

# Acadia Debates Use of Tidal Energy in the Bay of Fundy

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Acadia University will celebrate a Century of Bay of Fundy Tidal Energy Research in 2010, beginning with a debate on tidal power to be held Wednesday, March 31 at the K.C. Irving Environmental Science Centre Auditorium at 7 p.m. The debate will feature Acadia faculty and students tackling the pros and cons of harvesting tidal energy from the Bay of Fundy.

Tidal energy is a concept first considered in 1910 . More recently, the Offshore Energy Environmental Research (OEER) and Offshore Energy Technical Research (OETR) Associations have awarded Acadia researchers more than \$340,000 to pursue tidal energy projects.

Recently funded tidal power research projects at Acadia include assessments of the amount of tidal energy that can be harnessed, the movement and behavior of various fish species near the tidal turbine demonstration facility, and the risk of interaction between tidal turbines in the Minas Passage and both large wood debris and sediment-laden ice cakes (the size of a car).

"These new activities build on the long and distinguished history of research by students and faculty at Acadia and remind us of the central role the university has played in understanding the extraordinary dynamics of Fundy tidal systems," said Tom Herman, Acadia's vice-president academic. "During 2010, Acadia will honour early pioneers in tidal power development and those who have devoted their careers to addressing the environmental implications and effects of harnessing tidal energy."

## **Tidal power history**

The first Bay of Fundy tidal power proposal was put forward in 1910 by Wallace Turnbull, a native of Saint John, NB. Since then, there have been four major and numerous minor proposals for large scale tidal power development in the Bay.

"It is arguable that most of what is known about the ecology of the Bay has resulted from the dreams of harnessing its energy," explains Dr. Anna Redden, director of the Acadia Centre for Estuarine Research, and researcher on environmental issues associated with tidal power development.

This dream was shared by Acadia engineering professor Ralph Clarkson. In 1915 he created a novel tidal power plan to harness tidal energy at Cape Split. A series of other proposals followed. In 1984, less than a decade after scientists began examining the implications of harnessing the Bay's tidal energy, the first and only tidal power plant in North America was installed in the causeway at Annapolis Royal.

During the last half century, Acadia faculty and students have continued to play a leading role in studies of the Bay of Fundy.

## **About Acadia**

Acadia University, in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, has long been recognized as one of Canada's premier post-secondary institutions. With its nationally and internationally recognized undergraduate and graduate research initiatives, small classes and technology-rich teaching and learning environment, Acadia offers students an experience that includes academic achievement combined with personal growth and development. Acadia also offers distance learning, certificate programs, language training and other university extension programs through Open Acadia. For more information about Acadia University, visit our website at [www.acadiau.ca](http://www.acadiau.ca).

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