

## The Natural Environment -Sub-committee of the Environmental Advisory Committee

Attendees: Susan Purdy (chair), Leif Douglass, Lyn Baldwin, Tom Waldechuk and Kevin Scollon.

Date: March 28<sup>th</sup> 2012

Scope – review the Campus Sustainability Plan (2010- 2012) for the Natural Environment section.

### **Goal 1. Provide stewardship for on-campus natural areas**

*Guiding principle: Recognize the value of natural areas on campus for research, teaching and aesthetic purposes. To this end, it is vital that TRU protects indigenous habitat within its overall campus plan.*

- Action: Clean up Guerin Creek and increase its value as a teaching site for TRU students and the general public

Progress so far: the clean-up of Guerin Creek occurred in Sept 2009, but still this site is not being used for research or teaching, nor has any plan been put in place to protect this site from future development.

Tasks: Conduct a survey of the creek, and identify the biodiversity in and around the creek. Use the creek as a demonstration project for students as an example of stream restoration. Also, map the area that needs protection, and ensure that this land is not disturbed by any future development.

- Action: set aside the western undeveloped portion of TRU Kamloops campus as a Biodiversity Conservation and Teaching Area (especially the knoll).

*Importance of this area: Note that the knoll area has cryptogamic crusts. These crusts consist of a tightly bound mesh of various cyanobacteria, lichens, mosses, and fungi that hold the soil down and prevent soil erosion, and provide a hospitable environment for germinating plants. When disturbed, these crusts would take hundreds of years to reform.*

Progress so far: The disk-golf course was removed from this area, but that is all so far.

Tasks: Identify the participants in the management of this area and form a “Friends of the Knoll” group. Outline the boundaries for this area and make sure that this area remains undisturbed when future development occurs on campus. Identify specific biodiversity values for this area and use this area for teaching and research. Provide walking trails in the area with educational signage that lead from the already established pathways in the horticulture gardens, with the help of students as part of their classes or in student clubs, such as BUGS.

- Action: identify other on-campus and off-campus natural areas and biodiversity values under TRU’s control.

Progress so far: None taken.

**Goal 2: Minimize the environmental impacts of TRU's landscaping while maintain current aesthetic values.**

- Action: Update the current TRU Landscape Planting and Rehabilitation Plan to include reductions in pesticide and water use.

Progress so far: Recommendation from JOHSC to minimize the use of pesticides and also provide ample warning and signage to areas that have been sprayed – accepted by admin in Oct 2011.

Tasks: Encourage the Landscaping Committee to plant some areas on campus with native plants (that typically require less water). A certain percentage of new plantings on campus should consist of native plants, for example the University of Victoria has a goal of all new plantings consist of 75% native plants. Seek funding for research into growing native plants from seed to be used for plantings into specific areas at TRU. Reduce water use on campus by following the City of Kamloops water restrictions, such as only watering between certain hours and also make sure that water is not wasted by monitoring the accuracy of all automatic sprinklers (so concrete etc is not watered). Decrease the amount of area on campus that is under lawn, and introduce new xeriscaped areas that don't require as much water.

**Goal 3: Encourage more local food production and consumption**

- Action: Establish a food garden for use by the Culinary Arts program and as an educational tool.

Progress so far: A detailed plan has been developed by Kevin Scollon to plant a food garden near the Culinary Arts building.

Tasks:

- Action: increase the availability of local food on campus and support local farmers.

Progress so far: Not much. There was recently a "Sustainable Beef" day at the Culinary Arts cafeteria, and also a "Sustainable Seafood Day" has been conducted in the past.

Tasks: Make recommendations to Ancillary Services on purchasing policy in this regard.