

Committee: **Environmental and Ecological Planning Committee**

Organization/Sector represented:

Name: **Alexandra Poelman**

Address:

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Occupation: **Laboratory Assistant at A&L Biologicals**

Work experience: **Currently on a sixteen-month internship at A&L Biologicals working as a laboratory assistant. Other work experience includes being a sales associate at the Pink Flamingo Bakery and Boutique in Bayfield, Ontario. Here I was entrusted with managerial roles including opening and closing the store, as well as cash-out at end of day. I worked at this establishment the summers of 2013 - 2015 before landing an internship with A&L Biologicals in 2016. Relevant volunteering experience includes volunteering at Western Foot patrol 2013-2015; UWO Herbarium September - December 2015 and Dr. Greg Thorn's mycology lab at Western University from January - April 2016.**

Education: **I am completing an Honours Specialization in Biology at Western University. This program has allowed me to take the following courses: Ecology (BIO2483) - 90% Flora and Vegetation of Ontario (BIO3403) - 93% Wildlife Ecology and Management (BIO3446) - 95% Field Studies in Biology (BIO4257) - 90% Biology of the Fungi (BIO3218) - 91% From these courses, I have learnt the importance considering the complex interactions of organisms and their environment when we hope to develop new land. It is possible to balance the needs of the expanding human population and needs of wildlife through careful planning and scientific studies. I have also learnt how incredibly important it is to conserve natural wildlife areas and that it is necessary to maintain and protect them. As an intern at A&L Biologicals, I have learnt first hand of the importance of sustainability. The research department which I am apart of aims to find more environmentally sustainable farming practices by looking at the soil, root, and plans ecology. The aim is to find biologically based solutions to naturally improve yields and make farming more environmentally friendly. Working here makes me feel like I am helping the greater good as the end goal is to find ways for farming industry to interact better with the environment.**

Skills: **I am passionate about conservation. I have a keen interest in plants and enjoy spending time outdoors on nature hikes. I am from a rural community in Southwestern Ontario and have grown up with the ability to explore nature around me on a daily basis. I understand the importance of keeping land untouched by developers as there is more life on this Earth than people. I also understand that the human population is expanding and so is London. I believe that city expansion can be achieved while also carefully considering the land that should be left undeveloped. Additionally, I am a strong student very interested in ecology. I am highly organized and have learned excellent time management skills from my current internship.**

Interest reason: **I have been a resident of London since 2013 when I came to Western University for school. I consider London to be my home away from home and want to give back to this community. In the past, I have volunteered at more Western-specific clubs, for example, Western Foot Patrol where I would walk peers home at night. Now that I am away from Western, I want to spend more time giving back to this city. When I heard about this committee through Kristen Thomas, Dr. Nina Zitani, and Dr. Greg Thorn, I became very excited. I did not realize that a student could apply to volunteer on such a committee. With my keen interest in plants and ecology, they encouraged me to apply.**

Contributions: **I believe that I bring a unique perspective to the group. Having been born and raised in rural Southwestern Ontario, I understand the importance of preserving nature and appreciating it. I know that I am young and still learning much about this field, but I am eager help and broaden my perspective on the real life balancing act of nature verses city expansion. It would be a pleasure being apart of a committee that gives input to the future development of London. I am also thorough and organized. Additionally, I am a team player that works well with others.**

Past contributions: **I was a member of the Environment Club at Saint Anne's Catholic Secondary School. I ran a campaign for recycling in my final year of high school. The**

group collected water bottles thrown into the recycling bins over the course of first term and proceeded to string them and hang them in the main lobby. This was to raise awareness for the unnecessary waste non-reusable water bottles are to the environment. It was a successful campaign noticing the following semester that water bottles found in the recycling has significantly diminished.

Interpersonal: Interning at A&L Biologicals requires working with a diverse group of individuals with various backgrounds and viewpoints as well as experience and education levels. Teamwork and cooperation is necessary in order to succeed in completing tasks in a timely manner. Not only do you have to think critically, but also be open minded to other people's opinions. There is more than one way to complete a task, and listening to a co-worker's perspective is very helpful. We all help each other at work, even though we have our separate projects. It is a very helpful work environment. Also, Western Foot patrol as given me much experience with interacting with various students from different backgrounds, faculties, and age groups. I assisted many peers in receiving a safe way home while being an Operations Assistant in the office, on patrol, and on escorts.

Interview interest: Yes