

McGill Sustainability Project Fund Application

Project Title: Montréal à Votre Service...Écologique

Budget Requested: \$30,130

Applicant/Project Leaders:

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Agricultural & Environmental Sciences - Dept. Natural Resource Sciences
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Project Team:

1. Karine Dancose, Communications Officer - Biodiversity, Connectivity & Ecosystem Services in the Monterege, Natural Resource Sciences, karine.dancose@connexionmonterege.com
2. Maria Felipe Lucia, PhD Student, Ciencias Ambientales y Restauración Ecológica - Instituto Pirenaico de Ecología, Spain, mariafl@ipe.csic.es
3. Barbara Frei, PhD Student, Natural Resource Sciences, barbara.frei@mail.mcgill.ca
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9. Dr. Delphine Renard, Post-doctoral Researcher, Geography, delphine.renard@mcgill.ca
10. Dr. Marta Terrado Casanovas, Post-doctoral Researcher, Natural Resource Sciences,
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11. Carly Ziter, MSc Student, Biology, carly.ziter@mail.mcgill.ca

I. Project Overview

Like cities and people everywhere, McGill and Montreal rely on ecosystem services – the benefits that people obtain from ecosystems. These include food, energy, clean air and water, climate regulation, places for recreation, and cultural inspiration. Despite our reliance on them, we are often unaware of where these services come from, how important they are to our well-being, or how our everyday activities impact them. This is especially true for city-dwellers, who are relatively removed from the natural world. Our project, “Montreal à Votre Service...Écologique” will fill this gap by creating an interactive, dynamic, bilingual, ‘blog’-style website to tell the stories of the ecosystem services of Montreal.

While McGill has world-renowned researchers who explore the links between the natural environment and human well-being, communication of their work is often directed at other scientists and not the general public. We want to connect the McGill and Montreal communities to this research, and train graduate and undergraduate students in community engagement and communication, by telling the stories of the everyday ecosystem services that we all benefit from. We want to link the familiar – the products and places that Montrealers interact with each day, with the less familiar – the biodiversity and ecological processes that produce and maintain these products and places. For example, which ecosystem services are involved in providing the drinking water in the McTavish Reservoir? What ecosystem services are needed to produce Montreal’s famous bagels or smoked meat sandwiches? What ecosystem services does Mont Royal provide?

Our team is uniquely positioned to inform and educate McGill students, and Montrealers more generally, about the relationships between their daily activities and the ecosystem services provided here on the island, as well as the services that originate further away. McGill is home to a world-class lab focused on ecosystem services and urban ecology, has a number of on- and off-campus initiatives creating a sense of place for and by McGillians, and has eager students wanting to get more involved in creating a green campus and city. However, many of these initiatives remain separate, unable to capture the benefits of linking a movement for a green campus with building a strong sense of place. We will take advantage of these strengths and link them under the concept of ecosystem services to effectively communicate the diverse ways that McGillians (and Montrealers) depend on, and interact with, the environment. Understanding and appreciating these linkages is key to fostering a culture of sustainability within the McGill community as well as in its home city of Montreal.

Project Goals & Strategies:

We will create a bilingual website that incorporates social media to interactively tell the stories of Montreal’s ecosystem services. Our main goal is to engage with, educate, and interact with McGillians and Montrealers about the ecosystem services they use everyday, by:

- a. Describing which ecosystem services are provided on the island of Montreal and where this takes place using a story-telling approach;
- b. Providing diverse opportunities for McGill students to learn about ecosystem services and how to effectively communicate their knowledge and science to other groups inside and outside McGill;
- c. Interacting with students and Montrealers to understand which ecosystem services they use each day and which they view as most important; and
- d. Creating a ‘sense of place’ within McGill and on the island of Montreal that incorporates our connections to surrounding ecosystems.

We will create a ‘blog-style’ website to communicate these stories and engage with Montrealers. We were inspired by other efforts here in Montreal, like Under Montreal (<http://www.undermontreal.com/>), and Agriculture Urbaine MTL (<http://agriculturemontreal.com/>), to make seemingly specialized interests or information accessible and interesting through visual, geographical and narrative appeal. We will connect stories about the places and activities that Montrealers care about to the ecosystem services and the environment that provide them. Using an online platform will allow us to capture the institutional memory of McGill and create a living, ongoing program to connect sustainability groups within McGill. It will also allow us to use diverse multimedia techniques (e.g., text, pictures, audio, video, mapping) to connect with

our stakeholders in the McGill and Montreal communities. We will begin by focusing on services likely to be of particular interest to McGillians. This will serve as a pilot to ensure that we can create a vibrant community around our ecosystem services blog. After learning how to be successful within the smaller McGill community, we will branch out to services likely of interest to the greater Montreal population.

We will publish a new story at least twice monthly, each centered on a different iconic Montreal place or activity, an interest of a member of our large bilingual project team, class research or projects from McGill students, or the suggestion of stakeholders. The goals for each story will be accessibility, entertainment, and accuracy – we want to communicate with non-scientists in a way that is easily understood and is engaging, but that involves sound, fact-based information.

Building on these stories, we will develop an online map to display key Montreal ecosystem service locations. Montrealers will be able to see which services are provided or consumed where they live and work. We will also create a smartphone ‘app’ to link with our main website. Using this app, people will be able to pinpoint important ecosystem service locations as they travel throughout the island. This could later be developed into an educational ‘ecosystem services walk’ around the island.

We will also incorporate social media into our website to encourage interaction between the community and our team. McGillians and Montrealers will be able to follow our Tweets about ecosystem services, connect with us through Facebook, and contribute photos of the services they use on Instagram. They will also be able to comment and suggest ideas for future stories, and provide information about the ecosystem services they use each day. Such a dynamic space will encourage visitors to stay engaged.

Once the website is running smoothly, we hope to expand our project to include: (1) creating links between researchers, organizations, students, and citizens to collect data and carry out ecosystem service projects in and around Montreal, and (2) exploring other public outreach activities including public lectures, school class modules, public art exhibits, etc.

One of our most important engagement activities will be training McGill undergraduate students as project ‘ambassadors’. Ambassadors will be involved in all parts of the project, from designing the website and researching stories, to communicating with our stakeholders. They will be essential to the startup of the project and building the website and app, developing our social media presence, assisting in research, and making connections with McGill groups. We will also link with students in specific McGill courses (e.g. ENVB 222 – St. Lawrence Ecosystems, GEOG 460 – Research in Sustainability, GEOG 494 - Urban Field Studies). These students will have the opportunity to create ecosystem service stories through their course projects and research. Our project team will provide training and support to ambassadors and students about how to research and quantify ecosystem services and how to effectively communicate these results using social media. We hope that this will create an ever increasing number of McGill students trained in, and actively participating in, engagement with both the McGill and the broader Montreal communities about environmental and sustainability issues.

Our project will be based out of Dr. Elena Bennett’s lab at McGill. Elena is an expert in ecosystem services and has received training in communication and stakeholder engagement through the Leopold Leadership Program. Therefore her lab provides an ideal location to train students as future scientist-communicators. We will also hire an experienced project manager, Karine Dancose. She will be critical in managing our initial outreach activities, ensuring regular stories and updates, and coordinating the project team. We are seeking funding from the SPF to help establish our project, develop the connections with McGill and Montreal groups it requires, and ensure institutionalization of the project within McGill. By training graduate students and undergraduate students in community engagement, and by creating a strong network of researchers and students involved in ecosystem service research at McGill during our first year, we foresee that our project will be self-sustaining. After our initial year of project startup, we envision that the website will continue indefinitely as students leaving McGill are replaced by new students joining the Bennett lab and our partner groups. Stories will be continually added by team members, McGill students, class projects from the McGill classes and partner groups that we have linked with, as well as other stakeholders, without the need for a large support infrastructure or team.

Project eligibility:

At present, there are numerous research activities at McGill that evaluate and describe the links between human well-being and ecosystem services. However, most initiatives are fragmented across various departments and the tangible implications of this research often remain unclear. At the same time, McGill needs to train its students to engage with the greater Montreal community and better communicate how its research contributes to sustainability. Our project directly addresses two of McGill's Vision 2020 sustainability goals – Education and Connectivity. Our website and social media strategy will create a unique and interactive way for researchers and students across the university to make our research tangible and practice communicating this knowledge to each other within McGill, as well as to Montrealers. By linking our knowledge to Montrealers sense of place (i.e., the island and region that they live in), appreciation of the links between ecosystems and the quality of life in Montreal will be enhanced. All of this will ultimately help create a culture of sustainability at McGill and throughout Montreal in addition to educating students in science communication. By engaging and educating numerous groups (researchers, graduate and undergraduate students, public interest groups, NGOs) and training them in effective science communication techniques through stories about ecosystem services, our project will create social links between different groups interested in sustainability in Montreal. While sustainability requires knowledge and research to be effective, it ultimately depends on a “culture of sustainability” which necessarily involves social networks, a sense-of-place, and an understanding of our reliance on the natural environment. Our blog will help create that culture at McGill and in Montreal.

Timeframe/Milestones:

The first year of our project centers around creating our website, linking with partners, researching and writing stories about the ecosystem services of Montreal, mapping these services, and developing effective ways to communicate this work with the public. As the Bennett lab is already working on ecosystem services and urban ecology, we are well prepared to begin this project immediately. The proposed blog style of our website also means that we can very quickly begin communicating our results without a lag between data collection and dissemination, as might be the case with a more data-intensive mapping approach.

Task	Winter 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013
Website creation and launch			
Research and writing of initial ecosystem service stories (~ 5)			
Initial mapping of ecosystem services in Montreal			
Connecting with Montreal community and NGO groups (ongoing)			
Connecting with McGill University groups, courses, researchers			
Continuation of ES story research & writing			
Development of smartphone app			
Development of additional public outreach activities			

Indicators of our success will include creation and launch of our website in April/May 2013, successful publication of new stories on a twice monthly basis, and successful interaction with the McGill and Montreal communities. This last indicator will be measured using diverse metrics, including the number of website visitors, number of comments on each story, Twitter followers, number of people contributing service information and photos, number of McGill groups we have linked with, etc. Using social media will give us a unique opportunity to quantify our success after every story and adjust our approach.

Stakeholders:

Our project has two groups of stakeholders – passive stakeholders who are interested in reading about our project or following our blog or twitter posts; and those with whom we will partner in a more active way. We view the entire McGill community (students, faculty, administration) and all Montreal citizens as part of the larger group that could be interested in our project and who may participate in conversations about our stories or even contribute information to our website. There are also particular groups with whom we will partner in order to extend our project's reach to specific community groups. Groups that have provided

letters of support (sent directly to SPF office) for our project are listed below, while a longer list of potential partners and their roles is provided in the appendix. Active partners today include:

- Let's Talk Science
- PGSS Environment Committee
- Instructors of courses that could provide content or use our content in their classes:
 - Chris Buddle (ENVB 222 - St. Lawrence Ecosystems, and Env. Biol. Specialization)
- Campus Crops
- McGill Campus Radio CKUT – Ecolibrium FM program
- McGill University Photography Students' Society
- Conseil Régional de l'Environnement (CRE) Montréal

II. Project Implementation

Tasks and Responsibilities:

Type of Activity – Task	Estimated Time Required	Group Member in Charge
Website design and development	4 months	Matt Mitchell, undergraduate ambassadors
Research and writing of Montreal ES stories	~15 hours/story	All members, undergraduate ambassadors
Mapping of Montreal ES	6 months initially, afterwards incorporated with each story	Genevieve Metson, Hsin-Hui Huang, undergrad ambassadors
Social media integration	4 months initially, monitored and updated afterwards	Carly Ziter, Matt Mitchell, undergraduate ambassadors
Creation of partnerships with McGill & Montreal stakeholders	4 months initially (priority groups), otherwise ongoing	Karine Dancose, Carly Ziter, undergraduate ambassadors
Project management	Ongoing	Karine Dancose, Elena Bennett

III. Financials

Our project requires a strong initial effort to create a well-connected network of researchers and students at McGill and to effectively link with the various McGill and Montreal groups that will be interested in contributing to the project. We are seeking funds to hire undergraduate ambassadors and a project manager during our first year to ensure that our project progresses and becomes institutionalized within McGill. Student ambassadors will be key to creating a network of student groups and classes during the first year of our project and ensure that the project is sustained through future years. Our project manager, Karine Dancose, is critical to connect with diverse groups, to translate and edit stories, ensure consistency in our blog posts, and manage the project team and partners.

Expense Description	Estimated Cost
Web Hosting Costs at weebly.com	\$300 (\$25/month for 12 months)
Computers and GIS software	\$4,000 (provided by Dr. Elena Bennett)
Winter 2013 undergraduate ambassadors	\$1,920 (2 × 5hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Summer 2013 undergraduate ambassadors	\$13,440 (2 × 35hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Fall 2013 undergraduate ambassadors	\$1,920 (2 × 5hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Project manager & outreach coordinator	\$10,400 (8hrs/week at 25\$/hr for 52 weeks)
Digital still/video camera & accessories	\$1,500
Audio recorder	\$150
Web/App development software	\$500

Revenue Source	Amount Requested	Confirmed?
Sustainability Projects Fund	\$30,130	No
Dr. Elena Bennett	\$4,000 (computers & GIS)	Yes

IV. Additional Information

Project Team Description:

Our project team has a wide range of skills that will allow us to tell the stories of a diversity of ecosystem services with accuracy, as well as ensure effective outreach with our Montreal community partners. Our team also includes both native English and French speakers to ensure a truly bilingual website and project. Below, we briefly describe the skills and expertise of each team member.

Dr. Elena Bennett (Project Co-Leader) – Elena is an Associate Professor in NRS and the MSE. Her research focuses on how ecosystem services interact in landscapes and on building models that include this interaction for more accurate assessment of how land use change will impact service provision.

Matthew Mitchell (Project Co-Leader) – Matt is a Ph.D. student in NRS and Biology with Drs. Elena Bennett and Andrew Gonzalez. His research investigates how forests and fields interact to provide multiple ecosystem services in the agricultural landscapes east of Montreal.

Karine Dancose – Karine has been the communication officer for the Montérégie Connection project (<http://www.monteregieconnection.com/>) at McGill University for more than a year. Her responsibilities includes constant communication with stakeholders in and around Montréal and project website maintenance. She has excellent knowledge and contacts with environmental groups in Montréal.

Maria Felipe Lucia – Maria is a Ph.D. student in the Pyrenean Institute of Ecology in Spain and is a visiting scholar to the Bennett lab. Her research investigates how ecosystem services in a floodplain agricultural ecosystem change across different scales and land uses.

Barbara Frei – Barbara is a PhD student in the NRS co-supervised by Drs. Jim Fyles (McGill) and Joe Nocera (Trent U.) Her research focuses on conservation of species-at-risk in rapidly changing anthropogenic landscapes. Her work balances theoretical ecology and realistic management for habitat needs by wildlife and humans.

Hsin-Hui Huang – Hsin will be a Ph.D student (starting Jan. 2013) in Bioresource Engineering and will work partially under Dr. Bennett as her lab's GIS data manager. Her research and responsibilities concentrate on the application and development of geospatial technologies in agro-environmental management.

Aerin Jacob – Aerin is a PhD student in Biology with Dr. Martin Lechowicz. Her research investigates restoration ecology in tropical rainforests, including the interactions between animals and plants in forests recovering from different anthropogenic disturbances.

Purity Karuga – Purity is a Ph.D student in NRS with Drs. Elena Bennett and Jim Fyles. Her research focus is on ecosystems services, resilience and food security in semi-arid areas of Kenya.

Dorothy Maguire – Dorothy is a PhD student in NRS with Drs. Elena Bennett and Christopher Buddle. Her research investigates how forest structure in agricultural landscapes affects the ecosystem services that insects provide and influence.

Geneviève Metson – A Ph.D. student in NRS with Dr. Elena Bennett, Geneviève studies urban ecology, ecosystem services, and biogeochemistry. Her focus is on phosphorus management and food systems, specifically urban and peri-urban agriculture.

Dr. Delphine Renard – Delphine is a post-doctoral student in Biology and Geography with Drs. Elena Bennett and Jeanine Rhemtulla. Her research explores how relationships between land-use change and the provision of multiple ecosystem services change through time.

Dr. Marta Terrado Casanovas – A postdoctoral researcher in NRS with Dr. Elena Bennett and Dr. Andrew Gonzalez, Marta’s research addresses the provision of ecosystem services in hydrological systems, focusing on how riparian buffers protect water quality in agricultural landscapes.

Carly Ziter – Carly is an M.Sc. student in Biology with Drs. Andrew Gonzalez and Elena Bennett. Her research investigates how forest fragmentation influences synergies and tradeoffs between biodiversity and carbon storage in landscapes east of Montreal.”

List of Partners/Stakeholders:

Our project will partner with a number of on- and off-campus groups to ensure that our outreach activities reach the largest number of people possible. Below we have listed possible partners and stakeholders along with a short description of their possible involvement. This list is not exhaustive and will expand once the project is underway. Groups with which we have been in contact with are marked with an ‘§’ and who have sent letters of support are marked with an ‘*’.

McGill Groups

§McGill School of Environment – The MSE will be a contact point for hiring undergraduate “ambassadors” and connecting with independent project and study students (ENV 490 & 491) who have projects related to ecosystem services who would be interested in providing stories for our website.

§McGill Interfaculty Program in Sustainability, Science and Society – This program would be another contact point to involve undergraduate students with ecosystem services projects as website contributors.

***Let’s Talk Science** – Through Let’s Talk Science we envision taking our ecosystem service stories and using them to educate children and youth about Montreal’s links with nature, as well as help to link the Let’s Talk Science McGill chapter to MacDonald campus.

***McGill Campus Radio CKUT – Ecolibrium FM Program** – We’ll use this program as another means to communicate our project and stories to the McGill community, and create links between sustainability-focused groups on campus. Ecolibrium also provides training in interviewing and storytelling techniques through the “Radio Residency” program.

***MUPS (McGill University Photography Society)** – We will use the support of MUPS to help provide visual content for our website, as well as photography training.

***PGSS Environment Committee** – The PGSS environment committee will ensure that we have a way to connect with graduate students who have research related to ecosystem services and have them provide content and stories for our website.

§SSMU Environment Committee – As with the PGSS environment committee, the SSMU equivalent will ensure that we can reach the undergraduate community interested in environmental issues. This will include sustainability groups, students interested in becoming project ambassadors, and undergraduate classes.

§McGill’s Vision 2020 Initiative – Our project directly addresses two of McGill’s Vision 2020 sustainability goals – Education and Connectivity. We envision working with this program to ensure that our project fits in with McGill’s larger sustainability goals as they evolve over the future years.

***Campus Crops** – We will partner with Campus Crops by collaborating on local food stories through their connections to urban agriculture and alternative food systems both at McGill and in Montreal.

§GIC (Geographic Information Centre) – The GIC will provide important GIS data and support for the mapping activities of the project.

There are also specific courses at McGill that we will target to connect with students and their research that involves ecosystem services. If professors and students are willing, we will work with them to turn their research into stories that can be used on our website. This is not an exhaustive list and will likely increase as we connect with the McGill community.

***ENVB 222 St. Lawrence Ecosystems** – Dr. Chris Buddle, NRS, Program coordinator for Environmental Biology Specialization

MUSE (Montreal's Urban Sustainability Project) – We plan to collaborate with students in the MUSE summer field semester in order that they can provide ecosystem service stories for our website.

GEOG 331 Urban Social Geography – Dr. Natalie Oswin, Geography

GEOG 460 Research in Sustainability – Dr. Federico Martelozzo, Geography

GEOG 540 Topics in Geography I – Landscape Ecology – Dr. Jeanine Rhemtulla, Geography

URBP 622/623/624 Planning Studio 1/2/3 - Raphael Fischler

URBP 506 Environmental Policy and Planning – Madhav Govind Badami

URBP 530 Urban Environmental Planning – no current instructor

ARCH 515 Sustainable Design – no current instructor

CIVE 677 Water-Energy Sustainability – Dr. Susan Gaskin, Engineering

Montreal Groups:

For all Montreal stakeholders, we envision two main ways of interacting. First, by telling the stories of the ecosystem services that these groups are improving throughout Montreal while adding our scientific knowledge of the services they are influencing. Second, by connecting with these groups and their members and contacts to link our website and outreach to a diverse community within Montreal. Below, we briefly describe the mission of each group and how we might partner with them.

***Conseil Régional de l'Environnement (CRE) Montréal** – The CRE has the goal of protecting the environment and supporting sustainable development on the island of Montreal. It is also the Montreal representative on the Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l'environnement du Québec. Through the CRE, its website, and newsletter, we will be able to connect with diverse groups interested in sustainability and ecosystem on the island of Montreal. Specifically, the CRE has connections with Vivre en Ville, Regroupement de Éco-quartiers, Centre d'Écologie Urbaine de Montréal, and Sentier Urbain that we would aim to utilize.

§**Conseil Régional des Élus (CRÉ) de Montréal** – CRÉ is an organization mandated to promote coordinated development on the island of Montreal. We have been in contact with CRÉ and while they are very supportive of our project, they are required to go through their executive council before embarking on any partnerships. We plan to pursue a partnership with CRÉ in the coming months, and use their contacts and outreach to better communicate to Montrealers about how they depend on the natural environment for their well-being.

Agriculture Urbain Montreal – This group aims to enhance urban agriculture in Montreal. We could partner with Agriculture Urbain to provide stories of sustainable urban agriculture on the island of Montreal.

Montréal, le 3 décembre 2012

Mme Lilith Wyatt
Sustainability Projects Fund Administrator
Office of Sustainability, McGill University
1010 Sherbrooke O, Suite 1200, Montréal (Québec)

Objet : Appui au projet *Montréal à votre service...écologique!* de l'université McGill

Madame,

La présente est pour signifier l'appui du Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal (CRE-Montréal) au projet de l'équipe de Madame Elena Bennett à propos des services écologiques sur l'île de Montréal, dont une demande est présentée au programme de subvention du *McGill Sustainability Fund*.

Préoccupé de la préservation de la biodiversité sur l'île de Montréal et de la qualité de vie des citoyens, le CRE-Montréal reconnaît l'importance d'informer la communauté montréalaise des services écologiques dont elle dépend et des bénéfices qu'elle retire des écosystèmes. Nous croyons aussi que ce projet favorisera une culture du développement durable qui se manifeste par une meilleure connaissance des enjeux environnementaux par la population et sa compréhension de notre dépendance aux services que nous rendent les écosystèmes, quotidiennement. Le CRE-Montréal croit que le volet de sensibilisation et d'information du projet permettra de faire connaître un patrimoine naturel encore largement méconnu. En ce sens, le CRE-Montréal s'intéresse à la mise en valeur des ruisseaux urbains qui nous rendent incontestablement des services écologiques.

Nous appuyons cette démarche, car nous croyons qu'une meilleure connaissance des liens entre le bien-être des citoyens et les services écologiques leur permettra de poser un regard critique sur les actions à entreprendre pour protéger les zones sensibles à Montréal. Pour cela, en tant qu'organisme à but non lucratif indépendant voué à la protection de l'environnement et à la promotion du développement durable sur l'île de Montréal, nous vous offrons notre expertise dans la mise en place de l'initiative, en mettant à contribution notre connaissance du territoire et des enjeux environnementaux de l'île de Montréal. De plus, grâce à notre plateforme web et à notre bulletin *Env'île Express*, il nous fera plaisir de participer à la diffusion du projet, en assurant ainsi un bon rayonnement auprès de la communauté montréalaise.

Espérant que ce projet se réalisera dans un avenir rapproché, je vous prie de recevoir, Madame Wyatt, mes salutations les meilleures.



Coralie Deny
Directrice générale

Kelly A. Nugent
PGSS Environment Commissioner
MSc Candidate in Micrometeorology
McGill University, Montreal

December 3, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I believe that the Montréal à Votre Service... Écologique project has the potential to become an integral tool for educating the McGill and wider Montreal community on the three aspects of sustainability: social, economic and environmental. In my role as the PGSS Environment Commissioner, as well as being an M.Sc candidate in Natural Resource Sciences, I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Elena Bennett and several of her students. In my opinion, her laboratory personnel are both competent and passionate, two qualities necessary in ensuring a strong project foundation.

In my opinion, this project can deliver a significant positive movement toward achieving McGill's sustainability vision, through its ability to create improvements in three of the five goal categories outlined in the Vision2020 Vision & Goals Report. The categories I believe would be addressed are:

1. Education, through information dissemination to the McGill and Montreal communities on the ecosystem services used daily around the campus and Montreal Island;
2. Research, through involvement of students, both undergraduate and graduate, in collaborative research efforts to determine the ecosystem services being used as well as research accessibility via publishing McGill academic research in a more accessible manner for non-specialist persons to understand; and
3. Connectivity, through engagement of researchers, students, organizations and citizens in an effort toward collaborative learning and cross-pollination of knowledge.

The PGSS Environment Committee has discussed this project and is looking forward to becoming an active partner, by, at the minimum, aiding in outreach to PGSS members and using our network to reach other potential stakeholders in Montreal. Therefore, it is my pleasure, as the representative of the PGSS Environment Committee, to highly recommend Montréal à Votre Service... Écologique to be funded by the Sustainability Project Fund. I believe that this project deserves serious consideration, as it would be an educational connection between McGill and Montreal citizens, furthering sustainability for our community on multiple levels.

Kindest Regards,

Kelly Nugent
PGSS Environment Commissioner



**Faculty of Agricultural
and Environmental Sciences**

McGill University
Macdonald Campus

Department of Natural
Resource Sciences

**Faculté des sciences de
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21,111 Lakeshore
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue
Quebec, Canada H9X 3V9

30 November 2012

Dear Selection Committee, Sustainability Projects Fund, McGill University

I am writing in support of the funding application for the outreach and education initiative “Montréal à Votre Service Écologique”.

As Program Director of McGill's Environmental Biology undergraduate program, and instructor of the field-based St Lawrence Ecosystems course (ENVB 222), I fully support this initiative. The project would provide important opportunities for undergraduate students to learn about the ecosystem services provided by their surroundings, while delivering an avenue for students to engage in science and outreach via social media, a powerful tool in any current scientist's skillset.

I have first-hand experience with the use of social media (notably blogs and twitter) as a means to reach an audience beyond the walls of Academia (see: <http://wp.me/p1mbxE-iX> and <http://wp.me/P2Mo9k-20>). These posts discuss how undergraduate students benefit from outreach activities, and how this kind of outreach is an enriching experience from their perspective, and it puts a positive spin on the McGill experience.

The Environmental Biology Program places a strong emphasis on the understanding of ecosystems, environmental management and biological diversity, with a focus on experiential learning. By providing sound, fact-based information about the ecosystem services provided by, and on, the island of Montreal, this project fits well within the Major's mandate, and would serve to enrich the learning experience of Environmental Biology students at McGill. Furthermore, by providing a resource geared not only towards undergraduate students, but also professors, graduate students, NGOs, public interest groups, and the greater Montreal community, the proposed project will serve to enrich the culture of sustainability and collaboration at McGill, and throughout Montreal. I fully endorse the funding of this initiative.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Buddle".

Christopher Buddle
Associate Professor
514.398.8026
chris.buddle@mcgill.ca



Sustainability Projects Fund
McGill Office of Sustainability
1010 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 1200

30 November 2012

Re: Letter of Support for Ecosystem Services Program

To the Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group,

I write to you in support of the application for funding for the "Montréal à Votre Service Écologique" initiative.

As one of the Coordinators for the McGill Chapter of the national non-profit organization Let's Talk Science, I strongly support this proposal. The proposed outreach activities related to ecosystem services fit well with the Let's Talk Science mandate to engage children and youth in scientific thought, and to improve scientific literacy in the public. Let's Talk Science is particularly interested in encouraging youth to notice scientific principles at work in their everyday lives, and I believe that the proposed public education campaign for ecosystem services awareness will contribute significantly to this important goal.

My organization is eager to begin a mutually beneficial partnership with "Montréal à Votre Service Écologique." For example, we will be able to use our existing contacts to help the group advertise to teachers who can use their website as a learning module. We can further assist with recruiting school groups to participate in creating ecosystem service stories of their own for publication on the blog. This initiative will also enrich the current Let's Talk Science (McGill Chapter) program because we are still in the process of developing links to the MacDonald Campus community, and we are optimistic that this connection to the Natural Resources Department will help us to involve more MacDonald campus students in our outreach program. Thus, more McGill students will have the opportunity to engage the public in hands-on science, and we can strengthen our resources/expertise in the areas of agriculture and the environment.

I am confident that science outreach of this nature will increase awareness of the importance of ecosystem services, and perhaps inspire younger students to pursue studies in the field of environmental science. Furthermore, I can attest from personal experience that the opportunity to be involved in scientific communication to a general audience is an invaluable addition to one's science education at McGill.

In conclusion, this proposed initiative has my strongest support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kayla Hamelin".

Kayla Hamelin
Coordinator, Let's Talk Science (McGill Chapter)
MSc Candidate, Department of Biology

inspiring discovery

letstalkscience.ca

December 3, 2012.

Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group
McGill Office of Sustainability
1010 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 1200

Re: Letter of Support for Montréal à Votre Service Écologique

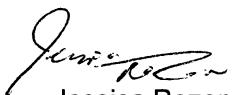
To the Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group,

Campus Crops supports the Montréal à Votre Service Écologique initiative and its application for funding from the SPF. As a collective dedicated to raising awareness at McGill and in the community about food-related issues, Campus Crops is supportive of other initiatives aiming to inform and educate about the environmental aspects of Montrealers' daily lives. We also hope that projects such as M&VSE can recreate or restore lost or otherwise damaged connections between rural, urban, and other populations, and between people and the environment.

The members of Campus Crops are interested in participating and collaborating with Montréal à Votre Service Écologique by participating in an interview about local food production or by other means that involve conveying local food systems in a manner that connects people with the ecosystem services provided by the environment.

Sincerely,

Campus Crops


Jessica Rozon


Noemi Stern


Carl Dion Laplante

December 3rd, 2012

Selection Committee
Sustainability Projects Fund
McGill University
1010 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 1200

Dear Sir or Madam:

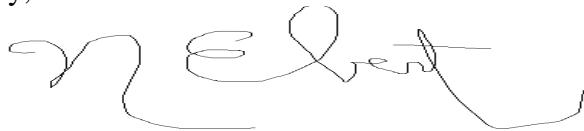
This letter is being written in support of the “Montréal à Votre Service Écologique.” This project is a unique initiative and is trying to connect the dots between various environments and local communities. Drawing these lines will be no easy task, and with support and funding this project will surely develop into an important community initiative.

Ecolibrium supports the interactive and dynamic “Montréal à Votre Service Écologique,” because it is a project that is directly in line with the mandate of our show at CKUT 90.3FM. As an environmental news show, we seek to bring awareness of ongoing environmental initiatives, while also highlighting the stories of people and local groups in Montreal that work to build a more sustainable community and campus.

The dynamic website proposed as part of the “Montréal à Votre Service Écologique” project is a platform that allows sharing and distribution of both visual and audio. By undergoing training with the Ecolibrium Radio Residency and within CKUT studios, team members will be taught interviewing skills and different story-telling technique necessary to produce audio materials for their website. As well, by completing the training members of the project will be able to routinely access the necessary equipment to record their stories.

In addition to this Ecolibrium will be able to regularly feature segments on these ecological systems and invite guests and participating team members into the on-air show to speak on the show about the project.

I sincerely hope you decide to support this project,
Kindly,



Nicole Ebert
Ecolibrium Radio Residency Coordinator



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