

SUSTAINABILITY AT SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

The First Annual Report of the
Sustainability Committee

April 22, 2014



Vision

In fidelity to our educational mission and Catholic principles, Saint Mary's College is committed to leadership in fostering environmental literacy, modeling a culture of sustainability, and creating an equitable future for all of humankind in harmony with nature.

Operating Principles

The animating vision of a more sustainable college cannot be achieved without considerable creativity, innovation, flexibility, and energy. To achieve our sustainability objectives, we must:

Engage our community at all levels. Successful implementation of sustainability objectives will require the initiative to become a stated priority for the Board of Trustees and senior administrative leadership. Simultaneously, we must work to ensure the ethic of conservation permeates the larger community;

Conduct a transparent evaluation and planning process that defines and weighs tradeoffs and sacrifices in a deliberate and conscientious fashion;

Take full advantage of the College's substantial intellectual resources — our own students, staff and faculty will generate some of the best solutions;

Link our work to the Saint Mary's mission, recognizing that conducting our work and ourselves sustainably is consistent with the College's aims and ideals;

Assign clear measures to institutional and individual accountability, ensuring that the progress toward our stated goals is regularly and accurately assessed and articulated to the community we aim to serve.

— Saint Mary's College Sustainability Committee Vision and Mission, ca. 2012



March 14, 2014

Dear Saint Mary's Community,

I am pleased to share the first annual report on sustainability initiatives and activities at Saint Mary's College of California. The results presented in this summary are the product of years of hard work, which began in 2006 when the Academic Senate and Staff Council passed resolutions calling on then President Ronald Gallagher to adopt sustainability principles for the College.

Since then, many of our faculty, staff and students have been actively involved in advancing the state of sustainability at Saint Mary's College. This work has been led by our Sustainability Committee, a powerful advocate for sustainability initiatives across our community. The committee's work is collaborative. They are working with campus partners such as our food service provider, Sodexo, and an ambitious and active facilities staff that is helping to reshape the way we design, build and operate our campus' physical assets.

Our core values are built upon the Lasallian principles and they inform how we engage the campus community to contribute to the global pursuit of sustainability. At the same time, our commitment to inclusiveness and tolerance adds a new dimension to the commonly held standards of sustainability. Unique program offerings such as the Center for Environmental Literacy, Dismantle, Immerse, Reflect, Transform (a.k.a. DIRT), and our Green Living residence community offer students opportunities to explore sustainability in a way that is unique to Saint Mary's.

When I joined Saint Mary's College as the 29th president in 2013, I was pleased to endorse the Saint Francis Pledge, an initiative of the Catholic Climate Covenant. It is a promise and a commitment by Catholic institutions to live our faith by protecting God's Creation and advocating on behalf of people in poverty who face the harshest impacts of global climate change.

Saint Mary's has made significant progress in its commitment to the environment, lowering our carbon footprint and educating the future generations who will inherit the earth. In this document, you will find a summary of the accomplishments of the Sustainability Committee and Saint Mary's since the committee's inception in 2007. While we still have far to go, we look forward to future years of building on this progress and, with each subsequent report, showing increased improvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Donahue".

James A. Donahue
President

Saint Mary's College of California

Background

This report symbolizes a major milestone in Saint Mary's journey toward sustainability.

In 2007, the President's Building on Strengths Strategic Plan set out the goals to increase environmental awareness and improve campus stewardship of its resources. From this plan, the Task Force on Sustainability was created and included faculty, staff, students and invited alumni of the College. By 2011, a Sustainability Vision (*see overleaf*) statement and Action Plan had been crafted and submitted to the President to meet the stated goals of the College's Strategic Plan.

The Vision and Action Plan also addressed the goals of the Provost's Academic Blueprint that called for the creation of courses in sustainability. One example of this effort is The Center for Environmental Literacy (*see page 5*).

In 2012, President Gallagher established the standing Saint Mary's College Sustainability Committee (stmarys-ca.edu/sustainability) to implement the Action Plan developed by the prior Task Force. In this same year, the Sustainability Committee initiated the process of registering and reporting under AASHE's STARS to audit the College's sustainability practices and programs, and benchmark our successes with peer institutions (*see page 7*).

Today the Sustainability Committee is a driving force for prioritizing initiatives and helping to guide activities that improve sustainability at Saint Mary's College. One of these efforts is to take stock, summarize and communicate what is happening on our campus relative to sustainability.

This document, **The First Annual Report of the Sustainability Committee** is meant to share all that has been accomplished and worthy of celebration, while also calling attention to the many tasks that lie ahead.

Through the preparation of this document we uncovered accomplishments big and small that are making Saint Mary's a more responsible contributor to the discussion of sustainability. But we also identified a number of areas where we are trailing our peer institutions and best practices in the field.



2014 Sustainability Committee

Members come from all areas of our community including faculty, staff and students.

Aaron Sachs
*Assistant Professor,
Communications*

Andrew Wilson
Associate Professor, Marketing

Alice Baldrige
*Assistant Professor,
Environmental + Earth Science*

Bill Sullivan
*Director of Scheduling
and Promotion*

Brian Foley
College Communications

Carol Firestone
*Assistant to the Vice Provost
for Student Life*

Collin Pugh
*Student Engagement
and Academic Success*

Gemma Niermann
Associate Professor, Education

Judith White
Associate Professor, Management

Jane Camarillo, Committee Chair
Vice Provost for Student Life

Joseph Kehoe
*Executive Director,
Facilities Services*

Key Findings

1. The foundation of Saint Mary's, built upon Lasallian principles, establishes a **campus ethos that transcends many of the conventional paths to sustainability**. Saint Mary's innovative offerings include the following:

- **D.I.R.T.** (Dismantle, Immerse, Reflect, Transform) provides an immersive learning experience to explore and contribute to global sustainability at the human level.
- **The Center for Environmental Literacy** affords students an opportunity to explore the link between the environment and learning.
- A **culture of inclusive excellence** that goes beyond affirmative action to create an environment where diversity, inclusion, and tolerance are a way of life.
- The Weekend of Welcome that ties **service to the community with the fun and community building** of orientation for new students.

2. **Dining Services at Saint Mary's provide tangible examples of applied sustainability**. With a holistic approach to operations, purchasing, energy and water use, waste diversion, detailed sources and uses accounting, and end user communication, the partnership with SODEXO provides Saint Mary's a resource in best practices that can be used to inform other campus initiatives.

3. **Water and energy conservation initiatives are in the early stages at Saint Mary's**. The campus' successful partnership with PG&E for peak load savings and resulting rebates that are used by Saint Mary's Sustainable Reinvestment Fund are a good start. Investments in new metering and systems training should provide significant future savings and benefits as they scale across the campus.

4. **Recent Greenhouse Gas (GHG) analyses provides a valuable baseline and standardized metric for comparing campus performance/emissions relative to peer institutions**. Student and faculty air travel continues to be the largest contributor to GHG at Saint Mary's.

5. **The lack of a campus-wide green building standard with third-party green rated or certified buildings is a disadvantage for Saint Mary's**. Green construction and remodeling best practice standards would improve performance and result in operating savings, while green rated or certified buildings would signal Saint Mary's sustainability commitment to the broader community.

6. **Saint Mary's 450-acre campus, which is largely undeveloped, provides a unique opportunity to link natural systems research, applied learning and sustainability**.

7. **The STARS Reporting process has helped improve important data collection protocols, while identifying gaps for where Saint Mary's lags peer institutions**. When complete, the STARS submission will create a solid foundation of data upon which sustainability at Saint Mary's can be measured consistently and continually improved.



Julie Welch
Garden Manager, Sodexo

James Sciuto
Associate Dean of Students

Lance Hourany
Deputy CTO

Margaret Cahill
Student

Marie Pagliarini
*Faculty Theology
and Religious Studies*

Matt Carroll
General Manager, Sodexo

Brother Michael Murphy
*Director of Mission
and Ministry*

Nicholas Kennen
Student

Pamela Michael
*Director of The Center for
Environmental Literacy*

Safa Toma
*Director Environmental
Health and Safety*

Scott Logan
*Superintendent
Facilities Services*

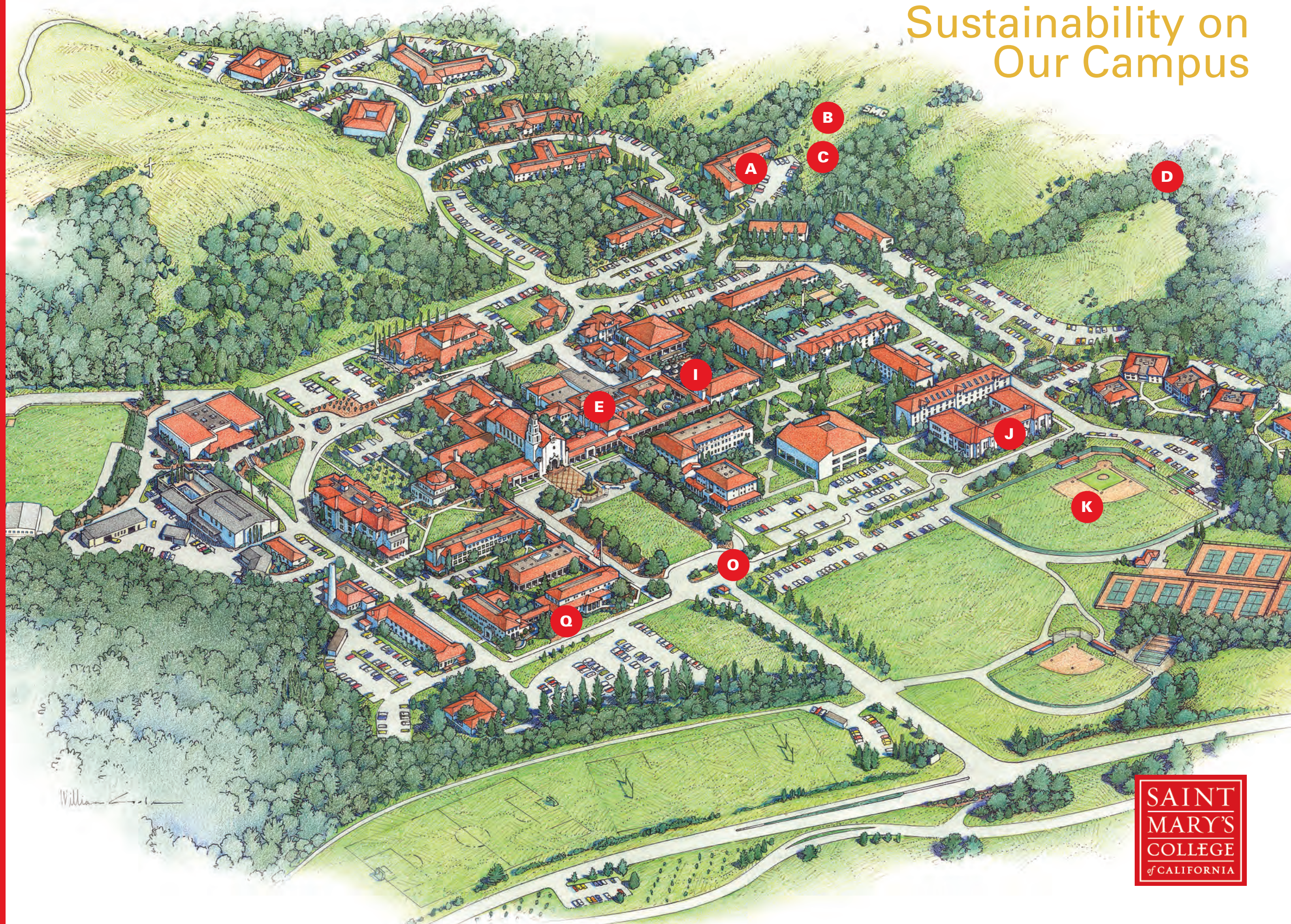
Steve Woolpert
*Dean of the School
of Liberal Arts*

Anthony Zapien
Marketing, Sodexo

Sustainability on Our Campus

KEY

- A.** Green Living Learning Community
- B.** Legacy Demonstration Garden
- C.** Windmill
- D.** Natural Open Space
- E.** Campus Dining Sustainability Programs
- F.** Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action
- G.** Water Saving Sports Fields
- H.** California Native Plant Garden
- I.** Intercultural Center
- J.** Center for Environmental Literacy
- K.** (Future) Energy Efficient Student Recreation Facility
- L.** Centralized Campus Recycling Station
- M.** Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Charging Station
- N.** Recycling Compactor
- O.** Campus Shuttle to Regional Transit
- P.** 14-Acre Red Willow Seasonal Swamp
- Q.** Presidential Oak



65%

of all cleaning products purchased by Saint Mary's are Green Seal or UL Environment (EcoLogo) certified.

19.8 tons

of waste was diverted from the landfill in just four months through recent on-campus recycling efforts.

71%

of Saint Mary's campus is kept in a managed, wild state.

1,321 lbs

of fruits and vegetables were harvested from the Legacy Garden (July 2012 through June 2013).

56%

reduction in ballfield irrigation water use since 2009, by installing playturf field surfaces.

Noteworthy

River of Words



The Center for Environmental Literacy (CEL) at Saint Mary's is one example of the institution's commitment to exploring new definitions of sustainability and new ways to create impact. Founded in 2011, the CEL explores and promotes educational programming and professional development opportunities for educators to integrate nature and the arts into academic curricula. Located in the Kalmanovitz

School of Education, CEL develops new approaches to learning that engage students and teachers more actively in the cultural, scientific and social dimensions of environmental study. River of Words, CEL's flagship program, works to connect children to their watersheds and their imaginations through innovative, interdisciplinary K-12 classroom and field programs.

Legacy Garden

Faculty initiated, student built and student run, Saint Mary's Legacy Garden was the first tangible action on campus for demonstrating sustainability. Built in 2009, the 1/2 acre demonstration garden, evolved out of the desire to educate students about ecology, food sources and community. The garden was built with over 1,000 hours of student labor, and provides a focus for a number of educational programs as well as small amounts of fresh produce to the dining hall and a student run market table. The garden also provides a 'hands on' laboratory to teach students about sustainability issues including rainwater harvesting, soil management and composting, integrated pest management, and the value of locally sourced produce. A student built wind turbine supplies power for the garden's lights.

Digging in the Dirt

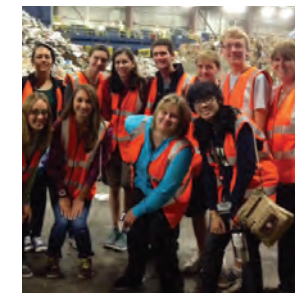


Since January 2002, students have had the option, during Jan Term, to participate in service trips under the title "D.I.R.T." - (Dismantle, Immerse, Reflect, Transform). DIRT sends students into situations of extreme poverty and challenges them to collaborate with host communities to address a chosen quality-of-life issue. More than just service learning trips, the course requires the students to participate in daily reflections that look beyond just treating the problems and instead seek out the larger social, economic and environmental conditions that led to the current condition. These observations are then explored further to understand the systemic changes needed to result in more sustainable outcomes for the benefit of the host community and surrounding region, and even communities at large.

Green Living + Learning

The Green Living and Learning Community creates environmental awareness through intentional living. Starting with the individual student and spreading out to others through proactive efforts of the residents, they implement sustainable practices in their personal lives as well as around the Saint Mary's campus. Partnerships with Goodwill, Monument Crisis Center food pantry and Saint Mary's Legacy Garden have helped to divert used goods and surplus food from the landfills to families in need.

In 2014, the Green Community chose to focus their efforts on campus recycling spreading the word about the importance and techniques for recycling at athletic competitions through campus-wide RecycleMania events. Located in Claeys Hall South, the student residence wing requires a year-long commitment by 11 sophomores who have chosen to live together to gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding sustainability.



Partnering for Sustainability

As an institution where values of inclusion and engagement are paramount, developing successful relationships with our vendors and partners on campus is an important part of our sustainability strategy. SODEXO, Saint Mary's food service provider, has been a proactive and innovative partner in our pursuit of sustainability. Our daily food consumption and the waste it generates touches a multitude of sustainability elements. SODEXO has struck up relationships with Alameda County's biodigester to turn waste food into energy.

Orientation week programs including 'weigh the waste' provide tangible ways for new and returning students to be more mindful in the quantity of food they are taking, and not eating. Locally sourced products and an emphasis on healthy food is core to the daily menu.



308

number of local vendors* that provide food to Saint Mary's.

*(within 200 miles of campus)

12,262 recs

(renewable energy credits) purchased this year creating the offset equivalent of 6,427 metric tonnes of CO₂.

>90%

computers purchased for Saint Mary's meet EPEAT Gold designation.

27%

of Saint Mary's electricity comes from clean and renewable sources.

30%

Minimum post consumer content for ALL paper purchased for Saint Mary's.

Recommendations

Based on what is being learned through the STARS Reporting effort, the Campus Master Plan process, and the second annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions analysis, the Sustainability Committee recommends a number of items that will continue advancing sustainability on our campus.

1. Ensure that the current strategic planning process firmly **embeds sustainability** throughout the document's goals and recommendations.
2. Leverage our **450 acre campus as a defining feature of sustainability** at Saint Mary's. This can be realized through further integration of applied research, classrooms-in-the-field, activities and programs focused on natural systems stewardship, and consideration of ecosystems services when developing new capital projects and master plan improvements.
3. **Further policies that implement Saint Mary's commitment to sustainability:**
 - *Standardized vendor RFP's and contracts* that require alignment with Saint Mary's sustainability vision and goals and specific STARS performance standards.
 - *Formalized policies* for EPEAT Gold computers, recycled content paper, dual-side printing, and continued purchase of RECs (Renewable Energy Credits).
 - A minimum requirement for *all new construction to meet an established Green Building Rating standard(s)*, or key performance metrics consistent with known industry benchmarks.
 - *Procurement that supports disadvantaged businesses, social enterprises, and/or local community-based businesses* to further complement Lasallian Principles.
4. Continue **refining day-to-day operations to reduce environmental impact** and improve quality-of-life for students, faculty and staff:
 - *Establish campus-wide targets for reduced resource use/GHG emissions* (including: electricity, water, heating, cooling, plug-loads, lighting, air travel).
 - Develop *aggressive alternative transportation options* including improved and preferential parking for clean emission vehicles, bicycle and clean transit options.
 - Adopt an institution-wide policy for indoor environmental quality.
 - *Implement landscape best practices* such as integrated pest management, low impact design techniques and Bay Friendly landscape standards.
 - *Develop manuals, standards or guidelines* for green material selection and construction waste diversion.
 - In order to maximize the potential for waste diversion at Saint Mary's, *continually refine the culture of the campus operations, faculty, students and staff to focus on reduce, reuse, recycle.*

5. Adopt measures to improve sustainability as identified through the STARS Reporting process for a 2015 report update:

- *Establish a single point of contact for STARS reporting* for each of the credit categories.
- Include *more deliberate presentations of sustainability within student and new faculty and staff orientation materials* and communicate opportunities for participation.
- Examine an *open access policy for campus generated research.*
- Look for opportunities to *link entrepreneurialism, socially responsible business, and sustainability at the student level.*
- Implement incentives and programs to *increase the number of sustainability-focused and sustainability-related courses*, and increase sustainability-related research by students and faculty.
- Examine if Saint Mary's *endowment can better align allocations with responsible investing practices.*

What's Next?

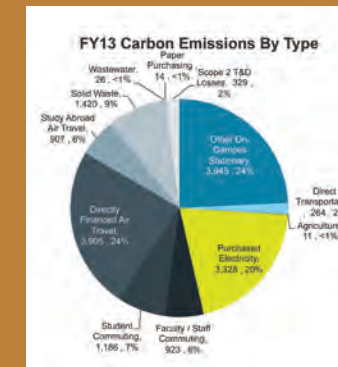
Saint Mary's is updating its Campus Master Plan. This effort, along with accompanying environmental documents, will better link sustainability, physical campus assets and day-to-day operations.

A major step was recently completed to improve waste diversion rates. The retention of Mt. Diablo Recycling (one of five certified single stream recycling companies in California) will greatly improve the tracking and collection of campus recyclables. This data, along with a recently installed centralized recycling center will systematically inform how waste is managed and handled while greatly improving diversion rates.

Facilities Services is installing water metering systems to separate athletic field irrigation from domestic water use. This will provide a much higher level of monitoring and management, and result in cost savings as charges are adjusted for domestic use vs. irrigation use.

Web-based management programs for water and energy monitoring are being installed, and staff are being trained to fine-tune daily management of energy and water resources.

High-energy consuming appliances are systematically being replaced by energy efficient options. Further energy savings will be realized by addressing plug-loads throughout the campus.



Source: Sightlines 2013

SMC + GHG

GHG is shorthand for Greenhouse Gas. Over the past decade, GHG has become a favored tool to measure key elements of sustainability through a single metric.

Translatable to energy source and use, travel mode, water usage, food decomposition and embedded energy in everything from purchased products to air travel; GHG has become a powerful way to benchmark the effectiveness of sustainability efforts.

In 2011, Saint Mary's College commissioned Sightlines to produce the college's first GHG analysis. This complex assessment measures a multitude factors using established protocols, and looks for areas where the greatest reductions in GHG can be achieved quickly and cost effectively. As an institution focused on both exceptional education and value, reducing GHG also helps keep costs in check. The study was recommissioned in 2013 to understand which efforts are having the greatest impact and where more improvement can be achieved.



STARS

The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment + Rating System (STARS™) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. Launched in January 2010 by the Association for Advancement of Sustainability Higher Education (AASHE) over 650 institutions are now using the tool.

The Sustainability Committee at Saint Mary's College began the reporting process for our campus in September of 2012. The data intensive process requires compiling extensive amounts of quantitative and qualitative information in four areas: **Academics, Engagement, Operations and Planning.** Through this process (anticipated to be complete Fall 2014) we have identified a number of unique and successful programs on our campus, and some areas where improvement can be achieved.

For more information on STARS, and to review Saint Mary's submission when it is complete, go to stars.aashe.org.



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of CALIFORNIA