



Inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future

National Wildlife Federation®

11100 Wildlife Center Drive • Reston, VA 20190 • www.nwf.org

**Franklin Pierce College
Rindge, New Hampshire
2006, Assessment**

BACKGROUND

Campus profile

Franklin Pierce College (FPC) is a private, four-year, primarily undergraduate, liberal arts college located in rural southwestern New Hampshire. There are 1,650 students enrolled on the main campus in Rindge, and there are 60 full-time and 24 part-time faculty members. The college's curriculum is a blend of traditional liberal arts, pre-professional study, teacher preparation programs, and a nationally recognized core curriculum, The Individual and Community. FPC's largest undergraduate majors are psychology, mass communication, and sports and recreation management. Biology and environmental science are also popular majors with students.

The main campus consists of 1,200 acres of land adjacent to a lake, and within view of Mount Monadnock. Most of the land is undeveloped forest and wetland. The land is teeming with wildlife, from moose and mink to black bears and bobcats. FPC's faculty and staff members, and students use the land for hiking, watching birds, drawing, doing research, and all forms of recreation. The land and the lake provide great inspiration to the entire community, and they have formed the basis for much of the environmental ethic that has evolved here.

In 1998, a small group of faculty and staff members, and its students, led by Catherine Owen Koning, began the Ecological Conscience Initiative at FPC. This campus-greening effort took its inspiration from Aldo Leopold's "Land Ethic" essay, as well as from the campus ecology movement. A summary of the early goals of this Initiative can be found at <http://www.fpc.edu/pages/Academics/nscience/envsci/ecisummary.pdf>.

Contacts

Catherine Owen Koning, PhD
Professor of Environmental Science
20 College Road
Rindge, NH 03461-0060
Phone: 603-899-4322
Office: Marcucella Hall 109
Email: koningc@fpc.edu

GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goals

At FPC, our goal was to conduct an assessment of the college's progress toward sustainability and to produce a report card grading the College community's work relative to other schools.

Accomplishments

FPC's sustainable communities class worked with the director of facilities, and the managers of purchasing, food services, maintenance, and environmental services to collect data, present findings, evaluate progress, and make recommendations for change. The written report was finished in May; it will be reviewed before being made available on the FPC website. The report gave the following grades for the college community: buildings and grounds, B+; energy: B+; food services: C+; purchasing: D; waste: C-. The class estimated the ecological footprint of the average student at FPC at 22.5 acres, well above a sustainable level of resource use.

The buildings and grounds section of the report noted that the facilities department has made several efforts to reduce environmental impacts, including responding quickly to resource-wasting problems, switching to a no-sand road de-icer, recycling used furniture and metals, and using very little pesticide and fertilizer relative to other schools. Undeveloped lands remain quite healthy. Problems remain in the lack of sustainable green building initiatives, a number of areas with erosion and litter, and some problems with invasive species. This group's most important goals are the protection of 500 acres of land from development and the construction of a certified green building by 2026.

The energy section shows that the college is attempting to cut down its use of fossil fuels and electricity and is using less electricity per capita than other schools. The action plan included the education of community members to reduce electricity use, the increased energy efficiency, the investigation into systems to reduce overheating of residences, the purchase of energy-efficient vehicles, the use of alternative fuels for heating, and the replacement or increased insulation of the Airframe.

The food services section found that Sodexo Food Services' operations are working to reduce environmental impact by serving less beef and fish and by cutting down on disposable dinnerware. Goals include raising community awareness of the environmental costs of nonorganic foods, beef and fish, food waste, and disposable products, plus reducing the use or occurrence of those items. Sodexo should buy more locally grown and organic food products.

Under the purchasing section, students found that FPC is only buying 5.4 percent green products, and that very little paper with recycled content is used relative to other colleges. The purchasing section's action plan suggests ways to increase purchasing for more products that are local, have energy star ratings, or both.

The waste section reports that each person at FPC produces 100 pounds of waste per month, more than most other schools. FPC recycles less than most schools but has made a number of efforts to reduce water use and toxic waste. At the same time, FPC's waste section is looking to increase recycling and to decrease toxic waste and water use. Action plans to reduce waste include a food composting system, an increase in recycling, and a strategy to reduce waste on move-out day.

Challenges and Responses

The largest challenge for this project was obtaining the data about FPC and comparable data from other similar schools. Information from the Campus Ecology Program website was very useful but required a lot of digging around to find. In the future at FPC, we hope to alleviate

some of the data mining problems by asking for regular reporting of certain indicators from the relevant departments; if this information becomes available on the Internet, perhaps other schools will follow suit and we may all see what works and what doesn't. Useful indicators include these: oil and electricity use per capita and per square foot, acres mowed, pounds of fertilizer or pesticide used per acre, pounds of solid waste produced per capita, gallons of water used per capita, acres of land restored or protected, acres of developed land, acres of degraded land (erosion, invasive species), and so forth.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

This project was led by Catherine Owen Koning, the Environmental Science faculty member, and eleven students: Emmy Andersen, Katie Bogaard, Pat Deane, Sean Doyle, Greta Frost, Derrick Gardner, Patti Gillen, Katie Hadsell, Andrew LaFleur, Reid Lichwell, and Tom Merkt. Major assistance and support came from Kim Knox, Sodexo Food Services General Manager; Doug Lear, Director, Facilities Department; John Mims, Chief Financial Officer; Barbara Peloquin, Manager, Environmental Services Department; Robert St. Jean, Manager, Purchasing Department; and John Weir, Manager, Maintenance Department.

Funding and Resources

This project did not require any additional funding because it was conducted in the context of a class. However, it did require quite a bit of staff members time, attendance at meetings, and compilation of data.

Community Outreach and Education

The class conducted two community forums: one in the evening and one during the day. About 45 students attended the evening session; about 12 students, 3 faculty members, and 6 staff members attended the weekday forum. The students presented their research and asked for ideas about what could be done to improve the situation.

Climate Change

This project focused on reducing many sources of greenhouse gases, from landfills to the burning of fossil fuels.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology® Program

We At FPC used the Campus Ecology program website extensively to find links to other colleges as we searched for comparative data and looked for ideas to move our project forward. The publication titled *State of the Campus Environment* was very useful for our project.

CLOSING COMMENT

As FPC's leader of the initiative, I would like to hear about any similar efforts and would like to see the National Wildlife Federation start a conversation about sustainability indicators so we at FPC can collect and disseminate comparable data.