

Rural Sustainability and Local Governance in Canada from a Two Wheeled Prospective.

Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance
Issue 10: December 2011- June 2012
<http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/cjlg>

Local Governance and Sustainable Rural Community Development: A Comparative Study of Canadian and Australian Experiences

Professor John Martin

Dr Alistair Walker

Having already contributed to a research paper issued in this edition of the Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance, Professor John Martin has found time to cycle with a small entourage across the vast landscape of Canada studying its rural sustainable communities. John is accompanied on his journey by his wife, Annie Guthrie and fellow researcher Alistair Walker, all native Australians.

The journey plots its course from Pemberton, just north of Vancouver and will end in St John's, Newfoundland at the end of August, a marathon journey of 7500km, the equivalent distance between Bangkok and Sydney.

John's journey studying and comparing rural communities and their sustainability in both Canada and Australia can be followed on www.sustainablecanadiancommunities.com, while Alistair has chosen to update the cycling journey www.canadothis.com and Annie to log the trip by uploading video clips to document the daily experiences as they unfold www.visualjourneyacrosscanada.com

The study aims to discover and research what Canadian and Australian rural communities have in common. In both countries, rural communities are located in federations similar in structure and function, with provinces/states having considerable authority over these places. Governments are often challenged to provide equitable services to all places, especially in rural communities. Yet these communities continue to survive often facing the most challenging demographic, economic and environmental circumstances. In this comparative research, John and Alistair will ask what it is about these places, people and institutions that sustain them over time addressing the key issue of how their past, current economic fortunes, social networks and public institutions work together to ensure their sustainability.

Why not log on now and follow their journey and share their experiences across the vast and varied landscape of Northern Canada!