

## 2006 Emerald Award Recipients Announced

([http://www.emeraldfoundation.ca/whats\\_new/2006\\_emerald\\_award\\_recipients/document\\_view?printable=1](http://www.emeraldfoundation.ca/whats_new/2006_emerald_award_recipients/document_view?printable=1))

Edmonton (June 14, 2006) – The Alberta Emerald Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2006 Emerald Awards for environmental excellence presented on June 14, 2006.

From the 113 nominations received this year, 12 were recognized for their outstanding efforts to protect and preserve our environment. “These 12 recipients truly demonstrate leadership in the field of environmental stewardship,” says Paul Hunt, chair of the Foundation, “from the individual saving water at his hog production facility and sharing his results with others to students seeking environmentally friendly fuel for college farm equipment.”

A panel of knowledgeable judges with cross-sectoral experience chose the 12 recipients based on commitment to preservation, protection, enhancement or sustainability of the environment and the positive, tangible and long-term impact on the quality of the air, water or land; preservation of biological diversity; climate change/greenhouse gases; and public or corporate attitudes toward the environment.

The Alberta Emerald Foundation believes that showcasing environmental excellence sets an example for others to follow. “Take, for example, municipal recycling programs, renewable energy such as wind power and energy efficiency programs,” says Hunt. “In past years the Emerald Awards have recognized such programs as being innovative; now similar practices are the norm for many people. These are just a few examples of how leading by example can, and does, make a difference.”

### **Community Group**

#### **Little Red Deer River Watershed Initiative, Red Deer (Bill Franz @ 403.340.4247)**

Improving water quality with a focus on manure management

This partnership allows municipal, provincial and federal governments, industry and not-for-profit agencies to join forces to engage the Little Red Deer River watershed as a whole. The initiative works to reduce the potential negative impact on water quality by livestock production; to increase public profile of agriculture’s positive contribution to water quality; and to establish an effective means for multi-stakeholder participation in proactive, positive watershed health.

Activities include water quality sampling and analysis, fish inventory and spawning surveys and riparian health assessments. Agricultural producers in the watershed have constructed more than 35 cost shared projects, some of which have been featured

demonstration sites on annual tours. Recently, a Watershed Health Report provided information on the health of the uplands, water quality, riparian areas and biodiversity.

## **Climate Change**

### **Sterling Homes, Okotoks (Keith Paget @ 403.212.6337)**

Using a combination of proven and new technologies to achieve environmental savings

Using a combination of proven and new technologies to achieve environmental savings, Drake Landing Solar Community is a collection of 52, R2000 and Built Green™ Alberta certified homes built by Sterling Homes in Okotoks. These homes derive 90% of the space heating energy required through a unique system of 800 solar collectors that use bore-hole thermal energy storage technology. It is the first of its kind in North America. Homes also have solar domestic hot water systems which save 60% of the energy normally required for this domestic need.

Typical Canadian homes using natural gas produce six tonnes of GHG emissions per year. Drake Landing saves five tonnes of GHG emissions per year realizing 83% savings per home. Following environmental conservation and sustainability initiatives in the community of Okotoks, this neighbourhood, a partnership of Sterling Homes, Town of Okotoks, United Communities, ATCO Gas and Natural Resources Canada provides Canadians with responsible, comfortable shelter.

## **Large Business**

### **EnCana Corporation (Contact: Barbara Zach at 403.645.5531)**

Eliminating flaring and hydrogen sulphine (H<sub>2</sub>S) emissions

Encana Corporation's Bantry gas processing facility is the world's first to introduce and commercially operate a new biological process technology that safely and efficiently removes H<sub>2</sub>S (sour gas) from natural gas streams. The process addresses the potential environmental, health and safety impacts of natural gas developments containing H<sub>2</sub>S by converting it into elemental sulphur.

This innovative technology has introduced a fresh solution to the long-standing issue of H<sub>2</sub>S emissions and enhanced stakeholder support for bio-technology alternatives, opening the door for other industry members to implement this environmentally friendly process. Since its introduction, the technology has performed beyond expectation: eliminating flaring (even during facility start-up); improving sulphur recovery

efficiencies with rates exceeding 99.5%; and purifying the natural gas stream to sales specifications.

## **Government Institution**

### **Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (AESAs) Program (Laura Ung @ 780.427.3819)**

Supporting environmentally sustainable growth

The goal of the AESA Program is to develop and deliver collaborative initiatives resulting in the environmentally sustainable growth of Alberta's farm, ranch and agri-food processing industry. The Program identifies and promotes practical, effective solutions for existing challenges while assessing emerging environmental issues. With AESA funding, municipalities, producers, first nations groups, environmental organizations, agri-food processors and other agencies concerned with environmental stewardship in agriculture are finding better ways to meet industry challenges.

Currently, AESA works in partnership with 40 community-based groups delivering environmentally sustainable agriculture programs across Alberta. As a result, there is increasing awareness and action by Alberta's farm and ranching communities to improve the environment at a local level. AESA also supports water and soil quality benchmarking and monitoring, enabling future measurement of the impact of agriculture on the environment.

Education: School

Riverdale Elementary School, Edmonton (Raquel Feroe @ 780.421.0975)

Walk the Prairie Grass Labyrinth to enter the Naturescape - a meditative journey to an urban nature experience

Riverdale Elementary school has created a native plant demonstration site and outdoor classroom where community and school share and learn about sustainable landscapes. Native trees, shrubs and forbs create a diverse habitat. Greening, composting, water recycling and pesticide-free plant maintenance reduce green house gas emissions and habituate naturescape users to sustainable practices. Teachers integrate curriculum in the naturescape classroom.

Student enthusiasm has pulled teachers, parents and community together and extraordinary levels of partner support have built, and keep building, Riverdale School's naturescape success. Students will plant an organic garden this spring and a rain water

collection system has been approved and designed. Students and community volunteers have dug, planted, watered and mulched; taken courses in composting and native plant care; built log benches, composters, bird houses, butterfly puddles and bat houses; and shared what they have learned with other communities.

### **Education: Other Organization**

#### **Strathcona Wilderness Centre, Sherwood Park (Jean Funk @ 780.922.6099)**

Outdoor recreation as an approach to environmental education

The Strathcona Wilderness Centre improves public and corporate understanding of the environment and encourages environmentally sustainable practices through education. Programs and park services offer outdoor recreation and survival skills, environmental and ecological education, team building, nature awareness and appreciation and teen leadership.

Programs and spontaneous park use support individuals as they develop their appreciation and understanding of natural environments; demonstrate positive behavioural changes towards environmental practices and conservation; commit to being more active in the outdoors; and promote the protection, understanding and sharing of the natural world.

Since 1985, the Centre has provided environmental education to over 275,000 participants and offered outdoor experiences of cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking and hiking to 18,000 individuals. Corporate meetings at the Centre provide opportunities for participants to retreat to a natural setting and day campers explore the Centre's land and lake.

### **Small Business**

#### **Calibre Environmental Ltd., Calgary (Contact: Dean Brawn at 403.287.7726)**

Recycling industrial and commercial paint

In 2003, when Calibre Environmental began operations, most Alberta municipalities were disposing of post-consumer paints through the Swan Hills hazardous waste facility. Calibre identified this as an opportunity with The City of Calgary.

In September 2004 Calibre obtained a contract to process the City of Calgary's post-consumer paint and began searching for alternatives for latex paints. In the first year, Calibre saved 50,000 gallons of latex paint from incineration and nearly 100 tons of metal from the landfill.

In 2005, Calibre embarked on a marketing campaign to launch 14 colours of premium quality, 100% recycled ecocoat latex paint to the retail market. Calibre continues to improve the viability of paint recycling and hopes to be an instrumental part of a future provincial paint stewardship program.

### **Individual Commitment**

**Edgar T. and Jeanne Jones, Edmonton (Please call 780.951.5051 for contact info)**

A lifetime developing awareness and educating North Americans about conservation

Edgar (Eddie) and Jeanne Jones have used their passion and their incredible images of birds – pictures both still and moving – to create awareness and educate people of all ages about conservation. They have travelled across North America, giving talks, serving as conduits of information from one organization to another, facilitating communication and mobilizing an extended network of support among members of the conservation community.

Edgar's meticulous record keeping, with supporting history, as he helped band approximately 115,000 birds covering over 310 species, has had significant impact on the scientific data base in terms of population studies, breeding areas, migration routes and longevity.

The Jones' have provided extensive service to a number local community groups as well, including the Wagner Natural Area, the Provincial Museum and the University of Alberta.

### **Corporate or Institutional Leadership**

**E. B. (Buck) Cunningham, Magrath (Brian Meller, Lethbridge Community College @ 403.382.6991)**

A visionary pioneer in environmental and conservation enforcement education

As one of Alberta's first fisheries biologists with the provincial government and later a naturalist with Parks Canada, Buck Cunningham recognized the need for an educational program for resource officers and technicians that combined biological and physical sciences with law enforcement. Buck joined Lethbridge Community College in 1969 and, based on his own vision and initiative, developed the Environmental Sciences program which was launched in 1971.

The first of its kind in the province and the only applied degree in conservation enforcement in Canada, the program currently boasts 350 students annually, 15 faculty and thousands of graduates working in environmental fields throughout Canada.

Now retired, Buck resides in Magrath, AB, volunteering in many local conservation efforts including a nature reserve and trail, bluebird nesting boxes, goose nesting platforms, winter pheasant feeding and a northern leopard frog reintroduction program.