

ENERGY & WILDLIFE EDUCATION INSTITUTE

July 2 - 6, 2013



Inside Education's 2013 *Energy and Wildlife Education Institute* was a professional development opportunity for teachers from across Alberta. The program aimed to explore the relationship between energy development and wildlife in our province.

This adventure brought a group of highly dedicated and passionate teachers together to travel across Alberta, from Fort McMurray to Jasper. The program examined the province's incredible diversity of wildlife that shares the land with much of Alberta's petroleum production. The

group visited a variety of energy projects and learned how operations can impact wildlife. Through the program, teachers are empowered to share their findings with their schools, classes, and communities - expanding the program's reach far beyond the program itself.

Participants

23 dedicated teachers from across Alberta, and **one** from Saskatchewan, joined Inside Education on this professional development adventure.

These participants were selected from **80 applicants**,

chosen by their interest in expanding their understanding of the relationship between energy and wildlife.

"The Energy and Wildlife Institute affords the rare opportunity to meet with multiple stakeholders while experiencing the learning in a true inquiry-based learning format whereby (teachers) get to network and learn from and alongside each other."

**Laurel LaBar-Ahmed,
École Massey, Regina**

Program

The 2013 Energy and Wildlife Education Institute aimed to support teachers to learn more about the complex relationships between the energy sector and wildlife in northern Alberta. Our participants enjoyed five days of first-hand experiences, toured a number of facilities and met with a variety of experts. Through the consideration of multiple perspectives, including industry, non-profits, education, government and traditional land-users, the ultimate goal of the program was to inspire the participants to think critically about the issues and bring this information back to their students.

Program Goals

1. To learn how development of Alberta's vast energy resources impacts wildlife.
2. Get a first-hand look at some of the ways impacts are being mitigated and prevented.
3. Gain teaching tools and ideas to enhance energy and wildlife programming in the classroom.

Themes

Oil Sands Mining and Wildlife – The group flew over the Athabasca Oil Sands deposit and some of the associated mining sites. A visit to the Suncor site gave the teachers a behind-the-scenes look at a mining operation, a reclamation site and an introduction to the measures in place to reduce wildlife/development interactions.

In Situ Oil Sands Development and Wildlife – Through a tour of Connacher's steam-assisted gravity drainage facility (SAG-D) and speaking with

the team that works on site, participants got a clearer understanding of the different methods of oil sands extraction and potential impacts on wildlife.

Research in the Energy Sector – Experts spoke on current research studying the relationship between wildlife and energy development, including looking closer at the impacts on both caribou and burrowing owls.

Traditional Land Uses – A northern Alberta trapper shared the traditional activities of trapping and how energy development has changed the way in which this lifestyle has evolved over the years.

Working Together to Manage the Landscape – The group met with a member of a multi-stakeholder organization, which provided a great example of a group working together to understand environmental issues and make recommendations on solutions. They also visited a reclamation area and spoke directly with one of the Government of Alberta's land managers, who introduced the wildlife and land considerations made once a development has been completed.

The Role of Parks and Protected Areas – A visit to Jasper National Parks introduced participants to the role that parks play in protecting both wildlife and habitat, and in connecting students with nature.

Turning Ideas into Action – A variety of resources and activities were introduced to provide concrete ideas to bring the information gathered on the program back to the classroom and to turn those ideas into learning opportunities for students.



Feedback

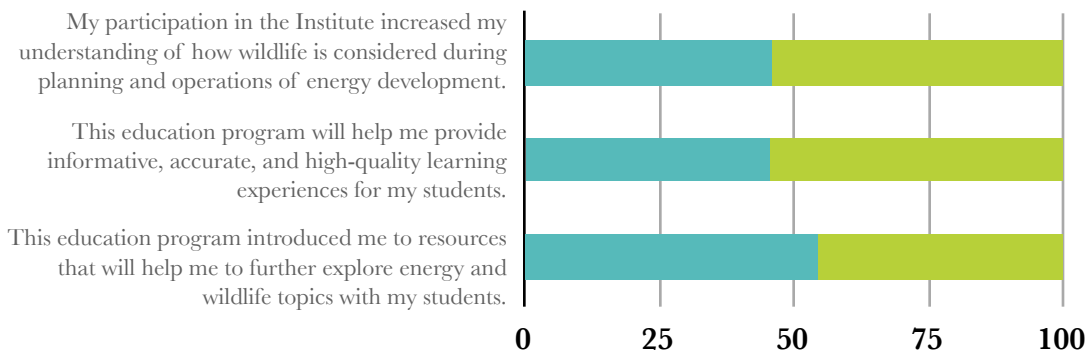
Inside Education continually strives to improve our education programming. To do this, we evaluate our teacher professional development programs through a number of lenses, one being a formal survey sent to program participants following the program. We have gathered the information below from the results of the *Education Institute* final survey. These results demonstrate a high level of satisfaction from program participants and the far-reaching impacts of the program. These results also speak to the value of this and future professional development programs.

“Trips like these are important for several reasons: gaining knowledge and understanding of multiple perspectives, building meaningful connections with other passionate teachers and having fun while learning... we try to do this for students so it’s great you do it for us.”

Caroline Sciarra • St Isabella School, Calgary

■ **Strongly Agree**
■ **Agree**
■ **Disagree**
■ **Strongly Disagree**

Education Institute Outcomes

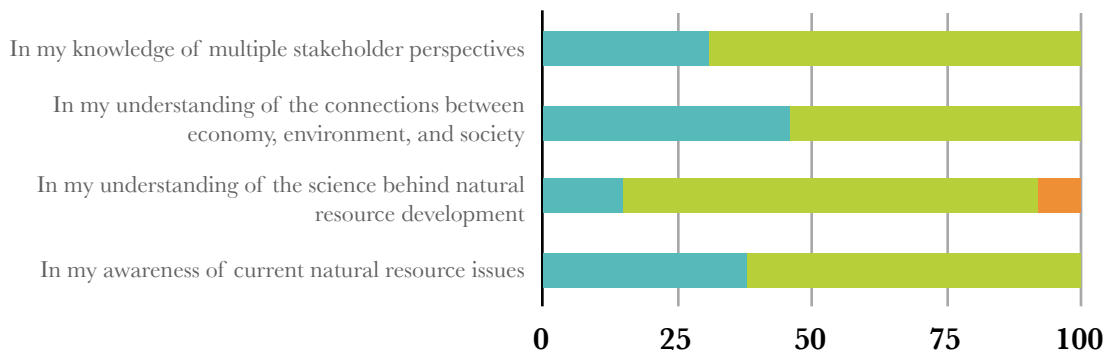


“It was a call to action for me to do more to be a better steward and to get my staff and students to become more thoughtful inhabitants of our great province.”

**Shelly Hamelin
Hillview Elementary School, High Prairie**

Topic confidence as a result of the program

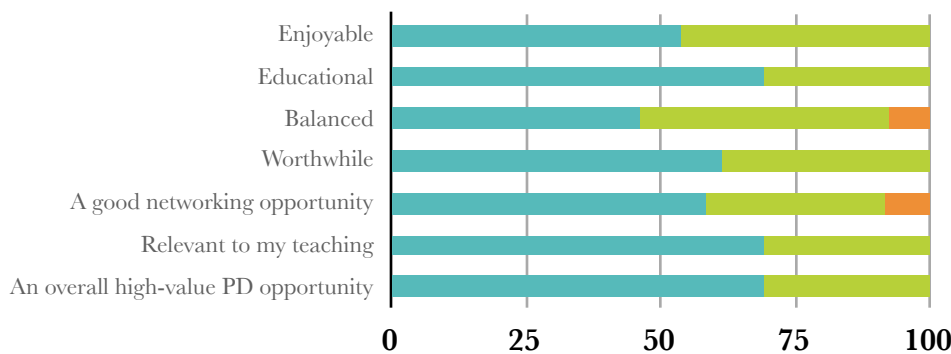
While keeping the education program’s theme of energy and wildlife in mind, I feel confident:



“I feel excited to attack my curriculum with renewed vigor and new plans.”

**Shauna Sudyk,
Lilian Schick School, Bon Accord**

In my opinion, the 2013 Energy and Wildlife Education Institute was:



Based on survey results, the impact of this professional development opportunity will be felt by over **900 students** across Alberta and Saskatchewan!

Program Partners

Inside Education would like to thank our program partners for making this professional development opportunity a success. The *2013 Energy and Wildlife Education Institute* would not have been possible without their time and support. These important relationships allow us to offer incredibly valuable professional learning experiences for teachers. Thank you to all of the organizations that provided expert speakers, site tours and resources for the *2013 Energy and Wildlife Education Institute*. A special thank you to the partners who provided the financial support that made this program possible:

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Summary

The *2013 Energy and Wildlife Education Institute* was an overwhelming success. After travelling across the province, from Fort McMurray to Jasper, participants were left with an understanding of the complex relationship between energy development and Alberta's wildlife, and were eager to share their excitement and learning with their students.

Professional development programs are one of the keystones of Inside Education's natural resource programming. They provide valuable opportunities and experiences for teachers to become immersed in the science, technology and issues behind natural resource topics in Alberta. These first-hand experiences, wherein participants are exposed to multiple perspectives, advance Inside Education's vision of fostering the next generation of critically thinking stewards of our environment and natural resources.

For more information please contact:

Steve McIsaac
Executive Director
Inside Education
smcisaac@insideeducation.ca
780-421-1497

11428-100 Avenue • Edmonton, AB T5K 0J4
www.insideeducation.ca
www.facebook.com/insideeducation

