

Environmental Committee
Accomplishments in the 2015-2016 Academic Year

1. Climate Action Plan

Over the summer of 2015 the Climate Action Plan (CAP) Subcommittee developed a document listing measurements and criteria of success for each action step in the Plan. On September 3, 2015, the CAP was presented to Meet & Confer and on October 7 to the Council of Deans; the response was positive. Pending approval by the Cabinet, liaisons from the Committee met individually with CAP responsible parties to discuss implementation of the plan and the reporting of the successful completion of action steps. A summary table of the CAP was made available to the responsible parties on One Drive to facilitate reporting. On March 1, 2016, the Committee learned that the Cabinet had officially authorized moving forward with the Plan. The CAP Subcommittee is moving forward with the writing of a first-year CAP progress report, to highlight major successes of the Plan in the 2015-2016 academic year. The individuals who worked on the Climate Action Plan are Karen Anderson, Bob Sorensen, Paul Prew and Lou Schwartzkopf for the Committee; Loren Ahonen; and Ron Fields for Facilities Management. *Written by Lou Schwartzkopf*

2. Sustainability Expo

On March 20, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. a Sustainability Expo was held in the Centennial Student Union. The event was sponsored by the Environmental Committee and Library Services at Minnesota State Mankato, Transition Mankato, and the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry. The 2016 Expo's theme was Sustainable Food and was held in connection with the Minnesota State Mankato's Common Read program. The event went smoothly, with over 160 people and 27 organizations in attendance. Twelve different informational programs were offered throughout the day. Programs included topics like "Building Regional Food Systems" presented by Jim Gerhke, Director of Entrepreneurial Development & Communications for the Minnesota Community Action Partnership and "Food Security and Food Sovereignty: Lessons from India" offered by Jim Dontje, Director of the Johnson Center for Environmental Innovation at Gustavus Adolphus College. KEYC covered the event and afterwards broadcast a short video. Door prizes were awarded throughout the day. Environmental Committee members who worked on creating the Expo include Monika Antonelli, Bob Sorensen, and Anne Stenzel along with Jane Dow from Transition Mankato and Lisa Coons from the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry. Student volunteers were recruited for the Expo through OrgSync. *Written by Monika Antonelli*

3. RecycleMania 2016

The Recycling Sub-Committee of the University Environmental Committee participated in the national RecycleMania program for the fourth year in a row. Minnesota State University, Mankato competed against 350 other colleges and universities from 48 states in the United States, the District of Columbia, and Canada representing 4.4 million students.

This year's contest was marketed using ideas from webinars and by posting updates on the University's "Green Campus" website. Display tables were set up in the Highland Center lobby area to disseminate information about the campus recycling program, the RecycleMania contest, and to increase awareness about the Campus-wide Environmental Committee's purpose, objectives and activities. The University's recycling data was provided by the campus waste handler, LJP Waste & Recycling, and the data was entered weekly into the online database by Sub-Committee members.

Competing schools in the eight-week competition were ranked according to how much recycling, trash and food waste they collected. Between the early-February kickoff and the tournament's final weigh-in on April 2, participating schools collectively recycled or composted 80 million pounds of recyclables and organic materials, preventing the release of 122,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂E) into the atmosphere, which is equivalent to preventing annual emissions from 24,000 cars.

MSU Mankato's rankings in specific categories were as follows:

- Grand Champion (recycling rate as a percentage of overall waste): MSU Mankato ranked 204 out of 208 total competitors
- Per Capita Classic (recycling of paper, cardboard, and bottles and cans per person): MSU Mankato ranked 213 out of 269 total competitors
- Gorilla Prize (recycling the highest gross tonnage of combined paper, cardboard and bottles and cans): MSU Mankato ranked 185 out of 276 total competitors
- Waste Minimization (least overall waste per person): MSU Mankato ranked 72 out of 114 total competitors
- Recycled Paper: MSU Mankato ranked 62 out of 91 total competitors
- Bottles and Cans: MSU Mankato ranked 41 out of 81 total competitors

MSU Mankato also participated in the "Game Day Basketball" subcategory event. Our University ranked 15 out of 24 colleges and universities that took part in this special category. Schools were compared based on recycling and waste minimization efforts made during a single home basketball game. Student volunteers were recruited for the "Game Day Basketball event" through OrgSync.

Committee members who worked on Recyclemania are Karen Anderson, Beth Holcomb, Medea Myhra and Gary Urban. *Written by Beth Holcomb*

4. George Boody lecture

The Environmental Committee organized and sponsored a lecture on campus on October 21, 2015, by George Boody titled "The Necessity of Sustainable Agriculture for Healthy Communities in Rural Minnesota." Mr. Boody is the Executive Director of the Land Stewardship Project, a private, non-profit organization dedicated to creating transformational change to the food and farming system. About 70 from campus and the community attended. His presentation is available for viewing from the Environmental Committee website at www.mnsu.edu/greencampus by clicking on Past Events and scrolling down to the date of the talk. Committee members who worked on the lecture are Monika Antonelli, Paul Prew, Lou Schwartzkopf, and Anne Stenzel. *Written by Lou Schwartzkopf*

5. Film showing: This Changes Everything

On February 27, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. on a beautiful warm February afternoon (an amazing 57 degrees) a steadfast group of 34 people attended the film showing on climate change. This was an excellent turnout for the event. Twenty-eight surveys were collected at the showing. Environmental Committee member Anne Stenzel had her student workers tabulate the survey results which documented that 71% of people taking the survey showed at least some improvement in their understanding of climate change after viewing the film. The Library partnered with Transition Mankato, the MSU Environmental Committee, and the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry in the showing of the film. The film was purchased with institutional public performance rights for \$350. The Environmental Committee and Transition Mankato each provided \$100 to cover the cost of funding. Monika Antonelli did the organizational work for the showing for the Committee. *Written by Monika Antonelli*

6. Carbon Footprint Update and Commuter Survey

All the data for the FY2014 and FY2015 updates have been compiled, with one exception: the inputs for commuting emissions. The inputs needed to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions from faculty, staff and student commuting are found from an analysis of the campus commuter survey conducted every spring. The spring 2015 commuter survey analysis has been done but not the spring 2014 analysis. It's anticipated that the spring 2014 analysis will be done soon, at which time the campus carbon footprint update for FY2014 and FY2015 can be completed. The campus carbon footprint will be updated for FY2016 after the close of the 2016 fiscal year on June 30, 2016. Ron Fields has coordinated the reporting of data for the Updates, Gary Urban has done the analysis of commuter surveys, and Lou Schwartzkopf has coordinated the analysis of the data. *Written by Lou Schwartzkopf*

7. Student Recycling Team

The Student Recycling Team was established in Fall 2014. The team consists of work-study students employed by Building Services who assist the General Maintenance Worker Lead Recycling person with emptying recycling containers in all academic buildings across campus. The students also help out with RecycleMania activities and other activities sponsored by the Environmental Committee and the division of Facilities Management, all of which are committed to establishing a campus culture supporting energy efficiency, resource conservation and sustainability – part of the University's Strategic Plan 2010-15. The Student Recycling Team was coordinated by Beth Holcomb. *Written by Beth Holcomb*

8. Recycling Guide

The Student Recycling Guides were shared at the display table during the RecycleMania tournament period. *Written by Beth Holcomb*

9. Campus Beautification

Our 16th annual Campus Beautification Day was a huge success. Volunteers from throughout campus – students, faculty, staff – enthusiastically showed up on a gorgeous spring day and planted around 6700 plants. Cleanliness and maintenance of grounds, beautification, preservation of green space and landscaping are vital aspects of enhancing our campus and making a positive first impression to visitors. Without volunteers, we simply wouldn't have the ability to beautify our grounds with flowers. And for that, we thank you. Becky Gahler, Medea Myhra, Anne Stenzel, and Gary Urban volunteered for the Committee. *Written by Becky Gahler*

10. Bicycle repair stands

The bicycle repair stands continue to be used by the campus community. A fourth repair stand has been authorized and will be operational outside of Wissink in time for Fall Semester 2016. More information about the repair stands can be found at www.mnsu.edu/greencampus/bikerepairstands . *Written by Gary Urban*

11. Barnes & Noble relationship

The Barnes & Noble bookstore on campus continued their financial support of the work of the Committee with a \$500 gift at the beginning of the academic year. Most of their gift was used to cover the expenses for publicity and the speaker's honorarium for the George Boody lecture in October. The Environmental Committee is very appreciative of their generous support. *Written by Lou Schwartzkopf*

12. Green Campus website / Social media

The Environmental Committee continues to maintain its website, www.mnsu.edu/greencampus , and its Facebook page, facebook.com/msumankatogreencampus . Gary Urban is the webmaster for the Committee's website. *Written by Lou Schwartzkopf*

13. Bus ridership

Bus ridership has grown continuously since 2011-2012 because of the creation of the Green Transportation Fee. Since the Fee is used to pay for the buses, students, faculty and staff can ride for free on presentation of their MavCard. This concept first surfaced at an Environmental Committee meeting and was subsequently championed by the Parking Advisory Committee and Student Senate. An increase in the Fee to \$1.00 per credit hour starting in 2016-2017 from \$0.90 per credit hour will generate more funds for alternative forms of transportation to campus. *Written by Dave Cowan*