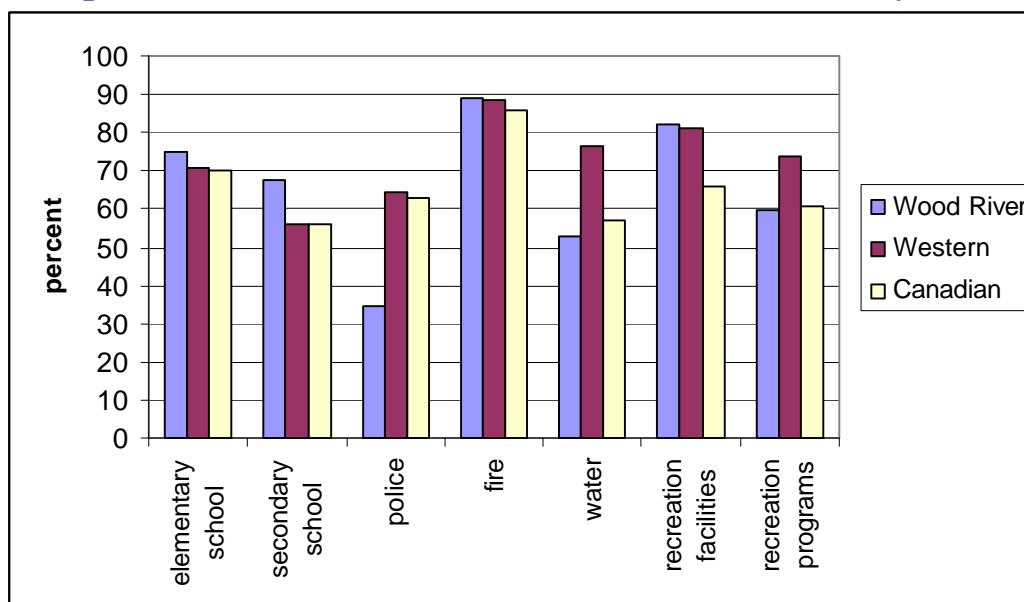
The residents of Wood River noticed some changes in access to health services in the past five years, mainly for the worse. As is seen in the graph below, 48% of respondents described their access to a doctor as more difficult now than five years ago, versus 35% who said it stayed the same. In the case of the dentist, most respondents had not noticed a change, although 10% said it has gotten more difficult. Although fewer respondents had experience with emergency services, 22% described a change for the worse. This suggests that respondents have noticed a decline in essential health services in Wood River during recent years.

Opinions About Health Service Access Compared to Five Years Ago



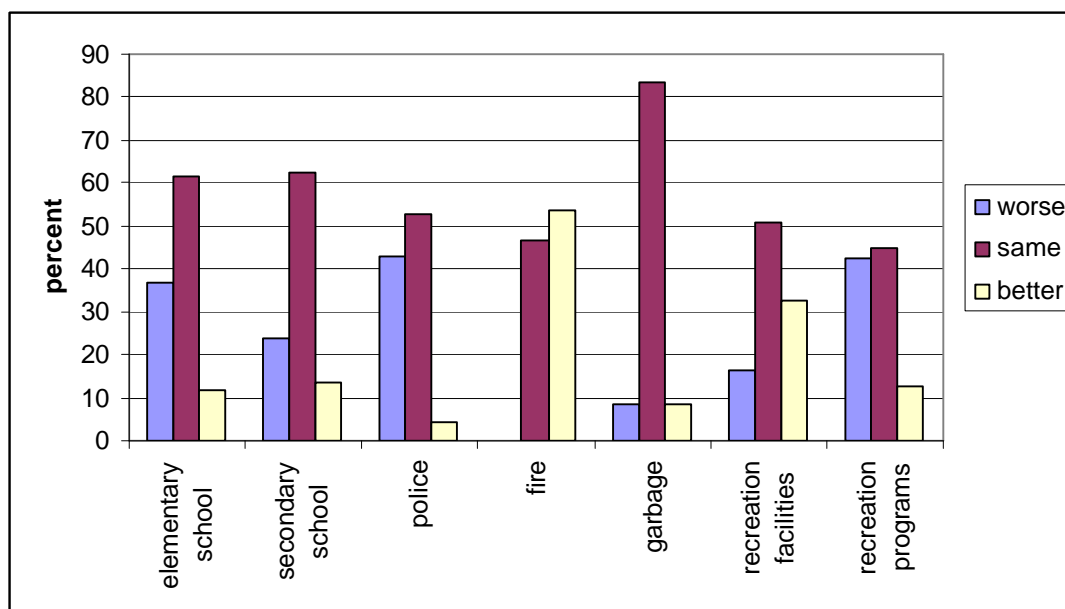
People in Wood River, are quite satisfied with the quality of other local services, with a few exceptions. As can be seen in the graph on the next page, in certain cases such as fire protection and recreation facilities, over 80% of respondents described these services as “good” or “very good”. In both these cases, local opinion is on par with the other Western sites. Respondents are least satisfied with police and water services. For example, only 35% of respondents described police services as “good” or “very good”. The percentage of people satisfied with the police service in Wood River is almost 30% lower than in the Western and Canadian sites overall.

Respondents who Describe Services as “Good” or “Very Good”



Respondents were also asked if these same services have changed over the past 5 years. As is shown in the graph below, many respondents described a decline in services. For example in the case of secondary schools, police and recreation programs, more than 30% of respondents described them as worse compared to five years ago. The only services which respondents described as having made significant improvements are fire protection and recreation facilities. Overall, our results indicate that while the quality of service provision is not far below that in the other sites, there is clear opinion among residents that many services are in decline.

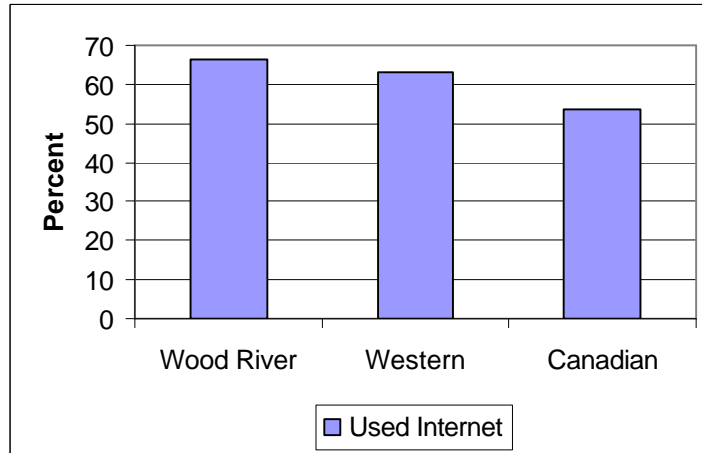
Perceptions of Local Service Quality as Compared to Five Years Ago



Internet in the Community

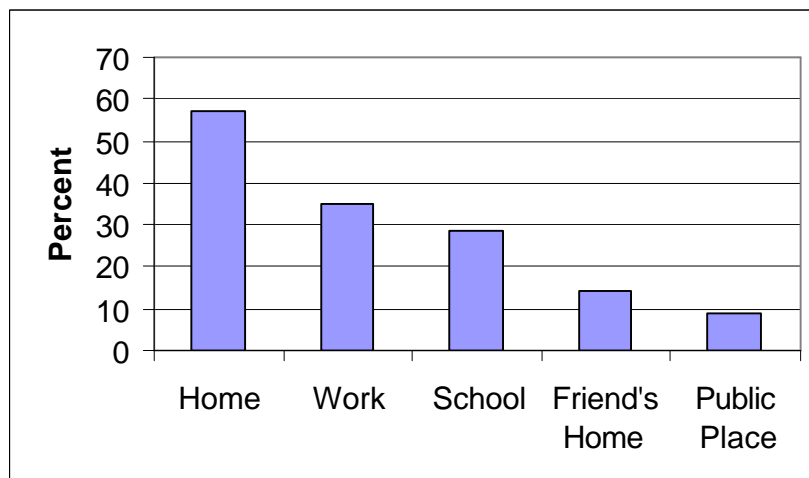
Part of this summer's survey looked at the community's use of the Internet. Questions we asked have helped us to better understand how many people in Wood River use the Internet, where it is used, what for, and opinions about it.

Internet Use in Wood River



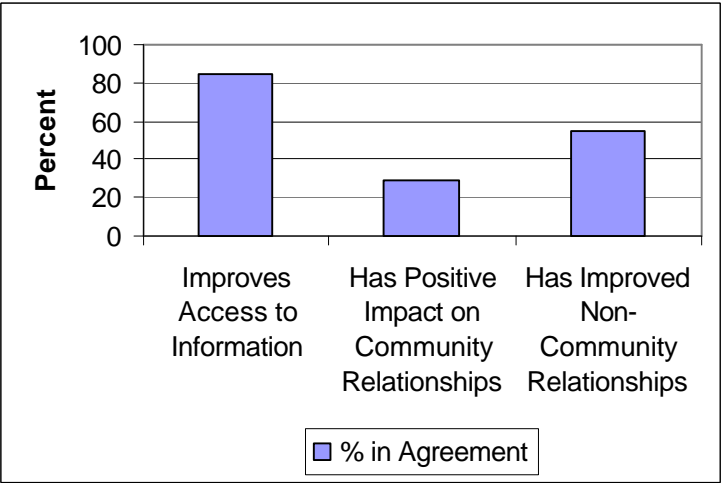
The above graph shows the percentage of people who use the Internet in Wood River, the Western sites, and in all 20 Canadian sites. Here we can see that approximately 66% of the people surveyed in Wood River used the Internet. This rate of use is similar to the regional average, but higher than the national average. In fact, of all of the sites surveyed across Canada, Wood River had the third highest level of Internet use. By adding computers and Internet access to other locations in Wood River and promoting existing public access locations, people who may not have access within the home may be encouraged to get online. Also, by holding "How To" sessions on Internet and computer use for various groups such as the seniors club or youth groups, more people may feel at ease using these technologies and build upon their existing knowledge.

Locations for Internet Use



The previous graph shows where people in Wood River tend to use the Internet. The most common place is at home and the least common place is in a public location such as a library or a community centre. The top three locations being home, work and school suggest that people of different ages and occupations can get online and access the information they need.

Opinions About the Internet



This last graph depicts how people in Wood River feel about the Internet and its impact on their lives. 29% of those people interviewed think that the Internet has a positive impact on their relationships with people inside the community. 55% of the people interviewed in Wood River felt that the Internet has improved their relationships with people outside of the community. 84% of respondents felt that the Internet has improved their access to information. The fact that so many respondents feel that the Internet has improved access to information may reflect people’s growing knowledge about navigating through the World Wide Web and an increased comfort level with this technology. Again, “How To” sessions held within the community may help even more people to learn about searching for the information they need and want, and becoming familiar with various advanced search engines, municipal, and national web sites can often help people to find what they are looking for.

Creating a community web site could further contribute to people’s positive feelings about online access as it provides a valuable source of local information. A site that includes details about local events, news, current issues, meetings, and fundraisers could help to provide community members with local knowledge. This type of access not only informs people, but can also bring people together from various parts of the community who may not normally have a chance to interact – certainly a benefit to social cohesion and community spirit.

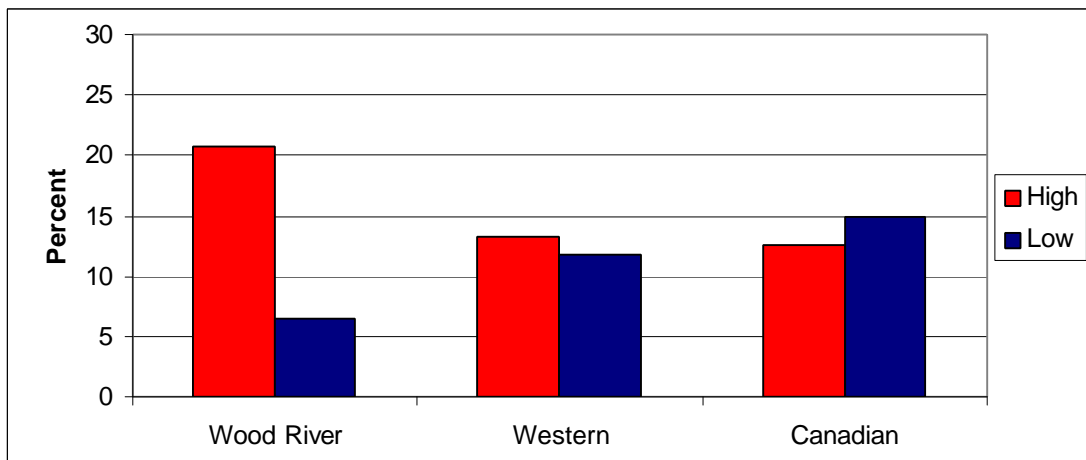
Personal Stress and Household Changes

Changes in personal circumstances, and the stresses that these cause, have a great effect on the residents of any community. In order to understand the changes in a community, and how it was dealt with by the residents, we asked a series of questions about the types of change seen in the last year, how they coped with the change, and whether life in the community was stressful or not. Examples of changes discussed included health, financial, legal, family relationship and parenting or child care.

Our survey found that more than 1 in 5 residents in the community of Wood River described their lives as being very stressful. High stress levels across the six Western rural communities surveyed this summer ranged from a low of 4% to this high of 21. The Canadian average indicated that 13% of the population described their lives as being very stressful across the 20 rural communities surveyed.

6% of respondents in Wood River indicated that they had no stress in their lives at all. This number is similar to the Western average of 12% and below the Canadian average of 15% who reported no stress in their lives.

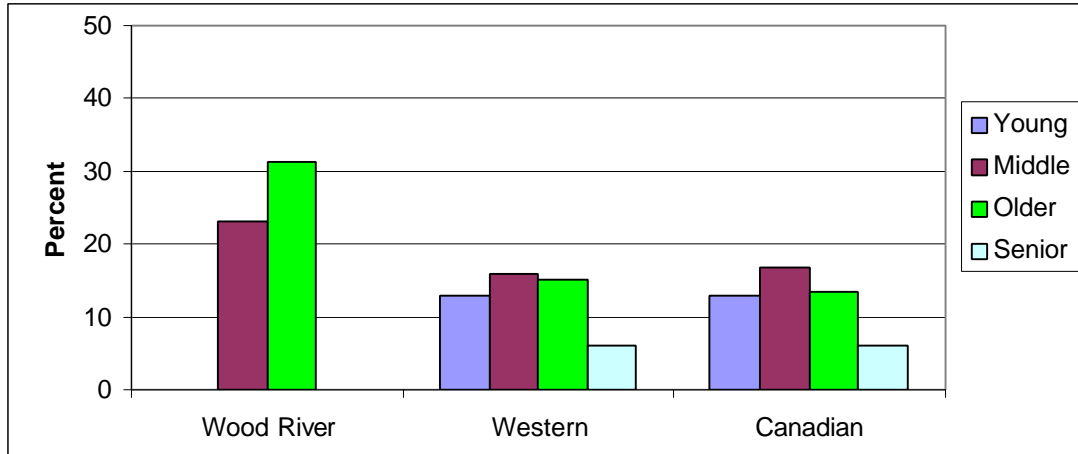
Examining the Levels of Personal Stress



The age of an individual also plays an important role in their level of personal stress. In general, our research across Canada indicated that stress levels tended to peak by middle age (35 to 49 years old) and then began to decline into the later stages of adulthood.

However, this was not the case in Wood River where levels of high stress tended to peak among older adults (50 to 64 years old) with nearly one-third of older adults indicating that they were highly stressed (as indicated in the following graph). Interestingly, there were no respondents under the age of 35 and none over the age of 65 in Wood River reported high levels of stress in their lives.

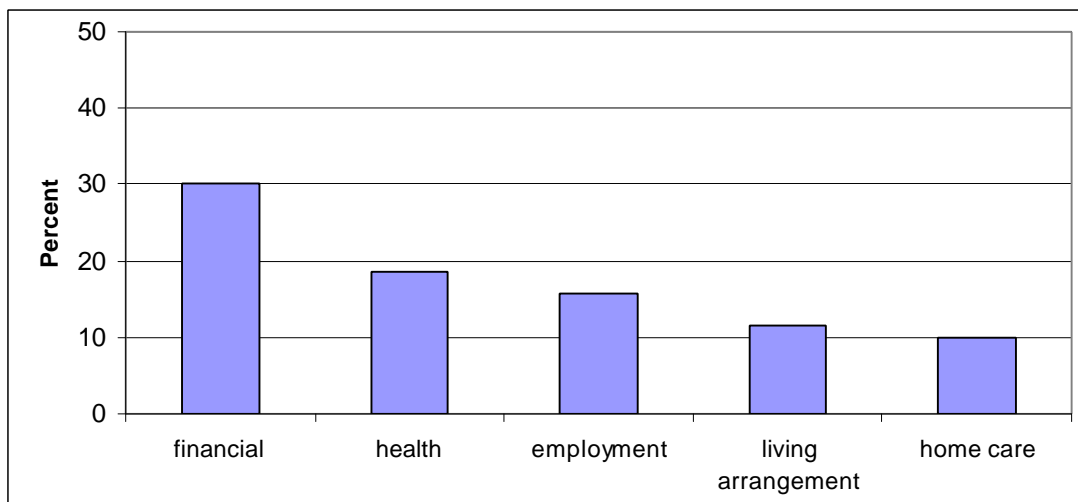
Examining High Levels of Stress Across Various Age Groups



Household Changes

Households experience many different types of changes throughout the course of a year and the impact of each of these changes varies from household to household and from one community to another. In the community of Wood River, 88% of households experienced at least one change over the past 12 months. Of these households, 30% of reported that a financial change had the greatest impact on their household.

Changes That Had the Greatest Impact on Households in Wood River



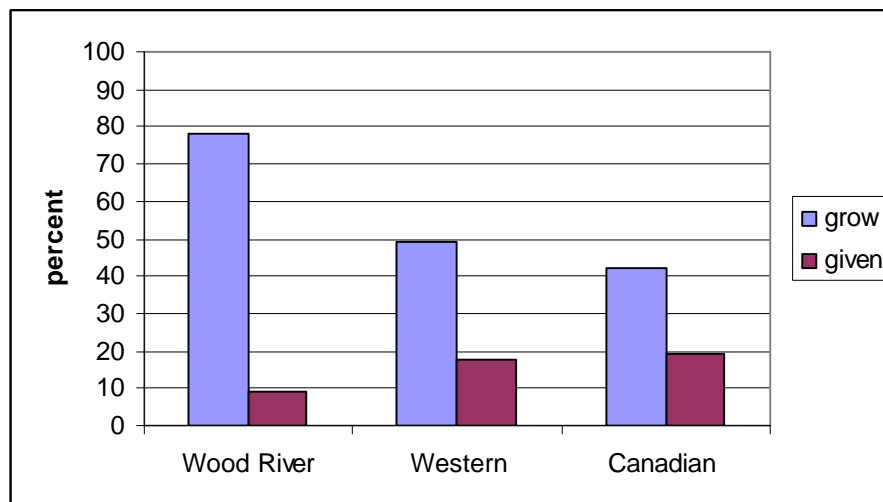
The fact that 30% of households in Wood River reported a financial change as having the greatest impact on their household may attempt to explain why only individuals between the ages of 35 to 64 years seemed to be affected by high levels of stress in Wood River. Financial changes more than likely tend to occur during these stages of life and could be a significant contributor to personal stress.

Doing Things For Ourselves And Others

In the section titled 'Community Inclusion and Co-operation' we measured social cohesion using resident's views of the community they live in, and how that community works together. In this section we look at how residents in the community help one another with basic needs and services. This allows us to measure cohesion within the community on a practical level. Doing things for others contributes to a community not just by providing basic needs and services, but by possibly increasing communication and understanding between residents, which may lead to greater unity.

We looked at some basic household needs, such as wood, vegetables, fruit and game. We asked if residents grew or collected these themselves, and if they gave or received them from others. We also asked about basic skills and services that people within the communities shared. The reports on each community only include those basic needs that are relevant to that community.

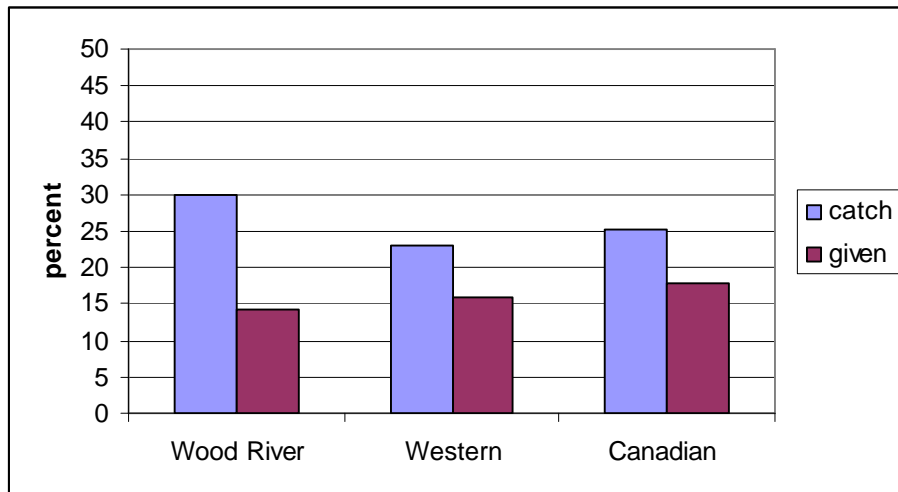
Households that Grow or are Given Vegetables



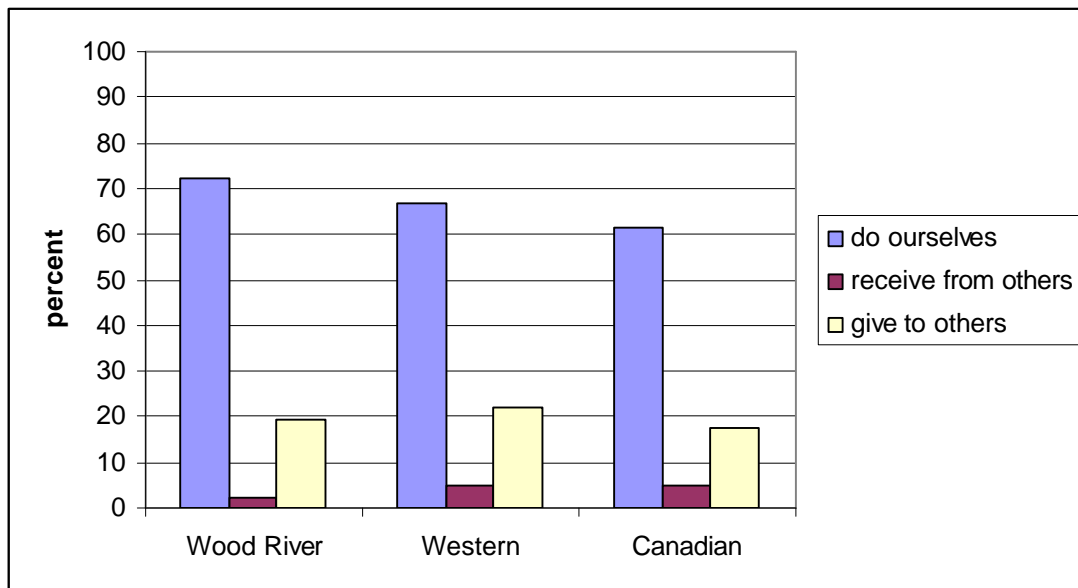
Land-based activities are important to residents of Wood River. As is shown in the graph above, 78% of survey respondents grow their own vegetables, one of the highest rates of all the NRE sites. Vegetable sharing in Wood River is lower than the average for the Western and Canadian sites, which may be explained by the high level of self-sufficiency of the residents. The growing and sharing of foods can be an important addition to more conventional economic activities especially during times of economic difficulty.

Hunting is also a popular activity in Wood River. 44% of respondents eat wild game, of which 30% catch it themselves. As seen in the graph on the next page, levels of hunting and sharing of game are both similar to regional and national averages.

Households that Catch or are Given Wild Game



Households that Provide and Receive Skills and Services Free-of-Charge

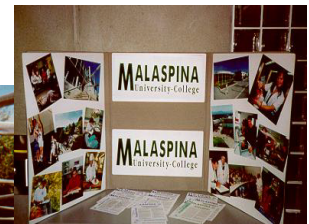


As a means to measure self-reliance our survey also looked at a number of other activities such as carpentry, painting, and mechanical work. In the graph above you will see an index which combines several of these variables (specifically painting, sewing, housework, babysitting, repairs, technical help, snow removal and lawn care). The graph reports on the percentage of respondents who do these things themselves, receive them free-of-charge from others or provide them to others free-of-charge.

The graph above shows that people in Wood River carry out a similar level of activities for themselves as respondents in other sites in Western Canada, and more than the national average. The activities that respondents are most likely to do themselves are housework, transportation and lawn care. The ones respondents are most likely to pay cash for are technical services, automobile/boat repair and painting. The graph also shows that people in Wood River do about the same amount of work free-of-charge for each other as people in the Western sites overall.



The NRE in the global context



THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF



One of the older coastal communities in Newfoundland, the traditional fishing town of **WINTERTON** is nestled along Trinity Bay on the Northwestern side of the Avalon Peninsula. Winterton is home to approximately 600 people, many of whom are employed by the local fish plant and various service industries in the area. To celebrate its heritage and beauty, the town has established a boat-building museum, and most recently a spectacular board walk.



TWILLINGATE, an island community along the central North Coast of Newfoundland, is said to be the iceberg capital of the world. Home to about 3,000 people, Twillingate has traditionally been one of the most prominent fishing ports in Newfoundland. Although it has felt the effects of the cod moratorium, Twillingate continues to support a growing tourism industry and hosts the internationally acclaimed Fish, Fun and Folk festival every year in July.



Encompassing the communities of Belmont, Central Lot 16 and Southwest Lot 16, **LOT 16** is an unincorporated area located about 15 minutes northwest of Summerside, PEI. With a population of approximately 650 people, Lot 16 is known for its involvement in the agricultural sector as it is home to both dairy and potato farming. Residents of Lot 16 place high value on family and togetherness, with community groups such as the 4H Club, the Women's Institute and the Senior Citizen's Club gathering on a regular basis at local churches and the community hall.



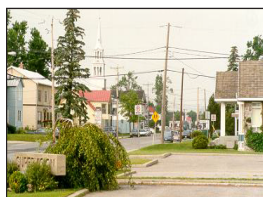
SPRINGHILL, with an approximate population of 4,200 people, is located in the Northwestern part of Nova Scotia. Since the end of its traditional mining backbone, Springhill has been working hard to diversify itself in the areas of tourism, geothermal development and manufacturing. It is home to the Anne Murray Centre, the Miners' Museum and celebrates an annual Irish Festival filled with traditional dancing, music and other cultural events.



BLISSFIELD, an unincorporated parish of about 700 people, is located along the Miramichi River, next to Doaktown. Because it is surrounded by natural resources and spectacular scenery, Blissfield has relied on forestry, fishing and tourism to support the local economy. For six days in July 2000, Blissfield organized the Doaktown Fair and Reunion, a celebration which revived community spirit and encouraged community action.



NEGUAC, a highly bilingual community along the Southern end of New Brunswick's Acadian Peninsula, is home to about 1,700 people. Traditionally, residents of Néguaac have relied mainly on the forest and fishing industries for their livelihood, but as these resources become more unstable, the community has been seeking economic support in other areas such as manufacturing and tourism. Through the local Historical Society and events such as Rendez-Vous Néguaac, the community is able to promote its heritage.



The town of **ST. DAMASE** is located in the St. Lawrence valley, only 45 minutes east of Montréal. The population, currently at about 1,500, has been gradually increasing as St. Damase promotes a solid economic base in agriculture and food processing industries. With numerous social clubs and organizations, along with annual events such the Festival du Maïs, the people of St. Damase encourage togetherness and community spirit.



CAP-A-L'AIGLE is a picturesque little town located on the edge of the St. Lawrence river in Québec, with a population of about 710 people. The community's picturesque nature, tourism and recreation are the main drivers of the economy. However many members of the community work in neighbouring areas. One important event for Cap-à-L'aigle is the Fête des Lilas which includes 3 days of activities to bring the town together.

THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF



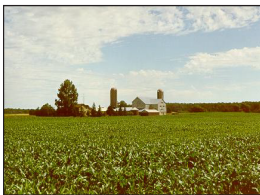
STE. FRANÇOISE is a charming community located south of Trois-Pistoles about fifty kilometers east of Rivière-du-Loup, in the region of the Lower Saint-Lawrence. The economic engine of this community of 467 people is its agro-forestry industry. There are also about ten commercial dairy farms in the area and many small farms that operate on a part-time basis. Each year, the Fête de Noël festival is celebrated by the residents of Ste. Françoise.



TASCHEREAU is a small town in Québec located in Central Abitibi between the communities of La Sarre and Amos. With a population of approximately 640, Tashereau has no shortage of water with 12 lakes and 7 rivers in the immediate area. With an entrance to the beautiful Aiguebelle Park, this town benefits from tourism. Forestry is also an extremely important industry as it employs almost 50% of the community.



Previously a township, **CARDEN**, Ontario has now amalgamated to be part of the City of Kawartha Lakes and is home to approximately 880 people year round. This number swells to over 1,300 in the summer as cottage season takes hold. While many people work outside of Carden, there's a growing aggregate industry here. The Carden Fair and the Alvar Plains are just some of the great reasons to visit.



USBORNE, previously its own township, is now part of the Municipality of South Huron, Huron County. It is located just north of London, Ontario and to the east of Lake Huron. With a population of about 1,500, Usborne's economy is rooted in the cash-crop and livestock industries; in fact, approximately 40% of the workforce is involved with farming. One of the major events which this town enjoys is the Kirkton Fair.



TWEED is a scenic Ontario town located just north of Belleville, between Toronto and Ottawa. It is home to approximately 1,600 people and acts as a service centre to the surrounding rural area. It has a mixed economic base of tourism, retirement functions, retail, and agricultural services. The Heritage Centre and renowned Flowerama Festival are two of Tweed's major attractions.



Located in Northeastern Ontario at the Southern tip of the Parry Sound District, **SEGUIN TOWNSHIP** is a recent amalgamation of several smaller communities. Its permanent population is about 3,400, but this number nearly quadruples as cottagers arrive each Summer. Tourism is one of Seguin's main industries and this beautiful area is not to be missed. Events like the Foley Fall Fair and the Winter Frolic bring the community together.



The Rural Municipality (RM) of **RHINELAND** is a cluster of communities, villages and farms in Southern Manitoba located along the border with North Dakota. The main communities of Altona, Plum Coulee and Gretna are small service centres and home to most of the 4,200 people living in the RM. The vibrant blue, yellow and gold fields in midsummer show Rhineland's strength in agriculture and annual festivals throughout the Summer draw tourists from around the province and the world.



The Municipality of **WOOD RIVER**, located in Southern Saskatchewan southeast of Moose Jaw, is home to about 980 people. Ranching and mixed farming are the main livelihoods in the municipality, and the town of Lafleche acts as the main service centre for the area. From their Crazy Canuk Days in the summer to the Curling Bonspiel in the winter, this community demonstrates a lively spirit year-round.

THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF



Home to approximately 280 people, **SPALDING** is located in Central Saskatchewan, northeast of Saskatoon. This small community acts as the service centre for the larger area of Spalding Rural Municipality. Historically rooted in agriculture, Spalding also has an innovative Geographical Information Systems business which connects truckers to farmers for grain transportation. The Fall Supper and Winterfest are just some of the events which bring community members together.



Home to 150 residents, **FERINTOSH** is located 125km southeast of Edmonton, Alberta. Ferintosh has proved to be a resilient community in the wake of many changes that occurred in the mid 1970's. It was able to adapt by bringing in outside industry (fibre optics terminals and public utility cooperatives) and by maintaining a strong volunteer base. The Church Suppers and the Snowmobile Rally help bring people together to express Ferintosh's community spirit.



HUSSAR, with a population of approximately 160, is located in Southern Alberta about 100km east of Calgary. Its economy is based in agriculture, oil and gas, and Hussar's adjacency to Calgary has also been an influence. The town recently raised money and built a new arena and sports complex. Hussar also celebrates community pride and spirit through such events as the Curling Bonspiel and the Summerdaze Rodeo.

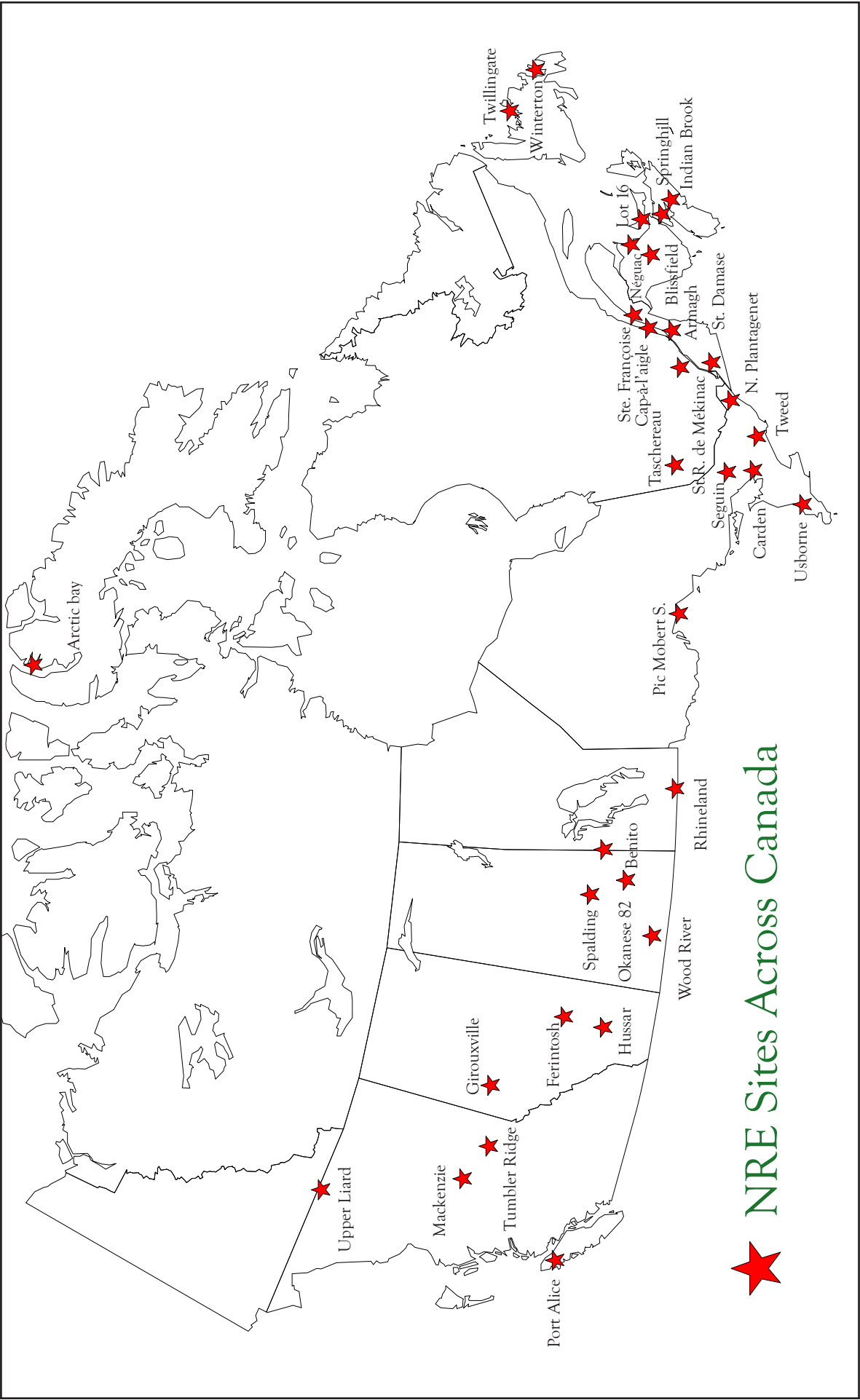


TUMBLER RIDGE, incorporated in 1981, is located in the Eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Northern BC. With an approximate population of 3,000, the town has relied mostly on coal mining but is working hard to diversify to include forestry, oil and gas, and tourism through newly established provincial parks and protected areas. Every August, the annual Grizzly Valley Days is held to promote community togetherness through family activities, sports, and games.



With a population of about 6,000, **MACKENZIE** is located in North Central British Columbia. Its economic base is grounded in forestry and it started out as an "instant town", planned and developed by a forestry company to be a regional processing centre. The annual Alexander Mackenzie Days is just one event which helps to bring Mackenzie's families closer, with entertainment, crafts, and games.





★ NRE Sites Across Canada



Understanding the New Rural Economy: Options and Choices

a project of
The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation
May, 2002

The New Rural Economy Project (NRE) is a five-year research and education program underway in rural Canada. It is a collaborative undertaking bringing together rural people, policy-analysts, researchers, the business community, and government agencies at all levels to identify and address vital rural issues. It is conducted at the national level with historical and statistical data analysis, and at the local level with case studies involving community and household surveys.

The project will produce:

- **learning forums** to discuss and debate opportunities, options, and choices that include the interests of all rural Canadians and stakeholders;
- documented **recommendations** for long run rural business performance, inclusive development, and public policy; and
- **informed questions** on new issues, unimaginable in the present, but requiring timely answers for the future.

The project is conducted within the framework of 5 social cohesion themes:

- **economy**
- **service**
- **capacity**
- **communication**
- **governance**

Since its inauguration in May, 1997 the project has held 10 national workshops and conferences, prepared a number of major reports, established a Centre for Rural Data, profiled 32 carefully selected rural sites for research and education activities, and organized a network of 33 partners, 22 researchers, 19 universities, and 18 government departments across Canada. Through its connection with the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF), the NRE project has involved over 100 partners and created a research and education network of international stature. Representation from Canada is complemented by colleagues from Europe, Mexico, and Japan.

For further information see the CRRF Web site: www.crrf.ca, the NRE Web page: nre.concordia.ca or contact:

Anna Woodrow, Research Manager
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Concordia University,
1455 boul. de Maisonneuve Ouest.,
Montréal, QC, CANADA, H3G 1M8

tel: (514) 848-2139; fax (514) 848-4539;
e-mail: WOODROW@VAX2.CONCORDIA.CA



Understanding the New Rural Economy: Options and Choices

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

May, 2002

Research Products

1. **Sampling Frame** designed and **32 Sites Identified** on 5 critical dimensions
2. Data Centre expanded with site profiles, reports, photo gallery and other research tools
3. *Site Profiles* prepared for 25 field sites
4. Household Survey database, summer 2001
5. *Rural Canada Database* developed (1986, 1991, 1996)
6. Report: **A Preliminary History of Rural Development Policy and Programmes in Canada, 1945-1995**
7. Report: **Analysis of Leading and Lagging Census Sub-Divisions in Rural Canada**
8. Report: **Economic Integration and Isolation of First Nations Communities: An Exploratory Review**
9. Report: **Access to Federal Government Services in Rural Canada: Field Site Findings**
10. Report: **Predictability and Trapping: Under Conditions of Globalization of Agricultural Trade**
11. Report: **Review of the Literature Relating to the Role and Impact of Government Involvement in Rural Canada**
12. Report: **Dynamics of the New Rural Economy: An Exploration of Community-Sponsored Research from Huron County** (edited by Tony Fuller and Paul Nichol, 1999) Guelph: University of Guelph
13. Report: **Voluntary Organizations in Rural Canada: Survey Results**
14. Report: **An Education Strategy for Voluntary Organizations in Rural Canada**
15. Report: **Leading and Lagging Sites in Rural Canada: a Literature Review**
16. Report: **Leading and Lagging Census Sub-Divisions: Statistical Summary**
17. Report: **An Analysis of the NRE Sample Sites Using Taxfiler Data**
18. Report: **Self-Employment in Rural Canada: Statistical Summary**
19. Report: **Rural Small and Medium Enterprises: A Review of the Literature**
20. Report: **Cooperatives in Rural Development – Literature Review**
21. Report: **A Sample frame for Rural Canada: Design and Evaluation**
22. Report: **The Role of Small Businesses in Community Economic Development**
23. Report: **The Long Run Role of Institutions in Fostering Community Economic Development: A Comparison of Leading and Lagging in Rural Communities**
24. Book: *Gouvernance et territoires ruraux. Eléments d'un débat sur la responsabilité du développement* (Sous la direction de Mario Carrier et Serge Côté, 2000) Ste Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec
25. Report: **How Researchers Approached Communities and Implemented the Protocols in 26 Sites Across Canada**
26. Report: **Factors of Growth in Rural Regions: Identifying Policy Priorities – Canadian Case Studies**
27. Network/Learning Forums: **CRRF National Workshops** (North Bay ON, 1997; St.Donat QC, 1998; Newtown NF, 1999; Nanaimo BC, 2000; Sackville NB, 2001) **CRRF National Conferences** (Charlottetown PE, 1997; Nelson BC, 1998; Trois-Pistoles QC, 1999; Alfred ON, 2000; Meunster SK, 2001)
28. **Powerpoint presentations available online**

Current and Planned Projects

1. Conceptualizing and Measuring Community Capacity
2. Complex and Dynamic Systems in Rural Canada
3. Social Cohesion and Social Capital in Rural Canada
4. Four systems (Bureaucratic Relations; Associative Relations, Market Relations and Communal Relations)
5. Governance and Local Participation
6. Communication Tools, Internet and Identity
7. Mobilization of Youth
8. Services in Rural Areas
9. Building Capacity in Agricultural Communities
10. Home Care and Health in Rural Canada
11. NRE Spring Workshop 2002, May 8 - 12, Altona, MB; CRRF Rural University (Miramichi, NB October, 2002)

NOTE: items in **bold** can be found via the CRRF web page: www.crrf.ca or the NRE web page: nre.concordia.ca ;
items in *italics* are available to NRE researchers and partners via the NRE web page

Upcoming Attractions

Network/Learning Forums:

- ~ NRE Spring Workshop (Altona, MB) May 8 - 12, 2002
- ~ CARCI Agricultural Capacity Building Workshop (Altona, MB) May, 2002
- ~ CRRF Annual Rural University Conference, Miramichi, NB; October 27-29, 2002
- ~ 3rd Annual Community Partners' Round-Table, Miramichi, NB; October 26, 2002
- ~ CARCI Agricultural Capacity Building Round-Table, October, 2002

Books: 2002/2003

- ~ Social Cohesion in Rural and Small Town Canada
- ~ Challenges and Opportunities: A Portrait of Rural and Small Town Canada
- ~ 2003/2004
- ~ Rethinking Rural, Remote, and Small Town Canada
- ~ Conducting Collaborative, Comparative Research in Rural Canada

Reports:

- ~ Literature Review of Services in rural Canada
- ~ Social Capacity in rural Canada - Theoretical Discussion
- ~ Social Capacity - Policy Implications
- ~ Subsistence in rural Canada
- ~ Four Systems of Support
- ~ Social Economy (CURA/ARUC)
- ~ Literature Reviews and Indicators for Social Capital and Social Cohesion
- ~ High/Low capability and the presence of communications tools in rural communities.
- ~ Communications and youth migration
- ~ Communications on social cohesion
- ~ Health and Internet use in rural areas
- ~ Methodological Implications and Design of a national research project
- ~ Building Capacity in Agricultural Communities (CARCI)
- ~ Home Care and Health in rural Canada

Presentations:

- ~ Popular Culture Association Meetings, March 13-16, 2002
- ~ Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association Meetings, Social Sciences and Humanities Congress, Toronto, May 29 - June 30, 2002
- ~ Session Organizers:
- ~ Ivan Emke - Rurality
- ~ D. Wilkinson - Social Cohesion
- ~ A. Woodrow - Boundaries in Field Research
- ~ International Sociological Association Meetings, Brisbane Australia, July 7 - 13, 2002