

Red Sand Cottage Permaculture – Strategic Plan Brief

1 The Current Context of the Permaculture Enterprise

1.1 A Description of the Business

Red Sand Cottage Permaculture is a sole-proprietorship, newly-created business in Prince Edward Island, Canada.

It consists of a 25-acre permaculture demonstration site with homestead and craft store. The crafts are made from items harvested sustainably. Approximately 5 acres is for livestock, gardening and recreation and the remaining 20 acres are wooded for fuel, food, craft sources, conservation and recreation.

The site is open to the public from 12-5pm between June-Sept and by appointment outside of those times. Admission is free to enjoy the woodland walks, observe the conservation projects, study the gardens and exhibits & see the small number of poultry and livestock. Income is hoped to be generated from the on-site craft store.

The sole proprietor is Sandra Storr, also helping is Fred Alich.

Business planning for the new business began in early 2009 and a search for a suitable property began in the summer of 2009, the property was purchased in September 2009 and a full Eco-Energy and Passive Solar Retrofit of the cottage began. Permaculture site assessments also commenced at that time.

Sandra and Fred moved into Red Sand Cottage in September 2010, where the retrofit and renovation project was completed over the winter months.

The target market is for permaculturalists, locals and tourists, but will rely quite heavily on the tourist trade which can sometimes be erratic with factors such as the economy, exchange rates and the weather having a significant influence. We have tried to mitigate these factors by producing a full range of items (all age groups, male & female and household items).

In line with permaculture principles, we are aiming to increase the diversity of products in the shorter term to include coppice crafts, non-timber forest products and items made from other 'sea junk' like furniture items made from old lobster traps washed up onto the beach and also driftwood items.

Under the Provincial 'Forest Enhancement Plan' we have created a Woodland Management Plan to enhance biodiversity and wildlife. By improving opportunities for new habitats, we also create a range of non-timber forest products for the future.

For example:

- Red Sand Cottage Permaculture is situated on a site of prime wild lowbush blueberry land, and forest conservation work will open up clearings which will soon spring back into blueberry, raspberry and wild strawberry production, at the same time increasing wildlife habitats in the woodlands.
- In the Fall, there is a wide range of fungi growing throughout the woods.
- There is potential for tapping some of the numerous birch trees for sap.

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- The beautiful Red Osier Dogwood willow stems can be used for basket weaving and making Christmas wreaths.
- Managed sustainable sections of willow and alder coppice will provide fencing materials, craft woods and firewood. Regenerating willow and alder coppice will provide a new habitat for grouse, snipe, woodcock and American robin.
- An area of Balsam Firs will be managed (coppiced sustainably) for a small number of Christmas Trees. These will be cut from the same stem and new trees will regenerate from that stem for future years.

In addition to the woodland and craft activities, it is hoped to run a number of craft and homesteading workshops here and that in the future we may be able to become known and respected as a provider of permaculture education. We are also working with local sustainable agricultural groups and investigating project funding for two projects here, one in sustainable blueberry production and a second into growing hops as part of an integrated permaculture system with a possible market in micro-brewing. There is a lot happening!

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1.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are capable, hard-working, focused, motivated and committed to our work.• We have many years of experience and knowledge in our field.• We look for innovative solutions and a professional image• We have a superb coastal and woodland location in a tourist region• Our craft products are aimed at those seeking price, value and quality and we create products for all ages, male & female and for the home. Our 'competitors' tend to rely on higher range artisan jewellery for women (and we feel that particular market is saturated).• We use a diverse range of locally sourced natural materials so supplier issues are rarely a problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are only two of us at present, the workload is great for two people, we have no management cover and time-off or away will be limited during the main operating season.• We have some gaps in technical expertise which can be frustrating, e.g. installing new systems like wind power• Cashflow and budget are tight following a period of considerable investment• Although we had an excellent reputation at our two previous business, we are new to this area and have to build trust, loyalty and reputation from scratch.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Always looking for collaborative projects, joint ventures and working co-operatively with others to share costs, reduce overheads, bulk purchasing, etc.• Consider Internet Marketing• Lifestyle Trends and attitudes towards the environment and ecology should grow our niche target market.• Strong trend towards increasing interest in Permaculture.• Look to extend season of operation, e.g. Christmas Craft Fairs, School fairs, etc., outside of summer tourism season.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of business is largely untested• Tourism is affected by the weather and economy• Market demand for Permaculture Training• Market Demand very Seasonal at present.• May be difficult to establish a reputation as permaculture teachers and innovators.

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2 Our Core Values

- Working for Sustainable Food, Fuel, Housing, Communities, Business & Transport
- Protecting Environment by reducing pollution, recycling and increasing Wildlife & Biodiversity
- Acting Ethically with Honesty, Integrity, Trust, Dependability, Fairness
- Supporting Fair Trade, Equality & Human Rights
- Respecting Cultural Diversity, People and the Community
- Passionate about Innovation, Excellence, Quality and Efficiency
- Valuing Co-operation rather than Competition, Balance & Quality of life

3 Our Vision Statement

Red Sand Cottage recognises that permaculture is becoming a more widely understood and mainstream concept which can offer solutions to current problems such as climate change and food production. In the next five years we will initiate ongoing permaculture research projects, undertake woodland conservation, establish a permaculture demonstration site, be involved in community relocalisation issues and offer permaculture training here in the Maritimes.

Our activities will be financed by a diverse range of crafts made from materials sustainably sourced from the local environment and income from fee-based courses.

Forging links with other permaculturalists and networking within the local community and beyond will be paramount in realising this vision.

The vision can be broken down into: Aims and Objectives.

3.1 Aims and Objectives

- Promote Permaculture
- Sustainable Living (environmentally, financially, healthily)
- Eat home or local produced, organic, fresh food
- Work from home producing sustainable products (financial and environmental), enjoy creative work
- Plenty of Leisure time to enjoy nearby beach and forest
- Easy to maintain property
- Easy to heat property
- Live in beautiful surroundings (conservation)
- Low overheads
- Enjoy community connections and activities
- Share experiences and enjoyment of the property with others

The objectives can be broken down further into a set of shorter-term goals (with a few longer term) as a means of achieving the 5-year vision.

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4 Goals

Objective	Goals
Promote Permaculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to update Website. Add Forest Management Plan by June 2011. • Open Permaculture Demonstration site to the public by 1st June 2011. • Apply for funding for Research Projects by January 2012 • Work to achieve Permaculture Diploma by December 2011 • Search for teaching practice and/or advanced course by end 2011 • Run local workshops: crafts, cheese-making, permaculture intro. courses by Fall 2011. • Seek out other potential teachers for PDC
Environmentally Sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new craft ideas which do not require packaging by 2012. • Replace bought-in items & packaging. Already reduced, but further reductions for 2012 • Coppicing activities for firewood (see below) • Woodland harvesting is sustainable and enhancing – Woodlot management plan • Food production is sustainable by permaculture methods. • Raise funds for conservation projects • Continue to work towards land protection • Implement permaculture design
Financially Sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate Income by craft shop to open by 1st June 2011 • Consider Food license for 2012 • Experiment with birch tapping • Continue to consider other NTFPs • Create e-commerce on our own webpage www.redsandcottage.net • Join Windmill Crafts Coop.
Eat Home or local produced, organic, fresh food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Mandala Garden by June 2011 • Finish Small Forest orchard by June 2011 • Plant perennial and annual vegetables by July 2011 • Clear Cut Forest Areas for Blueberries by June 2011 • Animals in the system by Spring 2011 and ongoing
Work from home producing sustainable products, enjoy creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend basket weaving course in Summer 2011 • Create new craft items from Red Osier Dogwood, e.g. baskets, wreaths, Xmas 2011 • Develop Blueberry growing areas for a potential market summer 2011 • Fall 2011 – study fungi in the woods, types & quantities to look for opportunities • Learn about and try to tap for birch sap summer 2011 • Coppice ½ alder by May 2011 and add signage • Coppice remainder by Dec 2011 then continue in 1/3s on a 3 year rotation for craft & building poles. • Tidy Poplar coppice started in Dec 2010, add signage • Coppice 1/3 remaining poplar in Dec 2011 and then continue coppicing 1/3 at a time on a 3-year short-term rotation for fire fuel. • Investigate the stock levels and locations of balsam fir on the property, begin to thin and tend for a possible future crop of Christmas trees which will be harvested sustainably by coppicing. Work already commenced, complete by December 2011. • Create willow firebreak and for craft materials by Aug 2011

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Plenty of Leisure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open hours June – Sept 12-5pm to allow more time off than previously (in B&B) • Aim to fund a part-time work position by increasing sales over the summer months • Formulate a volunteer recruitment plan by November 2011
Easy to maintain & heat Property with low overheads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise main passive solar design by April 2011 • Add Porch by November 2011 • Continue to reduce energy requirements • Biogas project summer 2011 • Woodgas-charcoal-biochar project summer 2011
Live in beautiful surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue recognition of the property under the Natural Areas Protection Act by hosting visit with NAPA technical advisory committee and Island Nature Trust in April 2011 • Forest Enhancement Program conservation projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Patch Cuts by summer 2011 • Bird Boxes by fall 2011 • Bat Boxes by fall 2012 • Maintain Hedgerows by 2012 • Plant more diverse tree seedlings 2011 & 2012
Enjoy Community connections and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free workshops on site Fall 2011-03-29 • Become committee member for PEICSA (community schools association) and continue to teach at community school. 2011
Share experiences and enjoyment of the property with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to the public 1st June, 2011 • Create woodland Paths May/June 2011 • Picnic table and benches along trails Summer 2011 • Log Cabin Summer 2012 (logs from patch cuts but leave to season for one year) • Information signage – already completed but get permit paperwork • Information – ongoing on website • Information leaflets – Summer 2011 • Fire alarms and extinguisher by Summer 2011

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5 Evaluation of Values, Vision and Goals in respect to Permaculture Principles and Ethics

5.1 Evaluation of Core Values

	Ethics met	Permaculture Principles met
Working for Sustainable Food, Fuel, Housing, Communities, Business & Transport	Care of Earth, Care of People, Create a Surplus/Fair Shares	Catch & store energy as food, fuel, passive solar design & alternative transportation, appropriate technology. Obtain a yield of food, fuel & local economy. Apply self-regulation and accept feedback within the business and the community. Use & value renewable resources & services by supporting ethical business and sustainability in the business and the community. Produce No waste by recycling and identifying uses for products. Design from patterns to details in the gardens, business & community. Integrate rather than segregate in the community. Use small and slow solutions, Use and value Diversity, Creatively use and respond to change. Everything is connected to everything else. Relative Location. Sustainability relies on system resilience and this can be improved by Every element is multi-functional and every function is supported by a variety of elements. Local focus. We are the problem we are the solution.
Protecting Environment by reducing pollution, recycling and increasing Wildlife & Biodiversity	Care of Earth	Catch & Store Energy by passive solar, wind, water, fuel and food. Use and value renewable resources & services, all food and fuel is renewable. Produce no waste. Use & value diversity by enhancing biodiversity by a whole range of conservation projects. Use edges & value the marginal by hedgerows, patch cuts, ponds and other forms of increasing edge. Diversity. Biological Resources. Stacking. Succession. Work with nature.
Acting Ethically with Honesty, Integrity, Trust, Dependability, Fairness	Care of People, Fair Shares	Apply Self regulation and accept feedback, Integrate rather than segregate
Supporting Fair Trade, Equality & Human Rights	Care of Earth, Care of People, Fair Shares	Use and value diversity, Integrate rather than segregate. We are the problem, we are the solution.
Respecting Cultural Diversity, People & Community	Care of People	Use and value diversity, Integrate rather than segregate. We are the problem, we are the solution.
Valuing Co-operation not Competition, Balance & Life Quality	Care of People	Integrate rather than segregate, Apply self-regulation and accept feedback.
Passionate about Innovation, Excellence, Quality and Efficiency	Care of Earth, Care of People, Create Surplus	In the cycle of review and continuous improvement: Creatively use & respond to change, use small & slow solutions, design from patterns to details, apply self-regulation & accept feedback

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5.2 Evaluation of Vision Statement

	Ethics Met	Permaculture Principles Met
Red Sand Cottage recognises that permaculture is becoming a more widely understood and a mainstream concept which can offer solutions to current problems such as climate change & food production.	Care of the Earth, Care of People, Create a Surplus/Fair Shares	All Permaculture Principles are applied in the permaculture design of the homestead and business, but because of the increasing acceptance of permaculture methods we attempt to Integrate rather than segregate because everything is connected to everything else . Relative location . Local focus . Diversity . Biological resources . Working with nature and using appropriate technology .
In the next five years, Red Sand Cottage will initiate ongoing permaculture research projects, undertake woodland conservation projects, establish a developed permaculture demonstration site, be involved in community relocalisation issues and offer permaculture training here in the Maritimes.	Care of the Earth Care of People Create a Surplus/Fair Shares	All Permaculture principles will be taught in classes, whereas workshops will focus on recycled crafts (produce no waste) and catch and store energy (cheese making and preserving). Research projects will utilise and demonstrate all permaculture principles, but will particularly focus on (because of the funding sources) showing how to obtain a yield whilst producing no waste . Local Focus . Diversity . Biological resources . Succession . Small scale & Intensive . Woodland conservation projects will centre around observe and interact, use small and slow solutions, use and value diversity and use and value renewable resources . The various exhibits and gardens will demonstrate one or more (each) of the permaculture principles especially biological resources, patterns and stacking.
Activities will be financed by a diverse range of crafts from materials sustainably sourced from the local environment and income from fee-based courses. Forging links with other permaculturalists and networking within the local community and beyond will be paramount in realising this vision.	Care of the Earth Care of People Create a Surplus	Use and value renewable resources and services to create a saleable product and to obtain a yield . Use and value diversity to continue to create new craft ideas so as to creatively use and respond to change . Integrate rather than segregate ourselves within the nearer and wider community. Sustainability relies on system resilience and this can be improved by Every element is multi-functional and every function is supported by a variety of elements . Diversity . Biological Resources , use onsite resources.

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5.3 Evaluation of Goals

	Ethics Met	Permaculture Principles Met
<p>Promote Permaculture:</p> <p>Website, Demonstration Site, Research Projects, Permaculture Diploma, Teaching Experience, Workshops, Teaching courses.</p>	<p>Care of Earth, Care of People, Create Surplus, Fair Shares</p>	<p>All of the following used in demonstrating, using and teaching permaculture:</p> <p>Observe & Interact, Catch & Store energy, Obtain a Yield, Apply self-regulation & accept Feedback, Use and value renewable resources & services, Produce No Waste, Design from patterns to details, Integrate rather than segregate, Use small and slow solutions, Use and value diversity, Use edges & value the marginal, Creatively use and respond to change, use onsite resources.</p> <p>Each garden or exhibit demonstrates one or more of the permaculture principles and ethics – Relative Location, Local Focus.</p>
<p>Environmentally Sustainable: Reduce packaging & consumables, coppicing, sustainable fuel, food & products</p>	<p>Care of Earth, Care of People</p>	<p>Produce no waste, Catch & Store Energy, Observe & Interact, Obtain a Yield, Use small & slow solutions, biological resources, stacking.</p>
<p>Financially sustainable: Marketing drive to other craft outlets, Generate Income by craft shop.</p>	<p>Care of People</p>	<p>Obtain a yield financially from labour, Produce no Waste by using 'waste' products to create crafts. Creatively use and respond to change by seeking out marketing ideas.</p>
<p>Eat Home/ local/organic, fresh food :</p> <p>Create Mandala Garden, finish Small Forest orchard, Plant perennial and annual vegetables, Clear Cut Forest Areas for Blueberries, animals in the system.</p>	<p>Care of Earth, Create Surplus</p>	<p>Small scale and intensive to Obtain a yield of produce. Catch & Store energy as fresh & preserved food. Use and value diversity to build resilient systems based on polycultures. Copy patterns from nature and design from patterns to details for abundance and efficiency. Use slow and small solutions, Use Edges and value the marginal to increase species diversity and micro-climate opportunities. Produce no waste as all the produce is cycled within the system. In the system Everything is connected to everything else, Relative Location. Sustainability relies on system resilience and this can be improved by Every element is multi-functional and every function is supported by a variety of elements. Local Focus. Diversity in polycultures, biological resources, stacking (multiple layers), stocking, succession AND accelerated succession, use onsite resources. Working with nature.</p>
<p>Work from home producing sustainable products, enjoy creativity:</p> <p>Attend basket weaving course, create new craft items from Red Osier Dogwood, e.g. baskets and Christmas wreaths, develop Blueberry growing areas for a potential market, study fungi growing in the woods,</p>	<p>Care of Earth, Care of People, Create Surplus</p>	<p>Obtain a yield by creatively managing the woods for products, Observe & Interact with the natural forest ecosystem, Apply self-regulation and accept feedback by limiting harvesting to sustainable amounts. Local Focus. Diversity in products. Biological resources.</p> <p>Use and value renewable resources and services since all the products are from renewable sources, Produce no waste by learning to use the products of the forest elements, Integrate rather</p>

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types & quantities to look for opportunities, learn about and try to tap for birch sap, coppice alder and poplar, Investigate the stock levels and locations of balsam fir on the property, begin to thin and tend for a possible future crop of Christmas trees which will be harvested sustainably by coppicing, create willow firebreak and for craft materials.		than segregate the various woodland species. Use and value diversity in the woods, Use edges and value the marginal by creating patch cuts to increase biodiversity, Creatively use and respond to change by finding new opportunities for sustainable growth.
Plenty of Leisure Time: Open hours June – Sept 12-5pm to allow more time off than previously (in B&B), Aim to fund a part-time work position by increasing sales over the summer months, Formulate a volunteer recruitment plan.	Care of People	Observe & Interact at leisure in the woods and seashore.
Easy to maintain & heat Property with low overheads: Finalise main passive solar design, Add Porch, Continue to reduce energy requirements, Kitchen waste to Biogas project, Woodgas-charcoal-biochar project.	Care of Earth	Obtain a yield of energy from waste products, Capture and store energy by adding a porch for solar heating and insulation. Carbon sequestration by adding biochar to the soil. Observe & Interact how the new experimental fuel production systems work, Produce no waste, turn woodchips and kitchen scraps into fuel and fertiliser, Use and Value renewable resources and services, using food waste and renewable wood for fuel. Diversity in energy sources. Appropriate technology.
Live in beautiful surroundings: Pursue recognition of the property under the Natural Areas Protection Act, Forest Enhancement Program conservation projects, Small Patch Cuts, Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes, Maintain Hedgerows, more diverse tree seedlings.	Care of Earth, Care of People, Create Surplus, Fair Shares	Observe & interact – use the woodlands as a classroom for ourselves and others. Integrate rather than segregate as the increased biodiversity plays a role in the ecosystem. Use and value diversity by encouraging biodiversity. Use Edges and value the marginal in hedgerows and patch cuts. Diversity in wildlife.
Enjoy Community connections and Activities: Provide some free workshops, Become committee member for PEICSA (community schools association) and continue to teach at community school.	Care of People	Integrate rather than segregate within the community. Local Focus. Apply self-regulation & accept feedback by seeking and acting upon feedback.
Share experiences and enjoyment of the property with others: Open to public, create woodland paths, picnic table and benches along trails, log cabin with compost toilet, information signage, website, leaflets.	Care of Earth, Care of People	Observe & Interact the wild areas and allow others to do so. Integrate with others rather than segregate. Creatively use & respond to change

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6 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

(Protocols)

Our business procedures are outlined in a manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) also known as protocols.

They were developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and are an agreed, standardised way of performing a task. SOPs ensure that the process is repeatable and reproducible.

Our SOPs are auditable, in that we say what we do and we do what we say.

Although we have no staff, workers or volunteers at present, the SOPs can and will serve as training documents, although not to replace training. These documents decrease over-reliance on memory for certain procedures.

They are readily available to relevant stakeholders.

Communicated updates are issued under a revision system which requires acknowledgement of receipt and return of superceded version.

6.1 The Standard format for our SOPs

- A header which contains SOP number, title, version number, issue date, author and page number
- 1. Scope – to whom and to what the document applies
- 2. Purpose – the objective of the document
- 3. Procedure – a series of steps outlining the ‘who, what, where, when and how’ of the procedure. This section outlines and materials, equipment, operational steps, responsibilities and safety issues.
- 4. Supporting Documents – if there are any records to be maintained for the procedure the record proforma will be given a supporting document number and these will be identified in the related SOP
- 5. References

6.2 Index of SOPs

SOP. No.	Title
1	Strategy Review & Revision Meeting
2	Revision of Documentation
3	Equal Opportunities
4	Health & Safety
5	Woodland Management