

FALL 2023

Student Forest Field Trips



The field sites where these events took place are located on the traditional territories of the Treaty 6, 7, and 8 First Nations, as well as across Districts 3, 4, 8, 13, 17, and 21 of the Métis Nation. Inside Education respectfully acknowledges the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on and cared for this land since time immemorial.



Overview

Thanks to the support of our Forestry Futures Alliance Partners, CAREERS and Work Wild, Inside Education brought another successful forest field trip season to the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

Students and teachers from urban, rural and Indigenous communities across Alberta participated in programming at the following field sites:

- Bunchberry Meadows Conservation Area (Edmonton)
- Des Crossley Demonstration Forest (Rocky Mountain House)
- Boreal Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park (Grande Prairie)
- Gregoire Lake Provincial Park (Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo)
- Huestis Demonstration Forest (Whitecourt)
- Three Herons Conservation Area (Diamond Valley)

More than 2,600 students and nearly 300 teachers and volunteers participated in programming from September - October 2023.

We are pleased to share the highlights from the 2023 fall field season.



Participants and Program Impact

A total of 2,676 students from 115 classes at 47 unique schools attended forest field programs at Inside Education field sites in September and October, 2023.

| | Elementary | | Junior High | | Senior High | | TOTAL | |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| | Classes | Students | Classes | Students | Classes | Students | Classes | Students |
| Bunchberry | 24 | 569 | - | - | 8 | 179 | 32 | 748 |
| Des Crossley | 24 | 586 | 2 | 39 | 1 | 20 | 27 | 645 |
| Boreal Wetlands Centre | 9 | 192 | 4 | 98 | 2 | 33 | 15 | 323 |
| Gregoire Lake | 13 | 325 | - | - | - | - | 13 | 325 |
| Huestis | 3 | 72 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 72 |
| Three Herons* | 9 | 186 | 13 | 325 | 3 | 52 | 16 | 371 |
| Other* | 3 | 63 | 6 | 129 | - | - | 9 | 192 |
| TOTAL | 82 | 1,930 | 19 | 462 | 14 | 284 | 115 | 2,676 |

*Three Herons and Other includes forest field trips originally scheduled for Jumpingpound Demonstration Forest - See Three Herons page for details.

Inside Education would also like to thank the 298 teachers and adult volunteer whose support helped make our field trips successful.

Schools visited student forestry field trip sites from **29** different communities across Alberta:

- Calgary
- Innisfail
- Rocky View County
- Cochrane
- Lacombe
- Sexsmith
- Donnelly
- Leduc
- St Albert
- Drayton Valley
- Leslieville
- Stettler
- Edmonton
- Penhold
- Stony Plain
- Edson
- Piikani Nation
- Swan Hills
- Fairview
- Red Deer
- Sylvan Lake
- Fort McMurray
- Rimbey
- Vermilion
- Fort Saskatchewan
- Riviere Qui Barre
- Westlock
- Grande Prairie
- Rocky Mountain House

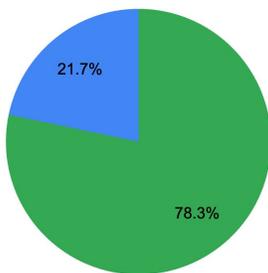
Program Feedback

After each field program, a survey is sent to participating teachers so Inside Education can evaluate the effectiveness of our student forestry field trip programming. The charts below summarize the responses of participants.

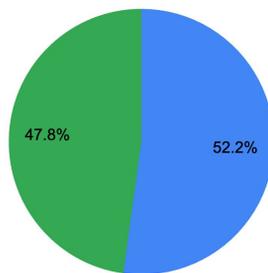
Overall, the responses indicate that our forest field programs play a vital role in accessible forest education through low-cost programming and professional program leaders. We continue to link to curriculum objectives and expose students to a variety of forest and forestry perspectives.

Question: In your opinion, how well are we meeting the following program goals with the forest field program?

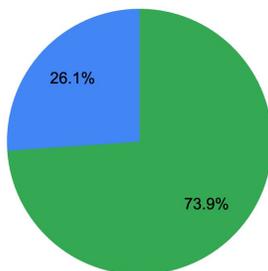
Opportunity for low-cost programming



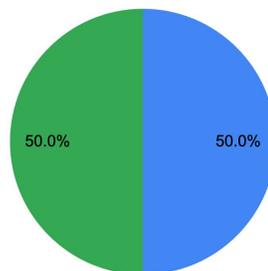
Linking to curriculum objectives



Providing a professionally led outdoor education program



Exposing students to numerous values of Alberta's forests



● Exceeding ● Meeting ● Not Meeting

Average overall value rating of forest field programming:

9.4/10

“This is such an amazing opportunity for students to get out into the actual forest and see it in a whole new way. We are super grateful that the funding is there so that we can come and enjoy this experience for free.”

- Stephanie Cardinal, École Our Lady of the Rosary School, Red Deer

Edmonton Area - Bunchberry Meadows

Bunchberry Meadows is a unique Nature Conservancy of Canada site that serves Edmonton-area schools. It features mixed woodlands and wetlands on a 260 hectare property.

While Bunchberry Meadows was our busiest site this fall, it also consistently has the highest proportion of senior high school participation. Notably, during this fall season Inside Education collaborated with fellow FFA member CAREERS to host students from the Braided Journeys program, an initiative by the Edmonton Catholic School District to support Indigenous students and provide them with career opportunities. Students joined Inside Education staff to explore activities related to forestry and conservation careers.

“Our bodies were exhausted from a full day of learning, our minds full of knowledge and hearts full of gratitude! Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to take our classroom outdoors and for the meaningful hands on learning activities. It was beautiful to see Alberta's parklands biome in person and be able to witness conservation in action. ”

- Katharine Mah, Academy at King Edward, Edmonton

Participants at Bunchberry Meadows - Fall 2023

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 24 | 569 |
| Senior High | 8 | 179 |
| TOTAL | 32 | 178 |



Des Crossley Demonstration Forest

Des Crossley Demonstration Forest is a fantastic site for students to explore their relationship to the land in the context of forest management. As a former research site, it showcases the long-term effects of different management techniques.

As our Central Alberta site, Des Crossley Demonstration Forest sees students visiting from a wide geographical range. Classes make the trip from as close as nearby Rocky Mountain House, to as far away as Cochrane. Many of these schools are rural schools with limited access to field trip experiences.

“Inside Education provides a learning experience that is directly linked to the outcomes in Science. The staff are always very knowledgeable and do a fantastic job of teaching students with hands-on opportunities.”

- Tina Chadwick, Innisfail Middle School, Innisfail

Participants at Des Crossley - Fall 2023

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 24 | 586 |
| Junior High | 2 | 39 |
| Senior High | 1 | 20 |
| TOTAL | 27 | 645 |



Boreal Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park

The Boreal Wetland Centre is managed by Ducks Unlimited and includes wetland, forest, and natural resource education components. It is located at the edge of Grande Prairie in Evergreen Park and serves the north west corner of the province.

Over 300 students attended this fall over only 6 programming days. Notably, students from many rural areas participated this fall - including the communities of Donnelly, Fairview, and Sexsmith. Some students got to witness active arachnid research in action with Jaime Pinzon of Natural Resources Canada, as they were at the site collecting data this fall.

Inside Education and Ducks Unlimited also welcomed Leanne Courchesne and Manny Corpas from program partner Alliance Pipeline to tour the site and see experiential learning in action.

Participants at Boreal Wetlands Centre - Fall 2023

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 9 | 192 |
| Junior High | 4 | 98 |
| Senior High | 2 | 33 |
| TOTAL | 15 | 323 |



"I am very happy with everything about the field trip. Charlotte was amazing with communication and she was very supportive with adapting the trip to meet the needs of our class. Natalie was another great part of our learning experience! I would 100% recommend other classes to take part in this great hands-on learning experience. Great intro into forestry!"

- Jesse Benoit, Georges P. Vanier School, Donnelly AB



Gregoire Lake Provincial Park

At Gregoire Lake Provincial Park, Inside Education collaborates with Alberta Parks, which allows us access to this site outside of their regular public season. This provides students from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo space to explore and enjoy an otherwise very busy site!

Like most of Alberta, the Wood Buffalo area struggled with high AQHI due to wildfire smoke this fall. Unfortunately this resulted in two cancelled field trips, and one modified program this season.

Participants at Gregoire Lake - Fall 2022

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 13 | 325 |
| TOTAL | 13 | 325 |

“It was amazing”, “It was the best field trip I have ever been on”, “I liked that we got to explore on our own”, “I liked the scavenger hunt”, “I liked the activities”

- Students, École St. Paul, Fort McMurray



Huestis Demonstration Forest

Huestis Demonstration Forest is a 10 km² section of boreal forest that exhibits sustainable forest management for students in the forestry communities surrounding Whitecourt.

The fall field season at Huestis included three elementary classes, as well as a one-day special event called Women in Outdoor Careers, which connected female students in the area with women who work in traditionally male-dominated natural resource careers

Participants at Huestis - Fall 2022

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 4 | 72 |
| Women in Outdoor Careers | 3 | 42 |
| TOTAL | 7 | 114 |

“On the bus ride back to school, one of the students said that this was their favorite field trip they had ever been on. They found tree coring piece particularly interesting. All students said they would love to participate again.”

*- Sydney Clampitt,
Blueberry Community School, Stony Plain*



Three Herons Conservation Area & Jumpingpound Demonstration Forest - Calgary Area

Three Herons is a small Nature Conservancy of Canada site that serves schools from south Calgary and the Diamond Valley area. It is a diverse riparian area featuring mixed forest and shrubland.

We typically run a conservation, water, and wildlife program unique to Three Herons. However, this year Three Herons was used as an alternative location for forest field trips originally scheduled for Jumpingpound Demonstration Forest due to an unexpected closure.

The Jumpingpound closure resulted in additional classes at Three Herons, and another nine classes did field trip in urban parks (Bowness & Cochrane Ranche). Unfortunately we also had five cancellations related to the closure.

In addition to our regular field programs we also hosted a one-day Women in Outdoor Careers special event where female students from Calgary-area schools connected with women with various outdoor careers.



Participants at Three Herons - Fall 2023

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 6 | 123 |
| Junior High | 7 | 196 |
| High School | 3 | 52 |
| Women in Outdoor Careers | 3 | 69 |
| TOTAL | 16 | 440 |

Participants at Alt. Sites - Fall 2023

| | Number of Classes | Number of Students |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 3 | 63 |
| Junior High | 6 | 129 |
| TOTAL | 9 | 192 |

“The students really enjoyed what they learnt and the opportunity to practically interact with the environment outside the classroom.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the entire Inside Education team”
- Bamidele Fasunwon, Piikani Nation Secondary School.

Summary and Futures

Inside Education and our Forestry Futures Alliance partners are proud of the experiential learning opportunities that provide fundamental skills for tomorrow's environmental stewards. In the face of a changing environment and constant innovation, these programs will continue to be vital for fostering environmental stewardship among students.

For the remainder of this school year, Inside Education and our Forestry Futures Alliance partners expect to continue with province-wide field trips, teacher professional development programming, forestry career-focused events, deep-dive experiential learning, and student internships/apprenticeship programs. Inside Education will also be spending time refining our programs to match the new Alberta curriculum.

We collectively look forward to supporting teachers and inspiring students to consider careers in the forestry sector and continuing the stewardship of our forest resources in Alberta.

Contact

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