

# 2015 Boreal Education Program Report



**October 1-3, 2015 Whitecourt, Alberta**

*Inside Education's 2015 Boreal Education Program was a hands-on learning opportunity to support teachers in bringing current, relevant and meaningful natural resource education to their classrooms.*

The *2015 Boreal Education Program* was a 3-day teacher professional development program designed to increase awareness and understanding of natural resource development in Alberta's Boreal region.

Alberta's boreal forest is a diverse natural region and a vital component of our environment and economy. Through this dynamic program the 28 teacher participants were exposed to multiple perspectives on a key topics such as caribou conservation, energy development, forestry and land management. The education workshop then provided context for taking the wealth of information gained back to the classroom to inspire our next generation of natural resource stewards and decision-makers.

# The Program

The three-day program began in St. Albert before traveling to Whitecourt. Participants had the opportunity to examine Alberta's Boreal region through presentations, outdoor activities, as well as discussions about forestry, energy development, and sustainability. As with all of Inside Education's programs, the final day workshop also examined opportunities to incorporate and apply the program content to the classroom – ultimately the program aim is to help Alberta students be informed citizens and stewards. A detailed program can be found in Appendix B.

## OCTOBER 1

### Alberta's Boreal Region

Teachers met with experts that provided the foundation of understanding for the program.

Themes included:

- An introduction to the natural region - flora, fauna and stakeholders
- Opportunities and challenges of land management in the Boreal
- The future of forested lands with an emphasis on species at risk and climate change

## OCTOBER 2

### Key topics that shape Boreal

Tours along with expert speakers highlighted current natural resource development including forestry and oil & gas. Participants also gained an understanding of local woodland caribou populations and heard community connections from Whitecourt Mayor Chichak.

## OCTOBER 3

### Classroom Connections

A comprehensive workshop that highlighted how to bring it back to the classroom. Teachers participated in reflective discussions, examined classroom resources, brainstormed lesson ideas and received learning resources including the *Voices of the Boreal* and *Forest Field Trip* video series.

## The Experts & Tours

Alex Drummond, University of Alberta

Rick Blackwood, Government of Alberta

Mike Norton, Natural Resources Canada

Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.

Maryann Chichak, Mayor of Whitecourt

Jesse Kirillo, Tailsman Energy/Repsol

Alison Ronson, Canadian Parks & Wilderness Association

### Tours

Millar Western's Sawmill, Pulp mill and Bioenergy facility

Huestis Demonstration Forest





# Program Participants

*Mark Agar, Chaparal School, Calgary*  
*Gary De Leeuw, Louis Riel School, Calgary*  
*Joan Erlandson, Maryview Elementary, Red Deer*  
*Heather Forrest, Silver Springs School, Calgary*  
*Abi Henneberry, Keenooshayo Elementary, St. Albert*  
*Tyng Ho, Robert Rundle Elementary School, St. Albert*  
*Paula Huddy, St. Joseph School, Calgary*  
*Les Kiffiak, Ernest Manning High School, Calgary*  
*Nicole Lamboo, Senator Patrick Burns School, Calgary*  
*Malcolm Landry, Robert Rundle, St. Albert*  
*Hans Lock, Calvin Christian School, Coalhurst*  
*Charlotte MacPherson-Levesque, Captain Nichola Goddard School, Calgary*  
*Patty Milz, Dr. Morris Gibson School, Okotoks*  
*Amanda Ocampo, Colonel Macleod School, Calgary*  
*Tasha Paauw, Guy Weadick Elementary School, Calgary*  
*Trina Powers, Duncan Cran Elementary School, Fort St. John, BC*  
*Christopher Rigby, Dr. Morris Gibson School, Okotoks*  
*Kaysi Ross, Colonel Macleod School, Calgary*  
*Mike Russo, Mackenzie Secondary School, Mackenzie, BC*  
*Penny Stone, St. Joseph School, Calgary*  
*Jenn Taggart, Bearspaw School, Calgary*  
*Shawna Tainsh, Hughenden School, Hughenden*  
*Laura Taylor, St. Angela School, Calgary*  
*Christine Todd, Duncan Cran Elementary School, For. St. John, BC*  
*Peggy Townsend, Crescent Heights High School, Calgary*  
*Bill Van Der Weide, Calvin Christian School, Coalhurst*  
*Michael Willing, Mamawi Atosketan Native School, Ponoka*  
*Colleen Wilson, Bowden Grandview School, Bowden*

*28 Teachers  
 from Alberta  
 and  
 Northeast BC*



**The education  
 extends beyond the  
 program itself.**  
 Teachers on this  
 program have an  
 estimated reach of  
**over 900 students!**

# Program Evaluation

Inside Education is excited to share the outstanding feedback received from teachers following the 2015 Boreal Education Program. The results below reaffirm Inside Education's approach to experiential professional development programs as an effective way to increase understanding of natural resource development in Alberta and support teachers in bringing multiple perspectives to the classroom.

*"This was the ultimate inquiry! I am so much more aware of all the initiatives being taken by stakeholders in the Boreal. Teaching kids about caribou, forestry, habitat, energy, & communities will help them become the critical thinkers we need."* Heather Forest, Silver Springs School, Calgary



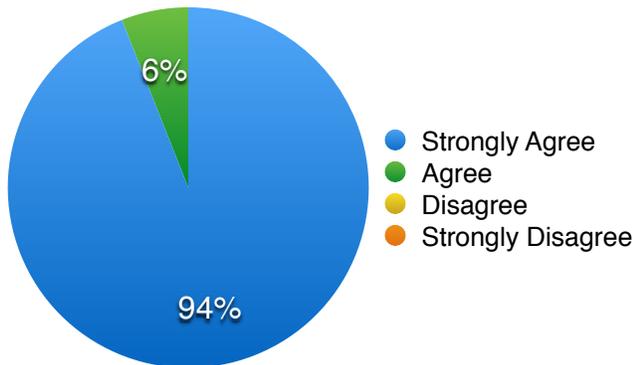
*"From this PD session I feel alive with wonder, engaged in teaching, curious to learn more, excited about possibilities and enthusiastic to share my new knowledge with students"*

Christine Todd, Duncan Cran Elementary, Fort St. John, BC

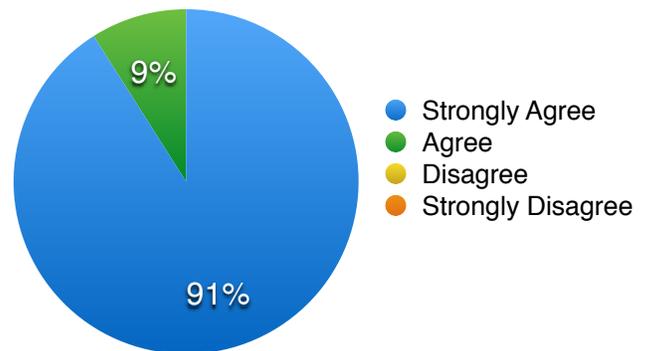


*"There are so many ways I thought of to use this info in the classroom. It is so helpful as a teacher, but also as an Albertan, to understand some of the key perspectives of our provinces stakeholders."* Tasha Paauw, Guy Weadick School, Calgary

This professional development program offered me information and experiences that I couldn't access elsewhere.



I am more comfortable discussing the opportunities and challenges surrounding natural resource development in Alberta in my classroom.



# Connecting to the Classroom

Participants to share how they plan to use the knowledge and experiences gained from the program in your classroom...

*"I plan on sharing with them the uniqueness of the Boreal forest and as environmental stewards how we should learn as much as we can. I plan on doing an exploration of the Boreal Forest plants, animals, interactions with students." Christine Todd, Duncan Cran Elementary, Fort St. John*

*"We talked about fragmentation and its impact on the caribou, the bioenergy initiatives to reduce impact on the environment, as well as how the foresters try to mimic natural forest fires when creating cut blocks. I continue to stress how complex and multi-faceted this issue is." Nicole Lamboo, Senator Patrick Burns School, Calgary*

*"As we are in Trees and Forests currently, we are beginning to discuss what are sustainable development choices for the students. The information will result in a unit plan that gives students a plot of land that they will design a town and have to develop it with sustainability as the focus." Mark Agar, Chaparral School, Calgary*

*"We have talked in my class about carbon stores and the importance of the Boreal Forest. I also used the video to discuss interactions and ecosystems." Colleen Wilson, Bowden Grandview Elementary, Bowden*



## Partnership Support

In addition to the support of the expert presenters and hosts, a special thank you to the following organizations for their financial support in making this program possible:



# Summary and Futures

Inside Education is proud of the success of the 2015 Boreal Education Program. There is a growing need for topical, pertinent and easily accessible natural resource education programs in Alberta, continued interest has been demonstrated by educators, partners, and presenters alike. It is with this that Inside Education is planning related programs including:

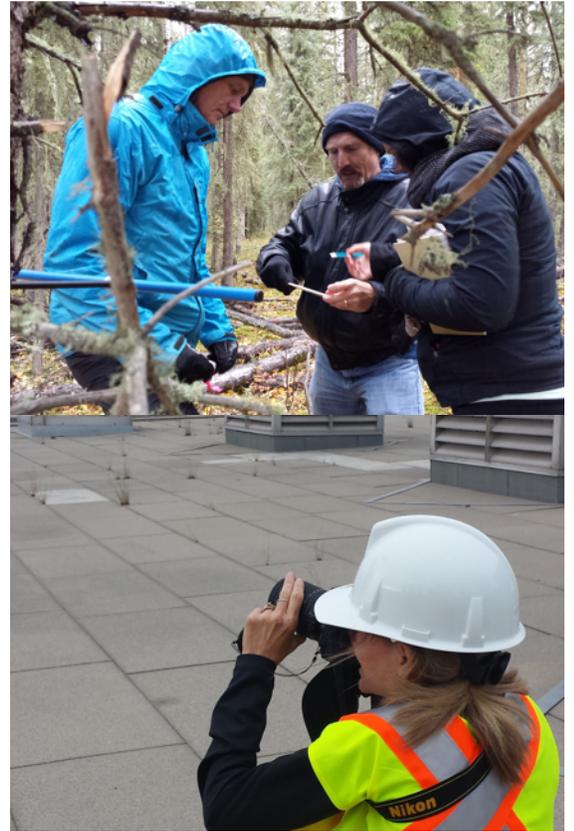
Navigate 2016: Youth Water and Environmental Leadership Summit

2016 Species at Risk Education Program

2016 Energy Innovations and Climate Education Program

Along with multiple classroom and demonstration forest field programs for students

Through these programs and learning materials, Inside Education fully supports teachers and inspires students across Alberta.



## For further information contact:

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**Inside Education Society of  
Alberta**

[www.insideeducation.ca](http://www.insideeducation.ca)



## 2015 Boreal Education Program

October 1-3, Whitecourt, Alberta

### Thursday, October 1st

#### **Welcome & Introductions** - *Inside Education*

Participants meet one another and Inside Education to officially open the program.

#### **Envisioning Alberta's Boreal Forest** — *Alex Drummond, University of Alberta*

Alex will provide an overview of the Boreal region; painting a picture of the unique ecology, natural resources and landscape.

#### **Natural Resource Management in the Boreal** - *Rick Blackwood, Government of Alberta*

Rick will address how the Alberta government approaches opportunities and challenges connected to resource development in the Boreal region.

#### **The Future of the Boreal** - *Mike Norton, Northern Forestry Centre (NRCAN)*

Mike will offer insight into the current research that is taking place in the Boreal and the exciting projects that will lead to improved development practices.

*board bus and travel to Whitecourt*

## **Friday, October 2nd**

### **Forestry in the Boreal** – *Millar Western*

Millar Western will take us on a tour of their Whitecourt operations: sawmill, pulp mill, and bio energy facility to give us a first hand look at how wood is processed.

### **Energy in the Boreal** – *Jesse Kirillo, Talisman Energy, A Repsol Co.*

Don will address how the oil and gas industry operates within this unique region.

### **Conservation in the Boreal** – *CPAWS NA*

Using Caribou as a case study, CPAWS Northern Alberta will discuss the cohesive management of the Boreal forest through their work as a partner in the innovative Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement.

*travel to the Huestis Demonstration Forest*

### **Exploring the Boreal Forest** – *Huestis Demonstration Forest*

Bringing along all that we have learned on the program we will visit a working Demonstration Forest to conduct a forest site assessment.

## **Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

### **Education Workshop** – *Inside Education*

After a packed program we will take some time to reflect on what we've learned and look ahead to how participants can bring these topics back to students in meaningful ways.

### **Program Wrap-Up, Evaluation and Farewell**

*travel back to the Enjoy Centre in St. Albert*