

Geology conference in Moncton this weekend

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Reg Wilson says when most people look at a rock, they just see a rock.

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Dr. R. Andrew MacRae, assistant professor in the Department of Geology at St. Mary's University and Dr. David Mosher, president of the Atlantic Geoscience Society look at a Geological Highway Map at their annual conference in Moncton.

"They say, 'what's so interesting about that?'" he says.

Wilson sees much more than just a rock. The geologist with the Department of Natural Resource's Geological Survey branch in Bathurst sees a rock as a piece of a much larger puzzle about the environment and the earth.

"There's a story to be learned there and it's a fascinating story," says Wilson.

Many people think of Geology as just the study of rocks and minerals, but there's a lot more to it than that. Wilson, one of the organizers of this weekend's Atlantic Geoscience Society's annual conference at the Delta Beauséjour in Moncton, says geologists are involved in environmental studies, waste disposal planning, oceanography, mining, paleontology and many other scientific fields.

"It's a very diverse field," he says.

More than 100 geologists and geology students from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and a couple from Newfoundland are in Moncton for the annual conference that began yesterday afternoon and continues today. It's the fourth time the conference has been held in Moncton since 2001. A third of the participants are university students.

Topics to be covered at this year's conference include improving awareness of hazardous building sites and flood risks, groundwater pollution, environmental management of gold and coal mining, tidal energy, coastal hazard mapping and many other topics.

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