



Newsletter of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

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CONTENTS

NRE Recent Accomplishments Fall 2001
2

La cohésion sociale et la gouvernance locale
dans les communautés rurales
3

Community capacity theme
team update
5

Social Cohesion Communications
Theme Update
5

Services and Social Cohesion in
Rural and Small Town Canada
6

Thinking About the 3Cs
(Capital, Cohesion, Capacity)
7

Nouvelle Chaire de recherche du Canada
en développement rural
10

Canada Research Chair in rural and small
town studies
11

NRE / NER Administration
12

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ABOUT CRRF

Founded in 1992, CRRF is a registered charitable volunteer organization dedicated to the service of rural Canada. It was established to bring the resources and creative minds of individuals, private enterprises, communities, governments and universities together to look at the issues, challenges, and opportunities inherent in the restructuring of rural Canada.

APPRENDRE DE LA RURALITÉ

Par BRUNO JEAN

Président, Fondation canadienne pour la revitalisation rurale

Les ruraux du Québec se sont réunis sur la Côte Nord récemment, dans le cadre d'une 3e session de l'Université rurale québécoise, et ils se sont posés une question que la FCRR devrait lancer à l'échelle nationale : que pouvons-nous apprendre de la ruralité ? Les ruraux ne le réalisent souvent pas eux-mêmes mais ils font preuve d'une créativité solidaire étonnante en mettant en place plusieurs innovations sociales et institutionnelles dont certaines se sont répandues dans toute la société. On peut penser ici à la coopération dans le domaine agricole et du crédit. Si nous pouvons apprendre de la ruralité, c'est sans doute que les ruraux ont déjà appris eux-mêmes à mettre en valeur leur environnement naturel, à gérer leur développement économique et à aménager leur organisation sociale.

Apprendre de la ruralité, cela suppose de la reconnaître comme une autre réalité, non le degré zéro de l'urbanité. Mais tout le monde se questionne sur ce que c'est que la ruralité. Pour moi, cela peut se résumer à trois choses. Premièrement, la ruralité, c'est un patrimoine naturel, un environnement, des ressources; deuxièmement, la ruralité, c'est un patrimoine vivant, une société, une culture; troisièmement, la ruralité, c'est un patrimoine collectif capable de créativité, d'innovation sociale bénéficiant à toute la société. Mais pour ce faire, il faut redonner, par des nouvelles modalités, une part plus équitable des revenus que toute la société tire de l'exploitation des ressources naturelles rurales.

Take a look at the CRRF Web Page
<http://www.crrf.ca/>

NRE RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS FALL 2001

**By
Anna Woodrow**

NRE Research Manager

This past summer was extremely busy and productive for the New Rural Economy project as we interviewed almost 2000 households in 20 NRE sites across Canada. Twelve NRE Researchers, twenty-eight students/assistants and twenty-four local residents across Canada successfully carried out this incredible task. Each interview focuses on a number of topics:

- basic demographics,
- communications,
- local and external networks,
- current stresses in rural households and how households deal with them,
- attitudes towards and perceptions of a community by its members.
- the informal economy,
- local participation,
- use of private and public services,

In addition, the survey was coordinated with a CARCI-funded project entitled Building Capacity in Agricultural Communities. Using information collected in 2000 as well as the household survey results to be gathered in 2001, the project examines pressures and strategies of adaptation faced in four agricultural communities in the NRE sample. Two leading and two lagging communities in Western Canada form the basis for this two-year study funded through the Minister for Rural Canada and the Rural Secretariat. Diane Martz, of the Centre for Rural Studies at St. Peter's College, is analysing findings from the survey for this project. Finally, through collaboration with Health Canada, the survey examines the changing demands for home care in rural areas and strategies rural households are adopting when faced with home care demands. Norah Keating at University of Calgary will be coordinating the findings from the survey with her Research on Aging, Policies and Praxis Group. Preliminary findings will be made available during the fall CRRF conference at Meunster, SK, October 24-27, 2001.

We are extremely appreciative of all of the hard work our researchers have applied to this endeavor, especially David Bruce of Mount Allison University, who was responsible for the implementation of the survey instrument, coordinating and responding to questions in the field, and for the collection of the data and development of the final database. Special thanks also goes out to the field site coordinators, our interviewers and callers, all of the staff at NRE headquarters who worked diligently throughout the summer to get the job done, Keith Thompson of Thompson Publishing and Ray Bollman who made our thank-you gift to our site researchers possible.

Considerable thanks must be extended to our communities who agreed to participate in the survey and warmly welcomed our researchers this past summer. We look forward to meeting with representatives from over a dozen of our NRE sites on Wednesday, October 23, 2001, when the NRE project will host its 2nd Annual Field-Site Personnel meeting. This prelude to the conference invites guests from Canadian rural communities to gather, exchange experiences and ideas, attend workshops on community development and meet directly with researchers, government representatives and other rural Canadians. CBCs Country Canada will be present during the meetings to capture the event for an upcoming cable program. This meeting is one of the ways the NRE project hopes to continue building networks between community members, researchers and government organisations.

We invite readers to follow our progress as we post new findings from our survey on our website, or, for more details please contact us directly.

LA COHÉSION SOCIALE ET LA GOUVERNANCE LOCALE DANS LES COMMUNAUTÉS RURALES

**By
Bruno Jean**

**Université du Québec
à Rimouski**

La cohésion sociale dans les communautés rurales est fonction de plusieurs facteurs internes et externes. Au plan des facteurs internes, la cohésion sociale d'une collectivité est en relation avec la capacité de la communauté à aménager les conditions sociales, économiques et environnementales propres à assurer l'épanouissement des individus, des ménages, et des différents groupes sociaux¹. Cela suppose que la communauté est capable de prendre des décisions pour aménager la vie collective qui respectent les différents intérêts individuels. Cette capacité d'action collective, en vue de la prise de décision sur des affaires qui concernent la communauté, renvoie non seulement à la capacité des institutions politiques locales, les gouvernements, mais aussi à ce que l'on appelle la gouvernance.

Trois grands ordres de pouvoir se croisent dans la vie socio-politique d'une collectivité : le pouvoir politique du gouvernement local, le pouvoir économique avec les entreprises du secteur privé et le pouvoir social des citoyens réunis dans différents groupes d'intérêts et des associations volontaires, ce qu'on appelle aussi la société civile. Historiquement, les sphères d'action des pouvoirs politique, économique et social étaient plutôt indépendantes l'un de l'autre.

Mais c'est l'un des traits majeurs de la nouvelle économie rurale de voir se mettre en place ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler une nouvelle gouvernance rurale. Au-delà de la dynamique spécifique du gouvernement local, il y a un nouvel objet d'étude que s'offre à nous, la gouvernance rurale. Elle concerne la manière dont les différents pouvoirs (politique, économique et communautaire) locaux aménagent leurs rapports pour prendre des décisions, étant entendu que le " développement local " suppose aujourd'hui un partenariat ou une concertation entre ces pouvoirs locaux.

Pourquoi s'intéresser à la gouvernance rurale? Pour mieux comprendre les facteurs qui peuvent influencer la trajectoire des communautés rurales en croissance ou en déclin, la finalité même de notre Initiative de recherche sur la Nouvelle Économie Rurale. Car on peut faire l'hypothèse que les communautés en dévitalisation sont aussi celles où la gouvernance n'est pas appropriée, ne produisant pas les synergies et les innovations sociales et institutionnelles aptes à assurer le développement de la communauté.

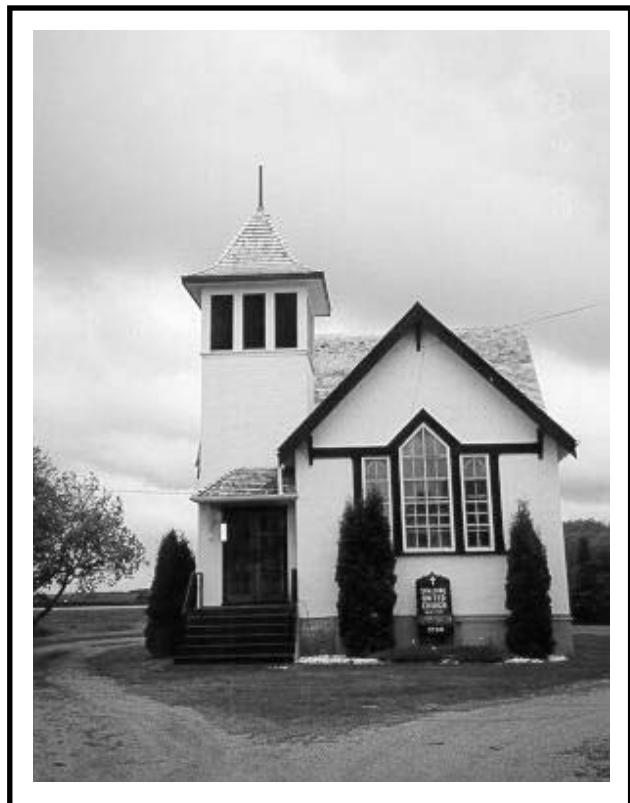
Comprendre la dynamique de gouvernance propre à une communauté n'est pas une tâche facile car la mise au jour d'une telle dynamique suppose un long travail de type anthropologique avec les acteurs-clés de la communauté dans les trois

¹ La position théorique développée ici implique que la cohésion sociale est à la fois une cause et une conséquence de la dynamique sociale locale ou autrement dit une ressource et un résultat qui redevient une ressource pour la communauté. Aussi, on peut étudier comment la cohésion sociale produit une capacité sociale (capital social) et finalement une gouvernance locale et inversement comment la gouvernance produit, ou met en œuvre, des capacités sociales spécifiques et finalement influence la cohésion sociale d'une communauté donnée.

domaines de la gouvernance. Ce travail est en général facilité par l'étude de certains conflits au sein de la communauté et qui amènent ses membres à prendre position et... la communauté peut ainsi se révéler à elle-même en quelque sorte. Cela peut être un conflit interne, cela peut être un événement extérieur qui est perçu comme une menace pour les uns et une opportunité pour les autres selon la conception que l'on se donne de l'identité locale.

Les membres de l'équipe " Gouvernance " du projet de recherche sur la cohésion sociale pensent qu'une étude monographique dans trois communautés rurales fort différentes comme Néguaac dans le Canada Atlantique (une communauté côtière), Ste-Françoise (une communauté agro-forestière) au Québec et un site dans l'Ouest à déterminer (une communauté agricole) serait de nature à nous aider à mieux comprendre comment la dynamique de gouvernance locale peut influencer la cohésion sociale dans les collectivités rurales.

Cette étude est rendue possible par la valorisation de certaines connaissances déjà accumulées par les chercheurs sur ces trois sites. Une démarche d'observation de la communauté par une série d'entretiens ouverts avec des acteurs-clés de la communauté sur une période intensive de quelques mois devrait permettre de dégager la structuration sociale la gouvernance locale dans les communautés étudiées.



Spalding, Saskatchewan. One of the NRE sites

COMMUNITY CAPACITY THEME TEAM UPDATE

By

TOM BECKLEY

Faculty of Forestry and
Environmental Management

University of New Brunswick

The Community Capacity theme team is making headway in defining community capacity, creating a model to examine how it works, and gathering data to test the model. After discussing over a dozen types of capacity-based "outcomes" that any given community may achieve (everything from getting government grants for infrastructure to having a high level of self-provisioning skills) the team narrowed down the set of outcomes into four general types. The four that we settled upon are; the capacity to maintain economic vitality; the capacity to access resources from the state (federal or provincial); the capacity to maintain a vital civic culture; and the capacity to subsist or persist.

We have qualitative data from key informants in 11 sites at present. We asked detailed questions about factors relating to all these types of capacities and we found significant variation across the case study sites. Further analysis of our own primary data and additional secondary data will help us to understand the relationships between these types of capacity, but we feel we are on the right track and have already made a contribution to the state of knowledge on community capacity by breaking the phenomenon down into these component parts. Communities experience different outcomes, based on differential development in the types of networks it has and on the type of resources that are available.

New data provided by the household survey conducted in the summer of 2001 will help us further refine our model and will help us to compare levels and types of capacity across our 20 NRE communities.

We have settled on an innovative format for displaying capacity outcomes for each community by borrowing from ecological literature. We have created capacity "amoebas" that illustrate at a glance where some communities exhibit strong capacity and where they might be deficient.

Our current goal is to create four distinct outputs from the capacity work. These include a theory paper outlining the model; a methodology paper that describes qualitative and quantitative approaches to measuring capacity, a policy paper (e.g. how to nurture and develop capacity); and a paper focused specifically on the sub-theme of the capacity to subsist or persist.

SOCIAL COHESION COMMUNICATIONS THEME UPDATE

By

David Bruce

Director
Rural and Small Town Program,

Mount Allison University

Several papers have been presented at the recent Social Sciences and Humanities Congress, Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association Meetings held at Laval University in May, 2001, on the general topic of social cohesion and communications issues. At the recent conference, May 2001, Andrea Sharkey & Anna Woodrow (Concordia University) presented Communication Tools, Identity and Social Cohesion Within Rural Canada, and Ivan Emke (Memorial U. of Newfoundland) presented Community Newspapers and Community Identity.

As part of the summer household survey, the Communications Theme will be analyzing the results of questions related to communication and interaction. For example, we are interested in how many individuals are using the Internet and for what purpose, and the extent to which they feel that the Internet has changed their lives or circumstances. The patterns which emerge can be analyzed in the context of many different variables or circumstances, including: long time residents

compared to newcomers to the community; perception about household quality of life; participation as a volunteer in the community; and financial, employment, and income status.

Further work is being conducted by Ivan Emke (iemke@swgc.mun.ca) on his survey of small community newspaper editors. In this work, Ivan is analyzing the role of the small community newspaper within the community, particularly as it relates to social cohesion and community identity.

SERVICES AND SOCIAL COHESION IN RURAL AND SMALL TOWN CANADA

By
Greg Halseth

University of Northern British Columbia

Within the CRRF's NRE project, the researchers interested in rural services provision have been collecting information about changes in service levels and the adjustments by rural residents and communities to those changes. Thus far, the findings suggest that service provision in rural and small town places is not only a critical issue in and of itself, but that service provision also plays a central role in social cohesion and social capital. The provision of services in rural and small town Canada has changed tremendously over the past 100 years. Following a long period which saw the expansion of the State into many facets of Canadian life, many argue that we are now experiencing a retrenchment of that involvement and that market based service providers have not filled the emerging gaps in rural places.

Rural services provision has always faced challenges. Large distances and low population densities mean higher service delivery costs per capita compared to urban locations and drives to achieve economies of scale often result in rural services being closed. In addition, calls for greater service specialization, and increased standardization and professionalization, have not always been done with the rural context in mind. Many rural places do not have the demand to justify highly specialized services, and without a general service model option the result is often that no services are delivered. While few would argue against increased professionalization and qualifications for service providers, the dominant urban based models simply do not fit the lived reality of rural and small town places. The loss of services, and the additional costs of having to travel long distances to urban providers creates a double burden for rural residents.

Yet, both rural service provision and rising to meet the challenges of services retrenchment can contribute to local social cohesion and social capital. First, services provide the mechanisms and opportunities for routine interactions. For example, voluntary organizations are a foundation for regular involvement while services like a rural post office also serve as a meeting place through which community members pass daily. If these services did not exist, the routine opportunities for interaction they afford would also not exist. The stress of rural services change can also provide opportunities for local involvement and interaction. For example, even the popular media has noticed rural Canada organizing itself to stop the closures of rural post offices or hospitals. In these cases there are opportunities for enhanced social cohesion interaction - something that may lead to the creation of new organizations, identification of new leaders, and identification of new solutions

Services also assist the functioning of social capital in at least three ways. First, services contribute to social capital both accruing and being drawn down. For example, volunteer fire fighters add to their own social capacity through their activities and they also draw down that social capital when they need help and equipment. Second, services may link local groups into regional, national and international organizations which allows rural residents to draw upon that larger body of knowledge and expertise. Finally, services are important to social capital construction which is constrained by place. One of the crucial aspects of rural and small town Canada is its ability to maintain an identity. By holding services within their small place, residents are reinforcing through localized social capital this sense of identity.

While service provision in rural and small town Canada faces some distinct and real challenges, they can also play a central role in processes associated with social capital and social cohesion. The next stage of the research is to identify the elements which allow a service challenge to be turned into a positive community building process.

THINKING ABOUT THE 3Cs (Capital, Cohesion, Capacity)

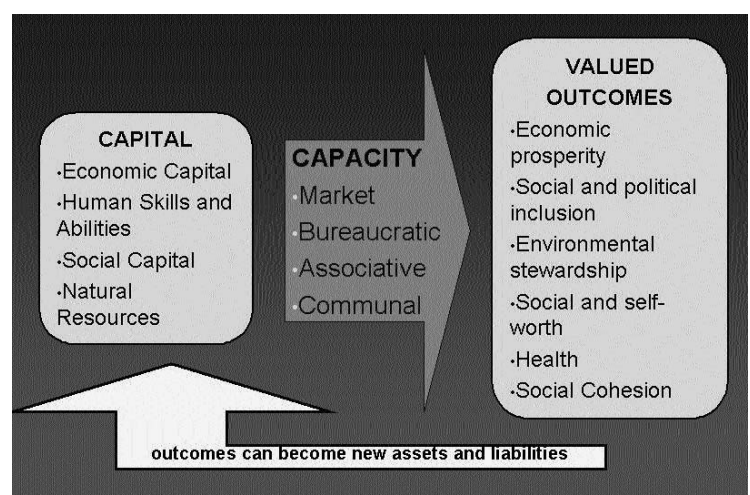
By
BILL REIMER,

NRE Research Director

Social capital, social cohesion, and social capacity have emerged as three central concepts in the NRE theoretical framework. I will outline my current understanding of these concepts below as a foil to the ongoing discussion and analysis within the project¹.

Social Capacity

Social capacity refers to the ability of people to organize their assets and resources to achieve objectives they consider important. These objectives may be reactive, where people are faced with a challenge - or innovative, where new visions are established and pursued. As illustrated in figure below, the analysis of capacity requires a consideration of the assets and resources available to rural people.



¹As usual, these ideas reflect the contribution of many people in the NRE network. I thank them for their insights and inspiration.

These include economic, human, social, and natural capital in various forms. It also requires an analysis of the outcomes that are valued by the various actors. The most important aspect of the framework, however, is the analysis of the structures and processes involved in producing those outcomes from different arrangements of assets and resources.

We have found it useful to consider these processes in terms of four different, but interdependent types of relations: market, bureaucratic, associative, and communal. These four relations and the processes associated with them form the basis of the specific research questions and hypotheses examined as part of the NRE project. They include the following.

- 1.** Market Relations (trade, industry, labour, finance, commerce)
 - How does trade policy and practice impact on the capacity and outcomes for rural communities?
 - How do changes in corporate organization alter the challenges and opportunities in rural areas?
 - What are the challenges and opportunities faced by small, medium-sized businesses, and cooperatives in rural areas?
 - How does the new economy relate to labour, housing, and consumer markets in rural areas?
 - What are the tradeoffs of life-style and identity that rural communities face in the new economy?
- 2.** Bureaucratic Relations (government, corporate, legal)
 - How have the governance structures of rural regions changed in light of the new economic conditions?
 - What impacts do changes in service delivery have on the capacity of rural communities?
 - What are the impacts of shifting entitlements on the capacity of businesses, local governments, volunteer groups, and vulnerable populations in rural areas (elderly, youth, working poor, Aboriginal peoples)?
- 3.** Associative Relations (volunteer, public interest, social movements)
 - In what ways do volunteer groups contribute to the capacity of rural communities?
 - How have the membership and financial challenges of 3rd sector groups changed, and what is their relationship to changes in economic and political conditions.
 - How has communication infrastructure changed the challenges and opportunities for private and voluntary sectors?
 - What are the new social conflicts emerging in rural areas and how are they managed?
- 4.** Communal relations (family, friendship networks, ethnic relations, gangs)
 - How has the new economy influenced the organization and activities of families and personal networks in rural areas?
 - In what ways does the informal economy contribute to or undermine the formal economy in rural areas?
 - How has the new economy modified the structure of social support for vulnerable populations in rural areas?

Each type of relation can be seen as particularly important for different types of community outcomes. Skill in market relations are likely to be valuable for economic vitality; bureaucratic skills can facilitate access to state resources; associative skills are useful for civic vitality; and communal skills are most likely essential for subsistence and resilience under difficult conditions.

Following systems insights, we argue that capacity also varies by level. The capacity required by a household to organize for its valued outcomes are typically very different than those required by a community, region, province, or nation. As a result the analysis of the capacity processes will be conducted at these different levels.

Most of the issues identified by our NRE research cut across two or more of the types of relations and processes above. Indeed, two implied, but central questions arising from this framework are "How do the processes associated with one type of relation support or inhibit those associated with another type?" and "How have the power relations changes among the primary institutions associated with these four types of relations (corporations, the state, the 3rd sector, and the family)?"

Social Capital

Capital is that part of production that is reinvested into future production. Social capital refers to its social forms as reflected in organizations, collective activities, and relationships. Economists have taken an interest in social capital, particularly as it is manifested in trust, networks, and norms like fair exchange and reciprocity since they are particularly interested in the ways it might improve economic efficiency. More generally, it has been used to refer to social characteristics that might facilitate coordinated action and improve conditions such as education, crime, and community development. Jan Flora and his colleagues have expanded the analysis of social capital by distinguishing bonding and bridging forms. Bonding social capital refers to within-group ties that serve to solidify by developing trust, internal networks, and social cohesion. Bridging social capital refers to between-group ties that link two or more relatively independent groups. Their research suggests that both types are important for community development, but that communities may 'specialize' in one or the other to their advantage.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is treated in a wide variety of ways in the academic literature. Sometimes it is understood as a characteristic of groups or places, sometimes as a process, and often as a positively valued characteristic, whether of groups or places. I suggest that the theoretical utility of social cohesion is highest when it is treated as a characteristic of specific social activities. Following this approach we define social cohesion as the extent to which people respond collectively to achieve their valued outcomes. Social cohesion is highest when groups work together to achieve economic, social, political, or cultural objectives or when they do so to deal with the stresses facing them, whether those be positive or negative.

Social cohesion is meaningful only with respect to specific activities and individuals. Groups may be cohesive with respect to certain activities, but not with others. In rural communities, for example, many ordinarily separate and even antagonistic groups might work together to overcome a fire, ice storm, or flood. Their social cohesion varies, therefore, with respect to the group, the events, and time.

Relations between the 3 Cs

These three concepts are closely related. Social cohesion can be an important outcome of collective capacity. In turn, higher levels of social cohesion contribute to the development and maintenance of social capital. Wherever social cohesion is used to enhance future production, for example, it becomes social capital. This is the same capital that is used to produce valued outcomes according to our framework. The ability to generate and sustain this cycle is a key element of social capacity.

For more information and discussion regarding these concepts see the NRE web site: (<http://nre.concordia.ca>) .

NOUVELLE CHAIRE DE RECHERCHE DU CANADA EN DÉVELOPPEMENT RURAL

L'Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR) vient d'obtenir une nouvelle Chaire de recherche du Canada, qui porte sur l'étude des sociétés rurales et des moyens d'encourager leur développement. Le titulaire de cette Chaire sera M. Bruno Jean, professeur à l'UQAR et actuel directeur du programme de doctorat en développement régional.

La chaire de recherche favorisera la recherche sur les questions relatives à la ruralité et au développement durable des territoires ruraux. Elle poursuivra deux objectifs complémentaires : étudier la restructuration à l'œuvre dans les territoires ruraux et soutenir les initiatives de développement des communautés rurales dans ces mêmes territoires. À la fois fondamentales et appliquées, les recherches porteront notamment sur l'évolution des systèmes ruraux contemporains, la revitalisation des milieux ruraux en restructuration, la nouvelle économie rurale, la gouvernance rurale et la planification du développement local dans le milieu rural, et la conception ou l'évaluation des politiques rurales.

Selon M. Jean, "la nouvelle Chaire aidera à maintenir une expertise de haut niveau sur les questions de développement rural durable. Elle permettra de nouvelles capacités de recherche et contribuera à former une nouvelle génération de chercheurs et d'intervenants en développement rural. Elle assurera aussi un partage des connaissances entre les milieux universitaires et les milieux ruraux."

L'attribution de cette chaire en développement rural comprend un montant de 200 000 \$ par année, pendant sept ans (soit 1,4 million \$). Le projet fait partie des investissements consacrés à la recherche et au développement scientifique à travers le Canada, tel qu'annoncé par le ministre de l'Industrie, l'Honorable Brian Tobin.

Pour plus d'information, contactez Bruno Jean : bruno_jean@uqar.qc.ca

CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN RURAL AND SMALL TOWN STUDIES

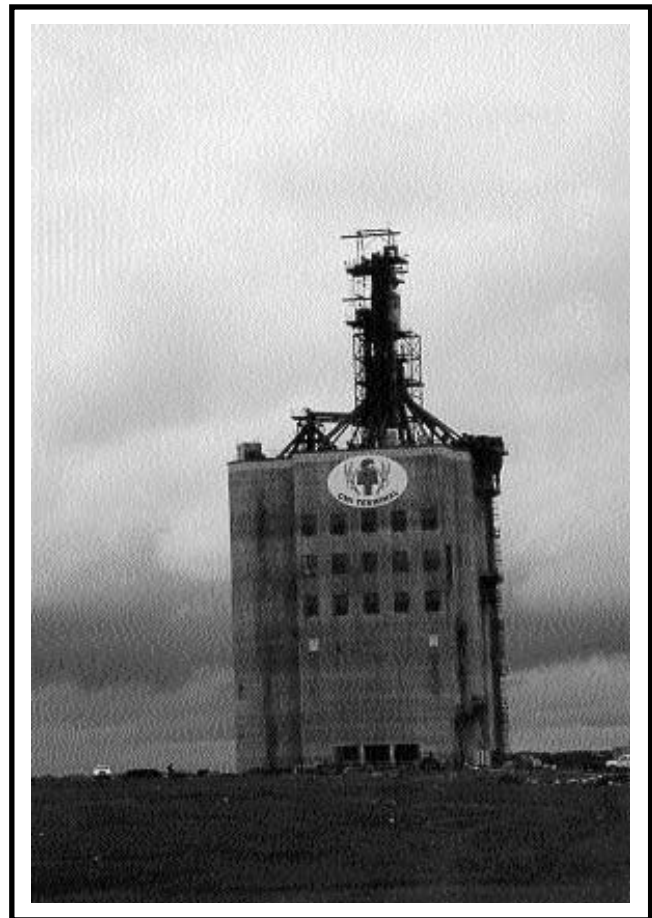
University of Northern British Columbia has been awarded a new Canada Research Chair on Rural and Small Town Studies. The Chair will be held by Dr. Greg Halseth.

Rural and small town places now confront a range of social and economic restructuring pressures. These include the loss of major employers, the uncertainty of employment with remaining firms, the loss of local employment in support industries, a potential leakage of commercial businesses and retail dollars, and resulting losses in local population. In short, rural and small town places across Canada face crises as they struggle with sustainability and viability. The research program will focus upon single-industry resource-dependent towns in northern British Columbia where restructuring is changing the social geography of these places and will concentrate upon two key themes:

- 1) Understanding local, regional, and global inter-linkages and their impacts on communities, and
- 2) Evaluating the processes contributing to community capacity building.

The proposed studies are designed to advance our knowledge of rural and small town Canada and provide evidence critical to developing public policies intended to help these places cope with restructuring and transition.

For more informations, contact Greg Halseth : halseth@unbc.ca



Spalding, Saskatchewan. One of the NRE sites

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