

Wetland Field Trips



May-June, 2023

Inside Education’s work brings us to all corners of the province and as such we acknowledge the Indigenous people who lived among and traveled through the land in the area currently known as Alberta. Inside Education is grateful for the opportunity to bring students and teachers to various sites across Treaty 6, 7, and 8 territories and throughout the 6 regions of Alberta’s Metis Nation. The deep respect Indigenous people have for the land and environment serve as a teaching and call to action for Inside Education to deliver programming that fosters the development of connection to the land and a sense of personal stewardship of the natural resources we use.

Overview

This spring our wetlands field trips were the most in-demand programs across the province as teachers sought out experiential programs to engage their students. Inside Education is proud to have been able to deliver this learning experience to over 5,400 students across Alberta. Students and teachers from urban, rural and Indigenous communities had the opportunity to participate in our Grade 5, Grade 8 or senior high programs at a wetland or riparian area in their community.

One challenge that we faced this spring was poor air quality and cancelled programs in evacuated communities as a result of the devastating wildfires in central and northern Alberta. Inside Education was able to offer modified in-school programs to the classes that were unable to join us because of the smoke and rescheduled another date outdoors when possible.



“Inside Education delivered a fantastic program that was relevant, engaging and fun. Thank you!”
 -Colleen Kiselyk, Fort Assiniboine School



The Participants

Inside Education received high interest for wetlands field trips, especially for our Grade 5 Wetland Ecosystems program. Additionally, we provided wetland education programming at two major special events in Calgary for elementary age students- the Mayor’s Environmental Expo and the Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation School Tours - as well as special Environment Week wetlands programming we coordinated in partnership with Repsol in Edson. Along with the student numbers listed below, Inside Education would also like to acknowledge and thank the **735** teachers, school staff and parent volunteers for dedicating the time to planning, accompanying and supporting these students in our programs.

Total # of classes	Total # of classes - modified programs	Total # of classes- special events	Total # of students	Total # of students- special events	# of elementary students	# of jr high students	# of sr high students
234	48	56	5,458	1,189	3,911	238	120

Students from **22** communities joined us this spring for wetland programs.

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|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Airdrie | Hinton |
| Calgary | Innisfail |
| Caroline | Morinville |
| Didsbury | Okotoks |
| Drumheller | Red Deer |
| Edmonton | Rocky Mountain House |
| Edson | Sexsmith |
| Fort Assiniboine | Sherwood Park |
| Fort McMurray | Spruce Grove |
| Fort Saskatchewan | Stoney Nakoda First Nation |
| Grande Prairie | Stony Plain |



Program Impact and Feedback

Following our field programs, a survey is sent to participating teachers to allow Inside Education to evaluate that our programs are meeting our goals to provide cost-effective programming that meets curriculum learning objectives and engages students of all grade levels in learning about wetland and riparian health and environmental stewardship.

Overall, the feedback received in the survey indicates that our wetland field programs are achieving our organizational goals. Our knowledgeable field staff, the use of ponds in the school's community where possible, and the ability to adapt programs to student needs and environmental factors play a vital role in the success of these programs. Teachers value the opportunity to bring their students outside and according to the survey, consider the wetland programs that Inside Education offer to be immersive, professional, well-organized, and connect extremely well to the curriculum.

“They got quite a kick out of the adaptations of the beaver being so tactile and visual in presentation. That was an unexpected and clever, fun way of demonstrating adaptations.” - Kerryl Padgett, Clara Tyner School, Edmonton



“The students were having conversations about lowering the fertilizers around the ponds as they tested it high. A pond that appeared very clean did not end up having best water quality for aquatic life.” - Prabhjeet, Khalsa School, Calgary

Summary and Futures

Inside Education is dedicated to providing high quality and accessible water and wetlands education throughout Alberta. In the coming school year, Inside Education expects to see a similar demand for these programs province-wide, water innovation days, and more. We look forward to supporting teachers and inspiring students to be stewards of our wetlands and watersheds.



Inside Education would like to extend our gratitude to our funding partners for their generous contributions that make these programs possible!



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