

The Origins of ARBRI

Robert Holmberg

Emeritus Professor



**Athabasca
University**

**1970: Tim Byrne chooses a
non-political name for the 4th
Alberta university ...**



Athabasca Hall at the University of Alberta

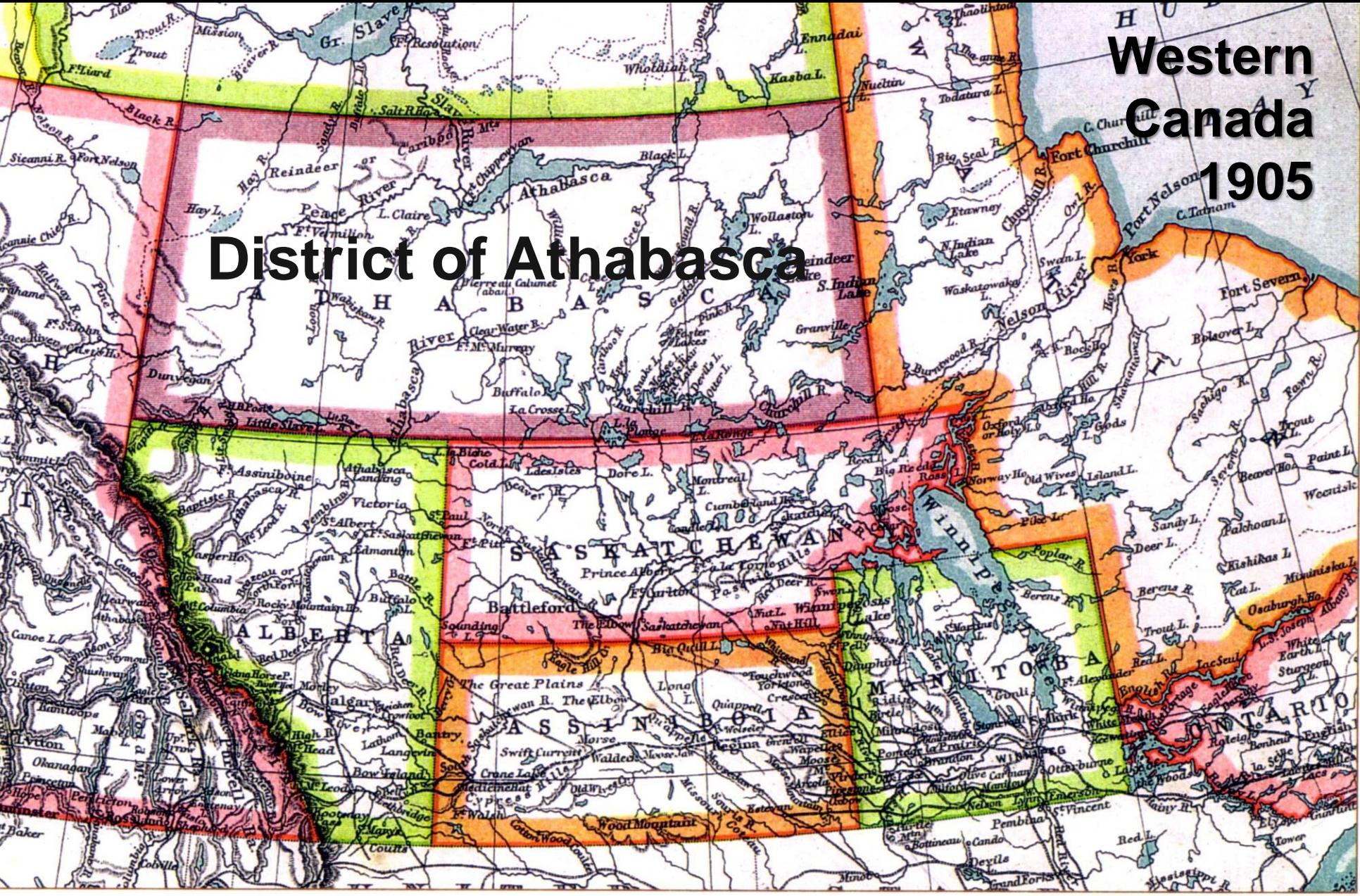
A photograph of Athabasca Hall at the University of Alberta, a large red brick building with many windows, surrounded by snow in winter. A sign in the foreground reads "Athabasca Hall".

1970 – possibility of demolition
1911 – first building on campus

New university to reflect a northern perspective

Western
Canada
1905

District of Athabasca



Athabasca University

Established 25 June 1970 in Edmonton

AU's Relocation to Athabasca

- Late 970s: secret Government decision to move AU headquarters to Town of Athabasca



Frank Appleby, MLA for Athabasca

Athabasca
University 

The first building of the University was
officially opened on June 15, 1985

by

James Corson and Anne Dobbie
two of its students

supported by

Hon. Dick Johnston, Minister, Alberta Advanced Education

and

Rt. Hon. Lord Perry of Walton

John P. C. Elson, Chairman
Athabasca University Governing Council

Frank Appleby, M.L.A.
Athabasca

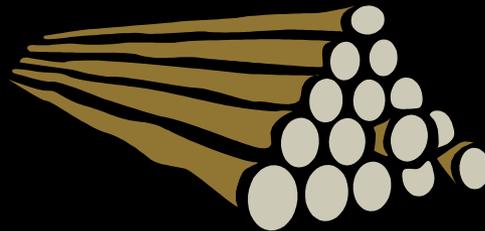
Wayne H. Wright
Architects Ltd.

Stephen Griew
President

Anton J. Schinkinger
Mayor of Athabasca

Carlson Construction
Company

1988: announcement of world's largest single-line Kraft pulp mill to be built just downstream from Town of Athabasca



Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for New Pulp Mill



- no consideration of 4 other pulp mills on the Athabasca River
- no consideration of logging operations

Alberta-Pacific Forest Products pulp mill (Al-Pac), 2007

1988: formation of Friends of the Athabasca Environmental Association (FOTA)

→ need to consider the whole basin and accumulative impacts



Bill Fuller



Louis Schmittroth

1989-1992: Pulp Mill Bibliographies

Pulp Mills and the Environment: An Annotated Bibliography for Northern Alberta

Robert Holmberg

May 1992

Friends of the Athabasca Environmental Association

Pulp and Paper Mill References

February 26, 1989

Robert Holmberg
Sciences, Athabasca University
Athabasca, Alberta
TOG 2R0

This is an annotated list of books and other materials related to the development and operation of pulp and paper mills in the Athabasca River basin. The purpose of the list is to encourage members of the public to learn about these industries so that they can ask informed questions, and better understand the answers given, at Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and other meetings that will be held when new or expanded mills are proposed. The materials are grouped into various categories including: **Air Pollution, Chemistry, Economics, Environmental Impact Assessments, Forestry, Human Health, Legal, Logging, Monitoring, Planning, Pulp and Paper Mills, Water Pollution, Water: Rivers and Lakes, Waste Management.**

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University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta
Environmental Research and Study Centre
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

Why a bibliography?

- Main role of any university is to improve the knowledge of the general public

- Teaching
- Research
- Service



Why a bibliography?

- In order to make the best decisions, one needs to know what is known



What is the Athabasca River Basin (ARB)?

- ~1,230 km long
- ~133,000 km²
- >101 tributary rivers
- >307 named creeks
- >328 named lakes
- no dams or reservoirs



2000-2006: several unsuccessful attempts to get AU to “adopt” ARB

- **Centre for Science**
- **Possible collaborations
with AI-Pac**
- **Rotarian club of Athabasca**
- **Inside Education**
- **Etc.**

Research in the Athabasca River Basin: Implications for Science

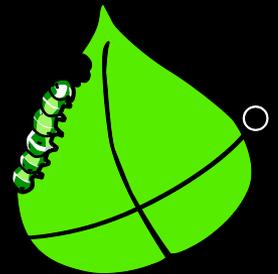
**Robert Holmberg
Centre for Science
Athabasca University
25 September 2002**

2001 April 1: Formation of Science Outreach – Athabasca



2001: Objectives of Science Outreach – Athabasca:

- 1. Increase science awareness
in greater Athabasca area**
- 2. Develop a knowledge base
about Athabasca River Basin**



2006: Open staff meeting with President Frits Pannekoek

- → government grant to study feasibility of a research institute on ARB
- 2 Campus Alberta Innovates Program Research Chairs (CAIP)



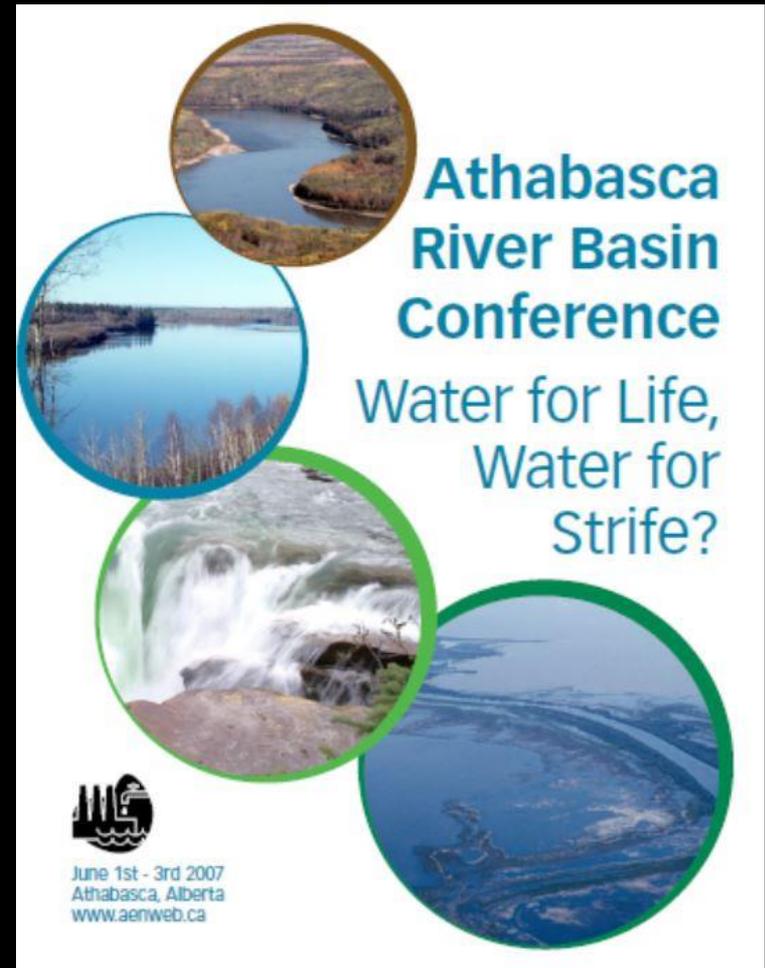
2007 March 21:

- I gave notice that I would retire at the end of the year



2007 June 1-3: Athabasca River Basin Conference

- Initiated by: Harvey Scott, Don Kvill, Jerry McLean (Athabasca Peace Initiative)
- Science Outreach – Athabasca people helped organize conference
- > 200 attendees from general public, government and industry

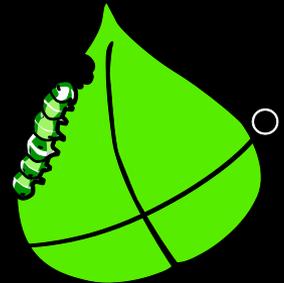


2007-2010: Science Bibliography of ARB

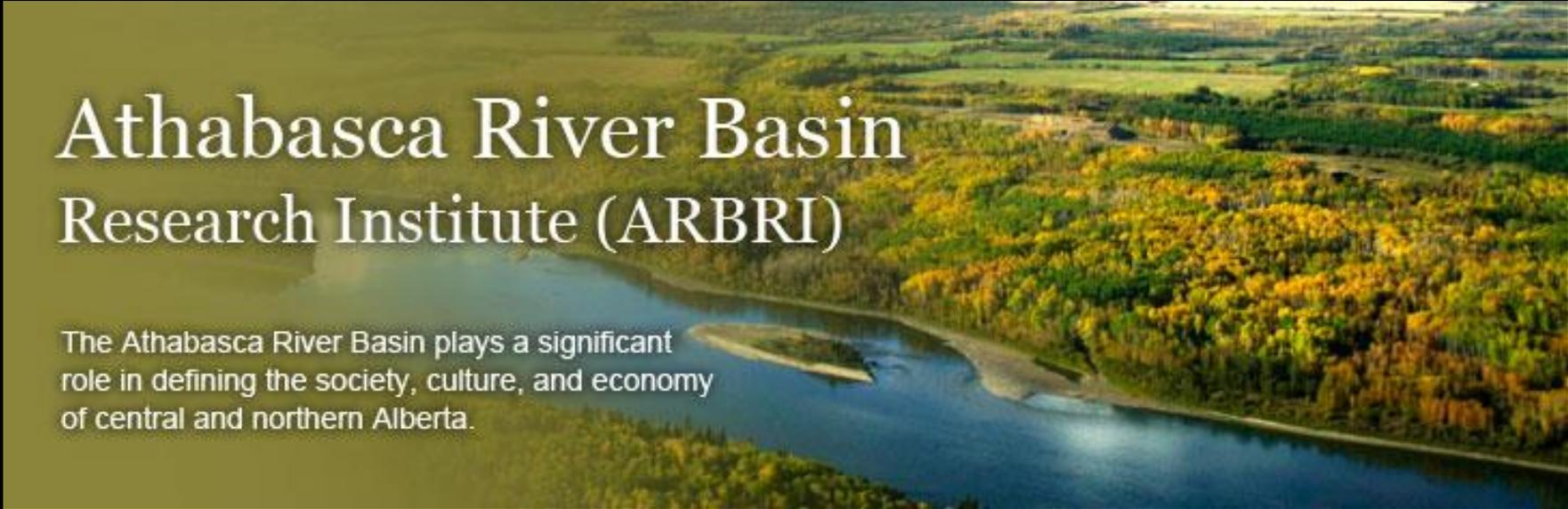


Pamela Carlton,
Science Bibliographer

- Suncor Energy Foundation and Government of Alberta grants
- → 25,000 references in 2.5 years



2007-2008: Formation of Athabasca River Basin Research Institute (ARBRI)



Athabasca River Basin Research Institute (ARBRI)

The Athabasca River Basin plays a significant role in defining the society, culture, and economy of central and northern Alberta.



Athabasca
University

2009 November 28: Formation of the Watershed Panning and Advisory Council for the Athabasca River



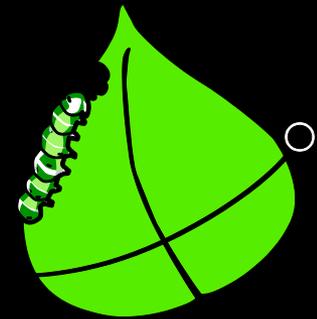
Our Watershed
Our Responsibility

A man with short hair, wearing a brown blazer over a dark blue sweater and a light blue collared shirt, stands outdoors with his hands in his pockets. The background is a blurred natural setting.

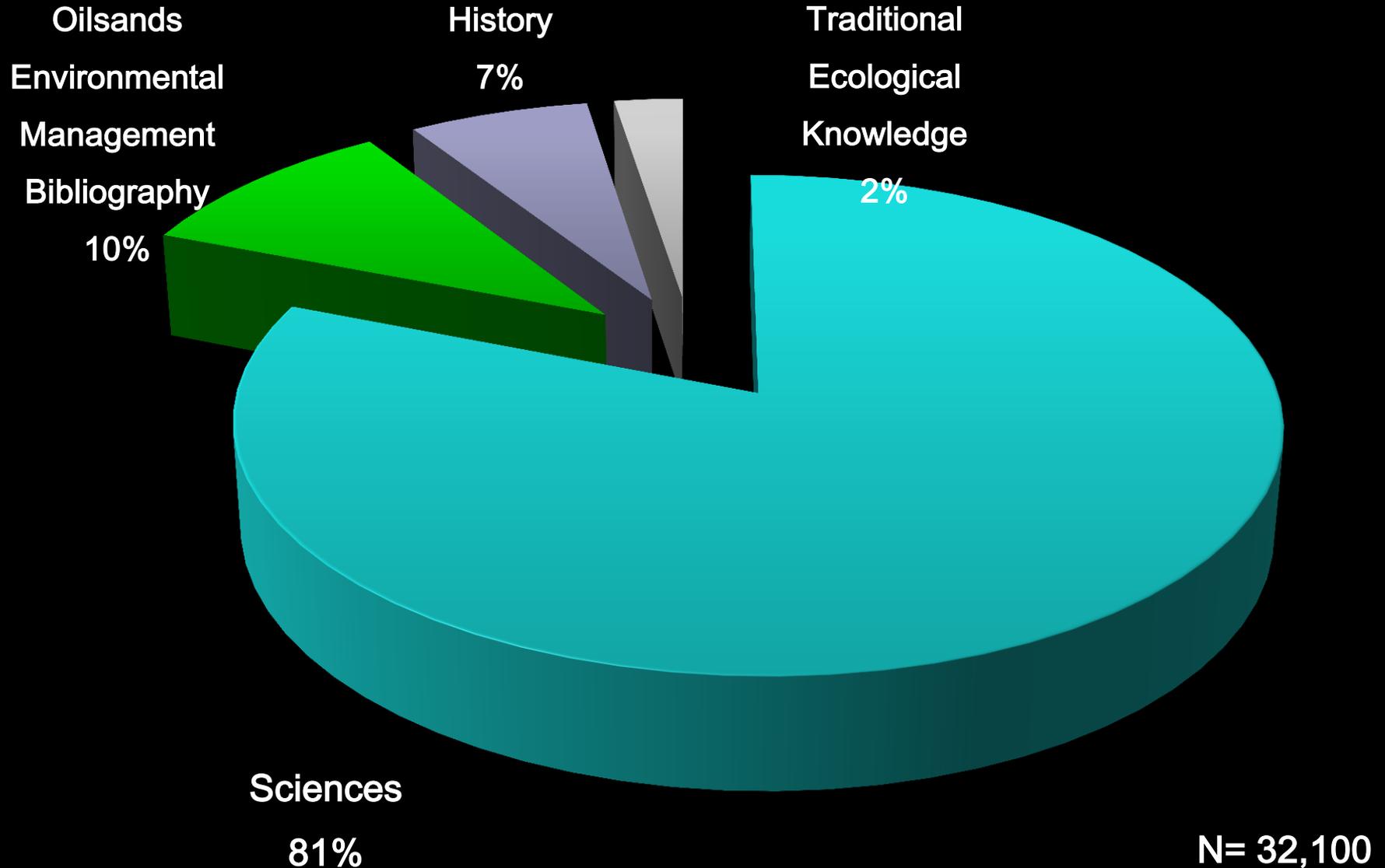
2008-2010: David Locky, Interim Director ARBRI

- **Scope of ARBRI**
- **Web site:** <http://arbri.athabascau.ca/>
- **Bibliography of the Athabasca River Basin (BARB) with AU Library and various academics**
- **Helped obtain grant from Imperial Oil**
- **Member of Watershed Public Advisory Council (WPAC) for the Athabasca River**

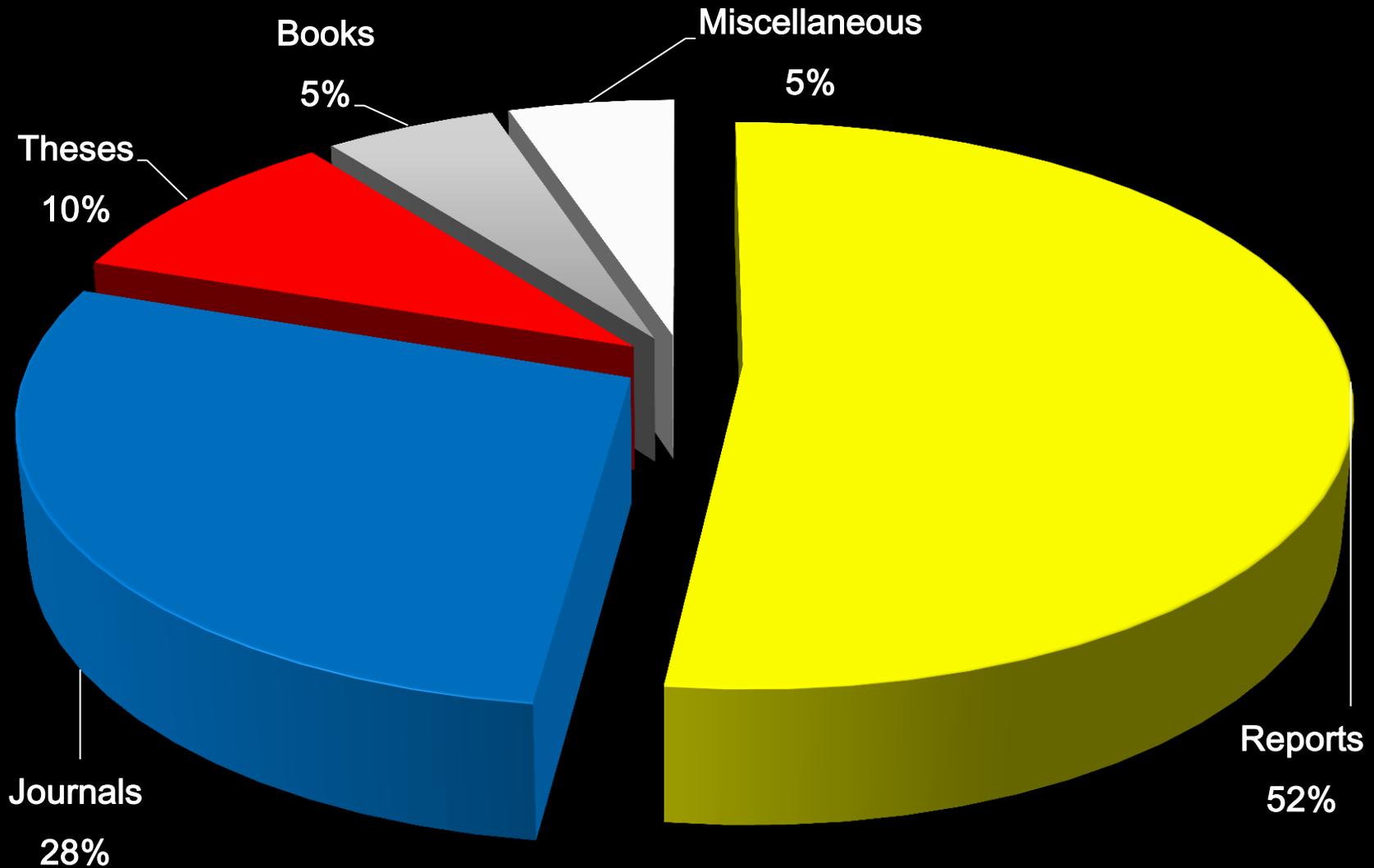
**2009: Science Outreach –
Athabasca donated 25,000
science references to BARB**



General Subjects now in BARB

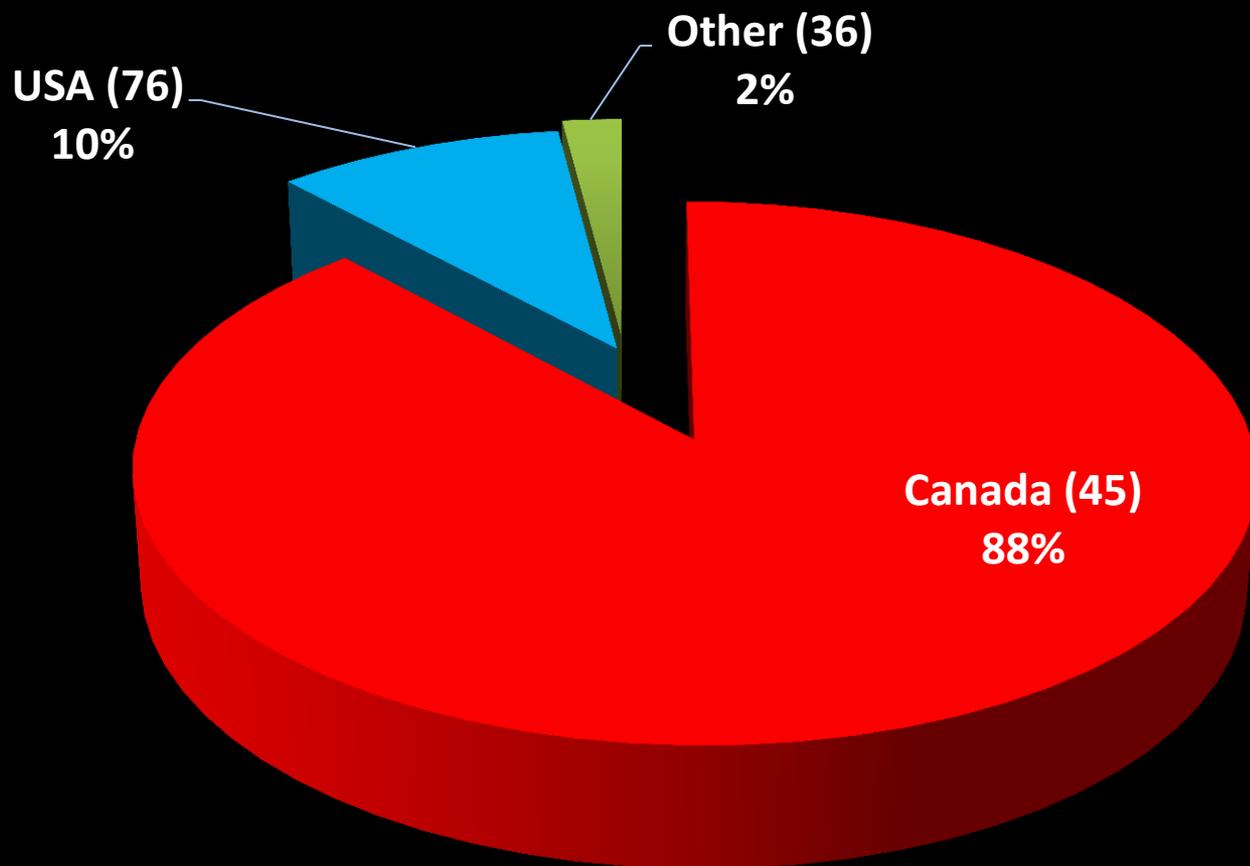


Types of Documents now in BARB



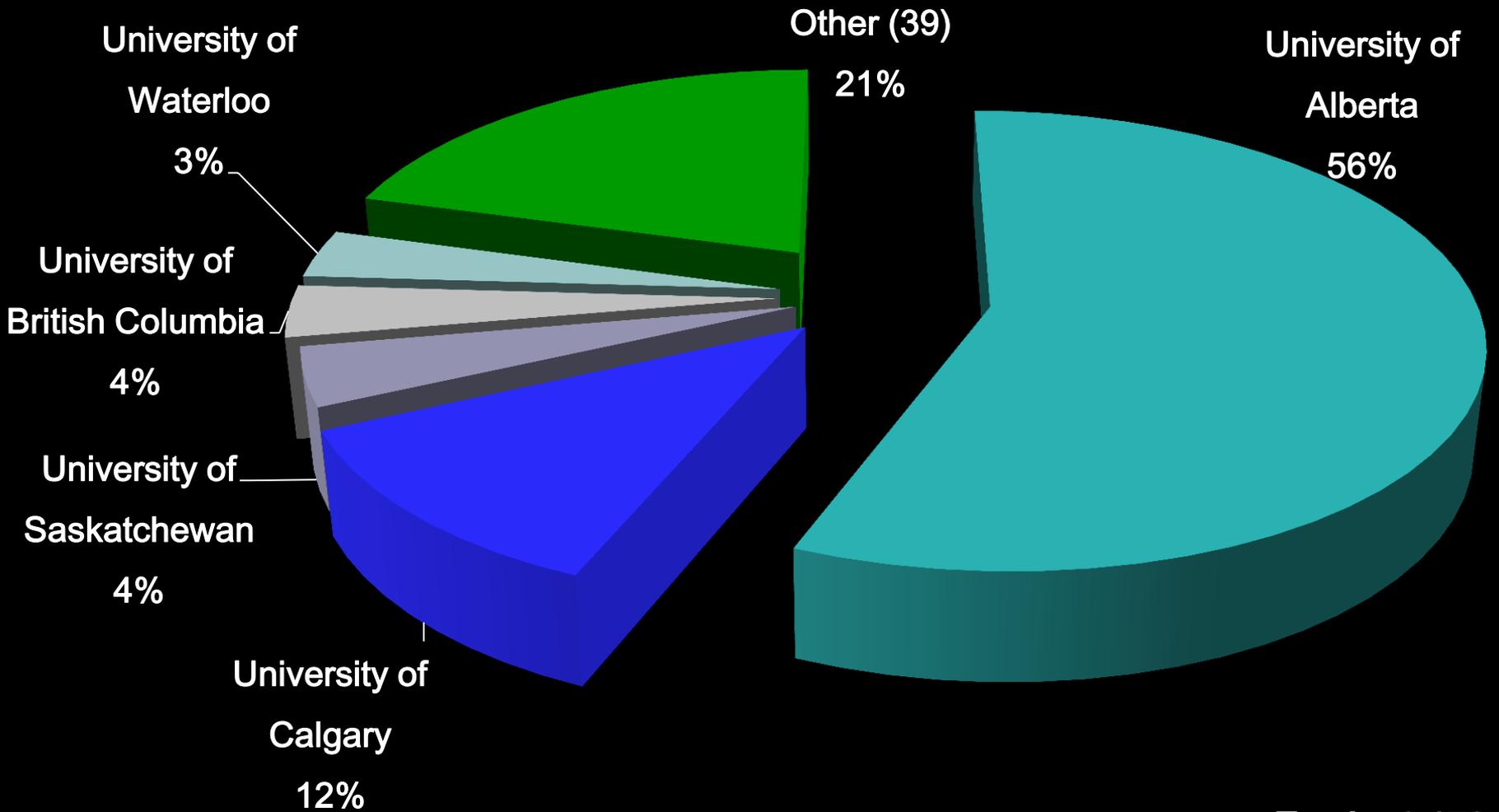
N= 30,467

Home Universities (157) of ARB Theses



Theses = 2,458

Canadian Theses on ARB



Total = 2,170

Athabasca River Basin Image Bank

<http://digicon.athabascau.ca/cdm/landingpage/collection/auriver>



ARBRI in 5 years?

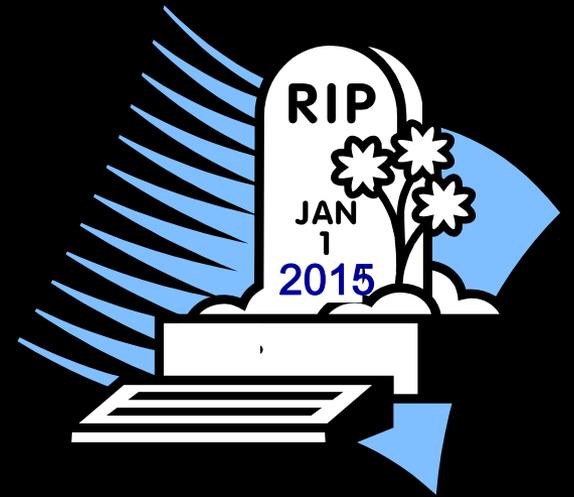
F U T U R

E



Future of ARBRI?

- Scenario 1:
slow death over next few years



Future of ARBRI?

- **Scenario 2:**
limited survival over several years



Future of ARBRI?



- **Scenario 3:**

very active and successful for many years

- **Appointment of full-time director**
- **Collaborations with several institutions**
- **Acquisitions of several research grants by several AU people**
- **AU Library = central depository for all published materials related to ARB**

Future of ARBRI?

- **Scenario 4:**
as Scenario 3 but with:
- **AU research building on the banks of the Athabasca River**
 - **Labs with pumped in river water**
 - **Dock with jet boats**
 - **Storage space for equipment and specimens**
 - **Public exhibits**



The future of
ARBRI is in
your hands

