

UNB students go green; win competition

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

UNB has just grown a little greener: four women from the university have won the TD Bank Go Green Challenge.

One hundred thousand dollars worth of awards are given out each year, and the competition is put on by TD Friends of the Environment Foundation (FEF).

UNB students Jane Simmons, Rachel Savidge, Kerri Krawec and Jennifer Hayward have put together a plan called "Research and Partnership Opportunities in University Land Development", which earned the group \$25,000.

The plan, which pertains to sustainable development of UNB's woodlot, suggested that the university use some of its own expertise, both from faculty and students, to develop the area in an environmentally friendly fashion.

"Development appears short-sighted and the social and environmental implications of present and future development are of concern," the group's abstract states.

"Historically, the UNB Woodlot has been used for research, teaching and recreation purposes by the University of New Brunswick and members of the Fredericton community. This report proposes changes in how the woodlot is developed in the future that integrate multiple elements of environmentally based community design by incorporating faculty and students in the development process."

The plan involves a number of ideas that would make development of the woodlot easier on the environment. Dr. Kerry MacQuarrie guided the four eco-conscious students throughout the development of their proposal.

Hayward explains the idea of permeable pavement for use in the woodlot development, which would aid in the management of storm water.

"Permeable pavement is not used in New Brunswick," she says. "But if UNB used it for research, it might inspire the province."

She says the group also suggested water detention ponds to channel runoff, as well as the implementation of green roofs, which would be grassed over in order to absorb storm water.

"We each had an awesome idea, and they all came together," Hayward says.

The deadline for the competition was Monday, Jan. 16, and the students found out about their victory last week. Criteria included originality, a two-or-more-member team, and pertinence to urban sustainability.

Submissions from 182 teams were received. These students hailed from no less than 52 schools across Canada.

"We need a UNB-centered committee to advise development," says Simmons. "We just feel that voices weren't heard."

Savidge says that development standards need to be higher, and views the placement of Costco as problematic.

Krawec agrees: "Perhaps an alternate spot could be found," she says.

Hayward points out that UNB has committed to donating 50 per cent of the woodlot space to conservation, with the other 50 per cent going to development. Costco, however, wants to build on an area that was supposed to have been protected, she says.

"Going back on their word to conserve already is a bad sign," Hayward says.

In terms of sustainability, Savidge says, "We just didn't think they'd taken things far enough. That's why



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Four UNB students have won \$25,000 through the TD Bank Go Green Challenge. They designed a plan for sustainable development of the woodlot. From left to right are the winners: Jennifer Hayward, Kerri Krawec, Jane Simmons, and Rachel Savidge.

we made this proposal."

The team is working on converting their 20-page essay into a presentation. They will deliver their ideas in this format at an environmental conference hosted by UNB this coming weekend,

Mar. 27-28.

Their lecture will be delivered to a number of students from across the Maritimes.

Also in the works for the four students is a possible presentation

to the president of UNB and the university's board of governors.

Hayward, Simmons, Savidge, and Krawec are looking at donating a portion of their winnings to conservational funding.

600 students sign woodlot petition

CAMERON MITCHELL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Last Friday, a group of UNB students submitted a petition with over 600 student signatures to University President John McLaughlin. In the petition, students voiced their dissatisfaction with decisions pertaining to the development of the UNB Woodlot.

The petition put forth a desire for the university to include students, faculty, and the Fredericton community in the search for an innovative design solution that will enhance development of the forested wetland.

Development of the Woodlot has recently come under scrutiny because of the proposed Costco development on the property. UNB had previously promised that developments on the Woodlot would stay clear of the surrounding wetlands areas by a distance of at least 80 metres. However, the boundary of Costco's section of land falls within 30 metres of a wetland in three separate areas.

The petition was put together by a small group of UNB students. It quickly gained support and eventually ballooned with hundreds of student signatures. Kerri Krawec is a fourth year political science major and the spokesperson for the group that started the petition. She is also part of a four-member group from UNB to

win the TD Bank "Go Green" challenge this month for a sustainable woodlot development plan.

"We have never been against development, in the sense that there is a deionization that the university is in need of revenue," said Krawec after the presentation on Friday. "But there is certainly a concern over how that development will take place, and it is very reasonable to suggest that environmentally sustainable development is possible, especially with all the expertise in house."

The group questioned the university's failure to use its own faculty and students to improve the decision-making as it pertains to development of the Woodlot. The group says UNB is filled with bright minds and many helpful programs that teach about environmental stability.

"There are a number of students here that actually have classes that are involved with different accepts of environmental sustainability, and to be able to use the experience that they are getting and put it into practice would be phenomenal," said Krawec.

The group handed the petition to President McLaughlin at 11:15 on Friday morning. They were welcomed by the President and invited to talk to him behind closed doors about the Woodlot. When they emerged a short time later, they seemed encouraged by his initial response.

"(Dr. McLaughlin) has pledged to include students in meaningful consultation by setting up a structure, while he is still in

his position as president, that will start to include students, faculty, and community in the way that development will proceed," said Krawec. "So we thank him for that."

"If he is able to follow through on the promises that he has made, as far as at least setting up a structure for including students, then I will be happy with that as a start," said Krawec.

Krawec also assured students that the Woodlot issue will not be ignored once President McLaughlin leaves at the end of the academic year.

"Dr. [Eddy] Campbell will also be sent a PDF file of the petition as an indication that students are concerned and that this isn't an issue that is just going to go away with a change in the administration," she said.

Krawec also elaborated on how President McLaughlin said he intends to get students more involved in the Woodlot discussion.

"President McLaughlin has indicated that there is an informal committee that is looking at a way for a structure to be set up that will incorporate students, faculty, and the community. He has invited one member of our group to be involved in that as a way to give more information about how we can see students actually participate in this," continued Krawec. "If that is able to go ahead, then we are thrilled because so far the student representation on this issue has not been satisfactory."

McLaughlin did not speak to press following the meeting on Friday.

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