



**Alberta
Emerald
Foundation**

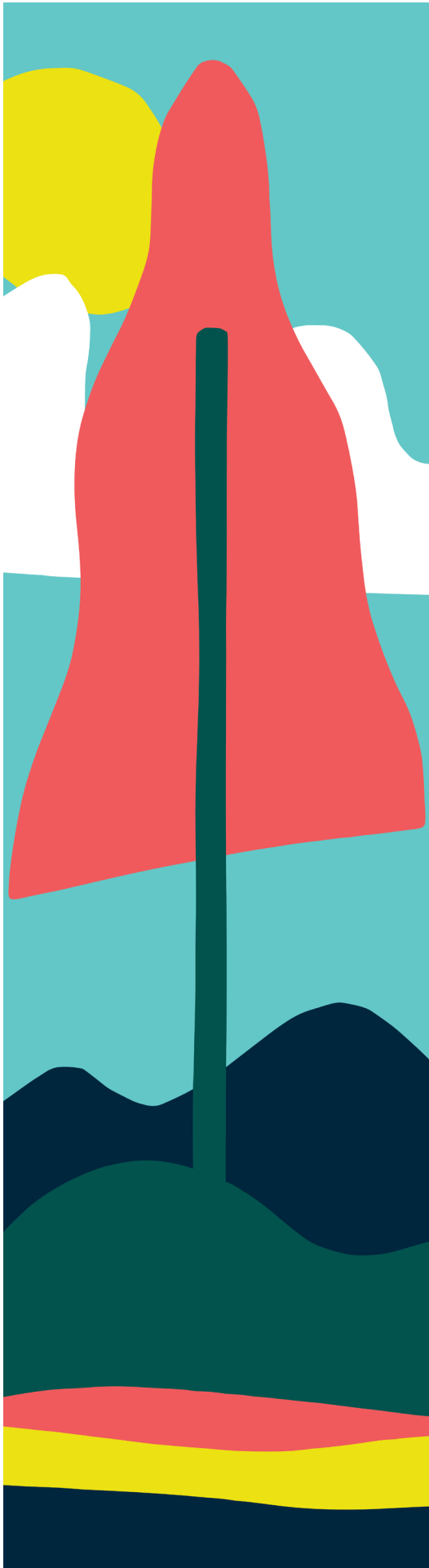
Showcasing, inspiring, and empowering
Alberta's environmental achievements.



Annual Report

2019–20

emeraldfoundation.ca



Mission

To recognize and celebrate
Alberta's environmental achievements.

Vision

To inspire environmental excellence
and improvement.

Values

- Promoting environmental leadership.
- Communicating and collaborating with others.
- Ensuring the integrity and credibility of the Foundation.
- Engaging the next generation.

We are Alberta's environmental good-news storytellers.

We are committed to providing year-round programming that engages, informs, and emboldens environmental stewardship in our province. What began as the Emerald Awards in 1991, our flagship program, has evolved into a 12-month conversation.

We have expanded our capacity and programming into a robust communications strategy that showcases our province's environmental achievements, and funding opportunities that educate and empower Alberta's next generation. This progression allows for a larger positive environmental impact that benefits individuals and communities all across our province. We do this through the generous support of our sponsors who are dedicated to creating a bright future for our province and our planet.

We acknowledge and honour that we operate on Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 territories, of which we have been beneficiaries since their signing. We extend our hands in peace and friendship to all Indigenous peoples who have made these places their homes since time immemorial.

We honour the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals. We believe in embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and welcome those from all walks of life, regardless of race, colour, gender identity, sex, ancestry, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or expression, age, marital status, or disability.

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Executive Committee

Chair

Mark Brostrom

Director, City Environmental Strategies, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development, Economic & Environmental Sustainability

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Consultant, Torque Communications

Past-Chair/

Resource Development Committee Co-Chair

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President, ETCON Environmental Services Ltd.

Treasurer

Rebecca Grant

Finance Advisor, LNGCanada Pipeline

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Senior Environmental Coordinator, Infrastructure Supports and Operations, Edmonton Public Schools

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Director, Sustainable Development Integration – ConocoPhillips Canada

Katherine Rogers

Energy Extension Coordinator – Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Government of Alberta

Theresa Wynnyk

Company of Women on the Screen Inc.

Staff

Executive Director

Gregory Caswell

Communications & Outreach Manager

Emma Crandell

Community Engagement & Development Coordinator

Lauren Calleja



Board Reports

Chair

MARK BROSTROM

The AEF has undergone many transitions this year from a staffing standpoint. The Foundation welcomed a new Executive Director, Gregory Caswell, and Communications & Outreach Manager, Emma Crandell. We also invested in the new position of Community Engagement and Development Coordinator, Lauren Calleja, to support our fundraising efforts during these challenging times.

The team has streamlined our programs, elevated our presence, and focused on achieving our mission of being our province's environmental good-news storytellers. Feedback from our community has been positive with many remarking that it feels like new life has been breathed into the AEF.

Both the staff and board have risen to the challenges of navigating the evolving landscape that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented. They have skillfully pivoted in the delivery of our events and our strategies to ensure that we are able to continue to serve our community through unprecedented times.

As we enter our 30th anniversary, we are grateful to our sponsors, donors, and funders for their support of our programs. The future is bright as we renew our commitment to our community to showcase their achievements and inspire others to become environmental stewards.

Communications

CHAIR: LEE FUNKE

MEMBERS: ALYSSA BELANGER, MORTIMER CAPRILES, GREGORY CASWELL, EMMA CRANDELL

For our 29th anniversary, we refreshed the Sharing Stories Communications Strategy by bringing content creation in-house and relying on social media for audience engagement. Working collaboratively with our partner, Hoopla Media, we launched the Emerald Speakers Series, What On EARTH Can We Do? podcast, and Emerald Speakers Series. All resulted in strong audience engagement, and elevated awareness of our Emerald recipients and our Foundation.

This change also allowed us to increase the amount of community events that we held. In October, we held the Emerald Documentary Series Premiere at Edmonton's historic Garneau Theatre, and an online Emerald Speakers Series for Earth Day on April 22, 2020. While the Emerald Speakers Series was initially intended to be held in a theatre, the move to online was in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It allowed us the opportunity to experiment with online events before we held our first-ever online Emerald Awards. These events were so successful that we have incorporated them into our annual programming.

Additionally, we saw an increase in followers on all of our social media platforms as well as several features on our recipients in local newspapers. We are excited to see an increase in interest in our Foundation and our programs, and anticipate that this will continue with our continued focus on quality content and events.



Finance

TREASURER: REBECCA GRANT

This past year for Alberta Emerald Foundation has been one of adaptation. With the current external climate, the Foundation has had to quickly change ways of working and execution of planned events. The Foundation was able to successfully see this as an opportunity and reshape how they carried out events such as 2020 Emerald Awards through a virtual environment. This created an opportunity for the Foundation to continue to expand on their successful social media presence across the province. In addition, the Foundation has taken this challenge and turned it into an opportunity to look for creative and sustainable sponsorships that will set them up for long term success. Overall, the Foundation continues to be nimble in this new environment and we are excited to see how we adapt to the opportunities of 2021.

Resource Development

CHAIRS: ANDY ETMANSKI & KARI MCDONALD

MEMBERS: LAUREN CALLEJA, GREGORY CASWELL, PETER KONING, KATHERINE ROGERS, THERESA WYNNYK

Mirrored by the year of change and transition experienced by the Foundation, the Resource Development Committee also experienced a year of change and flexibility. Supported by significant efforts by Foundation staff to ensure budgetary restraints were maximized, the RDC Committee continued efforts to broaden the base of financial support. Activities such as moving Foundation events to on-line venues, have significantly decreased the costs associated with events. There has been a related decrease however in the funding opportunities.

Other changes over the past year, including the addition of staff resources Lauren Calleja in February, have expanded the scope of resource and relationships pursuit programs. This increase in efforts is supported by the Committee as it is reflective of the nature of the emerging “non-profit” support network in Alberta. As the Foundation continues to proactively reflect the changing financial dynamics in the Province, the scale of support/donations is changing. The Foundation is consequently changing the scope of the supporter opportunities and list of potential supporters. Further changes to the “interface” with the Foundation continue to enhance the linkages to potential financial and other supporters. For example, the monthly donors opportunity, has the potential to provide a solid base of financial support for the Foundation.

Challenges for the upcoming year will be met by continuing to expand the nature and scope of supporters. It is expected that future financial challenges will continue, particularly in anticipation of the COVID related funding coming to an end in the very near future.

Governance

CHAIR: MAEGAN LUKIAN

MEMBERS: MARK BROSTROM, PAMELA BRYAN, GREGORY CASWELL, STUART CHAMBERS, JOANN JAMIESON

As per the annual review schedule, the Governance Committee has reviewed and updated a prioritized list of AEF terms of reference and policies over the past year. The list includes the Board of Directors, Governance Committee, Honorary Council and Emerald Awards Judging Terms of Reference, in addition to the Board Diversification Statement. Other reviewed and updated items include the Board Recruitment and Risk Management Policies as well as the Board Skills Matrix.

The committee also worked to complete a new Executive Director Annual Review document and Risk Management Matrix, as well as convert the existing Consolidated Fundraising Policy into a concise policy and detailed operational manual. Newly drafted items include the Emerald Awards Category Refresh Committee and Tell Your Story Terms of Reference in response to recent AEF initiatives.

The committee will continue to work to update and develop new policies over the 2021 year to help the AEF pursue the goal of becoming Imagine Canada certified.







29th Annual Emerald Awards

For the past 29 years, the Emerald Awards have showcased and inspired our province's environmental achievements across all sectors, from business, education, government, nonprofit, and beyond.

Nominations for the 29th Annual Emerald Awards opened November 1, 2019 and closed mid-February, 2020. We received 36 nominations from all corners of the province in 10 categories of our 12 categories.

With the onset of COVID-19, the AEF was required to move swiftly to innovate how we held this year's Emerald Awards judging session, shortlist announcement, and celebration.

Emerald Awards Judging Session

In past years, our judges were assigned a selection of nominations to review prior to our in-person judging session. The panel would then gather for a two-day in-person session to select the recipients and finalists. We would also thank them for their contributions through a dinner at a local restaurant.

With COVID-19 restrictions in place, the AEF adopted Zoom for the first time to conduct our in-person judging session. Although the panel was initially concerned their conversations would be challenging on a new platform, they unanimously concluded that the incorporation of Zoom was an improvement to their experience. Some had just returned from out-of-country travel and were in quarantine, while others appreciated not having to travel to Edmonton from their home city. Their conversation did not suffer. In place of their dinner, the panel requested the AEF make a donation on their behalf to a food bank. The AEF donated \$1,250 to Food Banks Alberta.

Our judges selected 22 nominations to appear as part of our shortlist, 10 of which were announced as the recipients at the 29th Annual Emerald Awards on June 2, 2020.

Emerald Awards Shortlist Announcement

The Emerald Awards judging session concluded with a public announcement of the 29th Annual Emerald Awards Shortlist. Initially planned as a public event, the AEF hired Hoopla Media to create a prerecorded video, and was joined by event sponsor, Alberta Recycling Management Authority. The video was launched on emerald.foundation.ca and the AEF's social media on March 27, 2020 with an extraordinary viewership. The video was viewed more than 700 times on YouTube and reached over 29K people via Facebook.





The show must go on...but in a different way.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the AEF made many updates to the 29th Annual Emerald Awards celebration. Our board unanimously agreed that we move forward with our event, but with an online version. With the support of FMAV, Details! Convention + Event Management, and Hoopla Media, we presented the 29th Annual Emerald Awards on June 2 at 4 p.m. via webcast on emeraldfoundation.ca.

The event was hosted by Rapid Fire Theatre alumni Julian Faid, and featured live artist Giselle Denis and poet Audrey Lane Cockett. The webcast was attended by approximately 550 people, and was viewed across our province, country, and internationally. The YouTube video of the event is nearing 200 views, making this the most well-attended Emeralds to date.

Another major update to this year's celebration was an update to the award itself. In place of our trophy, we provided our recipients with a grant to assist in the continuation of their work, or to donate to an environmental charity of their choice. All recipients received \$2,000, excluding Education which received \$5,000. We thank Syncrude Canada Ltd and ABCRC for supporting us with a portion of the grant prizes. The recipients were also profiled in the Sharing Stories Communications Strategy.

All those shortlisted for an Emerald Award received a printed certificate and digital logo designed by Studio Hazel to showcase their participation and success.



2019 Emerald Judges

The AEF entrusts an independent panel of judges representing Alberta's diverse sectors with the selection of our Emerald Awards shortlist and recipients.

The panel is tasked with reviewing all nominations with each member volunteering upwards of 100 hours of each year.

We thank our panel of judges for contributing their time and expertise to this crucial role.

Monique Dietrich

*Watershed Adaptation and Resilience Branch,
Alberta Environment & Parks*

Sithara Fernando

Norquest College

Christine Hornung

Ecologist and Visual Artist

Andrew Kohlenberg

*Program Founder,
Environmental Studies,
NorQuest College*

Sarah Levine

*Associate
McLennan Ross LLP*

Ed McConaghy

John Parkins

*Professor, Department of
Resource Economics &
Environmental Sociology,
University of Alberta*

Debbie Rheinstein

*Teacher
Queen Elizabeth High
School*

Ryan Smith

*Senior Environmental
Planner, Shell Canada Ltd*

Yvette Thompson

*Climate Change
Adaptation Strategy
Coordinator,
Government of Alberta*

Kathryn Wagner

Inside Education



29th Annual Emerald Award Recipients

Community Group or Nonprofit Association: Grassroots

Agroforestry & Woodlot Extension
Society: Trees Are The Solution
Edmonton

Community Group or Nonprofit Association: Large Organization

presented by Syncrude Canada Ltd.
Municipal Climate Change Action Centre
Edmonton

Education

presented by ABCRC
Rocky View Schools –
Ecole Manachaban Middle School:
W.I.L.D. Program for Outdoor Adventuring
Airdrie

Emerald Challenge: Climate Change

Cochrane High School Sustainable
Development Committee: Sustainable
Development Project
Phase IX Rooftop Solar Array
Cochrane

Government Institution

First Canadian Municipal Long Range
Electric Buses
City of St. Albert

Large Business

Edmonton Convention Centre –
Sustainability at the Edmonton
Convention Centre
Edmonton

Lifetime Achievement

Pres Winter
Viking

Public Education & Outreach

presented by Government of Alberta
Inside Education –
Youth Environmental Leadership
Summits
Edmonton

Shared Footprints Award

presented by Alberta Real Estate Fdtn.
Sans façon | Watershed+ | City of
Calgary | AECOM | O2 Planning + Design
| Source2Source | Wilco Contractors
Southwest Inc: Dale Hodges Park
Calgary

Small Business

EcoGrowth Environmental:
Waste to Energy Project
(ConocoPhillips Surmont Plant)
Calgary

**Learn more about the
recipients and shortlist!**



Sharing Stories

With the ever-changing media landscape, the AEF decided to bring content creation in-house this year and launched the Emerald Documentary Series, the *What On EARTH Can We Do?* podcast, and the revived Emerald Speakers Series.

Emerald Documentary Series

The first season of the Emerald Documentary Series features the 28th Annual Emerald Award recipients in their own documentary short created by Hoopla Media. The series launched at the Emerald Documentary Series Premiere held at Garneau Theatre in Edmonton on October 6, 2019. This special event was attended by 125 people, all eager to see our province's EcoHeroes on the big screen. The videos are now available on our website, and have been viewed over 3,000 times to date

Emerald Speakers Series

Our version of TED Talks, the Emerald Speakers Series invites our Emerald recipients to share an inspiring presentation based on their award-winning work with a live audience.

Initially, we planned to hold a special event at MacEwan University's Theatre Lab on Earth Day, April 22 through a partnership with City of Edmonton's Change For Climate. With the onset of COVID-19, we were required to innovate the event to an online platform. We are pleased to report that we successfully held our public event via Zoom on Earth Day as planned, and premiered three pre-recorded talks and one live presentation. This event was attended by 50 viewers from around Alberta, with some out-of-province representation as well.

What On EARTH Can We Do?

Our new podcast hosted by Executive Director Gregory Caswell and Colleen Nuc from Hoopla Media invites our audience to an environmental conversation with our Emerald Award recipients. Each episode tackles a different theme, including food waste, land reclamation, renewable energy, recycling, the youth movement, and more.

The podcast launched on January 10, 2020 and has since been downloaded over 1,000 times and has garnered a respectable social media following. It can be accessed on our website, iTunes, and Spotify.

Other initiatives

In addition to the content we created this year, the AEF maintains a strong presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram) and was pleased to see an increase in our followers on all platforms this year. We also publish our monthly newsletter, Elevate, which now has just under 2,000 subscribers and an average 26% open rate, well above industry standards.

Additionally, the AEF purchased ad placements promoting our programs in Avenue Magazine, Alberta Views, and on Edmonton's LRT and Calgary's C-Train.







Youth Grants

The AEF believes in supporting Alberta's young people in their environmental education and efforts. In addition to our Youth Environmental Engagement Grant program and EcoPitch, 2019 marked the launch of the Emerald Educational Engagement Grant Program.

This year, our Youth Grants were met with many challenges including a decline in funding and school closures resulting from COVID-19. As a result, we were unable to hand out our target of 100 Youth Environmental Engagement Grants, and had to cancel our EcoPitch competition.

However, we are pleased to report that we successfully distributed over \$25K in funding through our Youth Grants programs, supporting approximately 4,400 young people in 19 Albertan communities.

Youth Environmental Engagement Grants

This granting stream supports young people 11 years of age and under with their environmental education.

Applications can be submitted in the following categories:

GREEN BUILDERS: For the development of new green spaces or the enhancement and improvement of existing ones. Includes community gardens, outdoor classrooms, and urban naturalization projects.

GREEN SCHOLARS: For educational experiences that result in environmental learning, inspiration, and personal/professional development. Includes presentations, experiments, and field trips.

GREEN ENERGIZERS: For the initiation of renewable energy or energy conservation projects, or the enhancement and improvement of existing ones.

GREEN GUARDIANS: For the protection, restoration and/or maintenance of natural habitats and areas. Also for the creation of new recycling or composting programs, or the enhancement and improvement of existing ones.

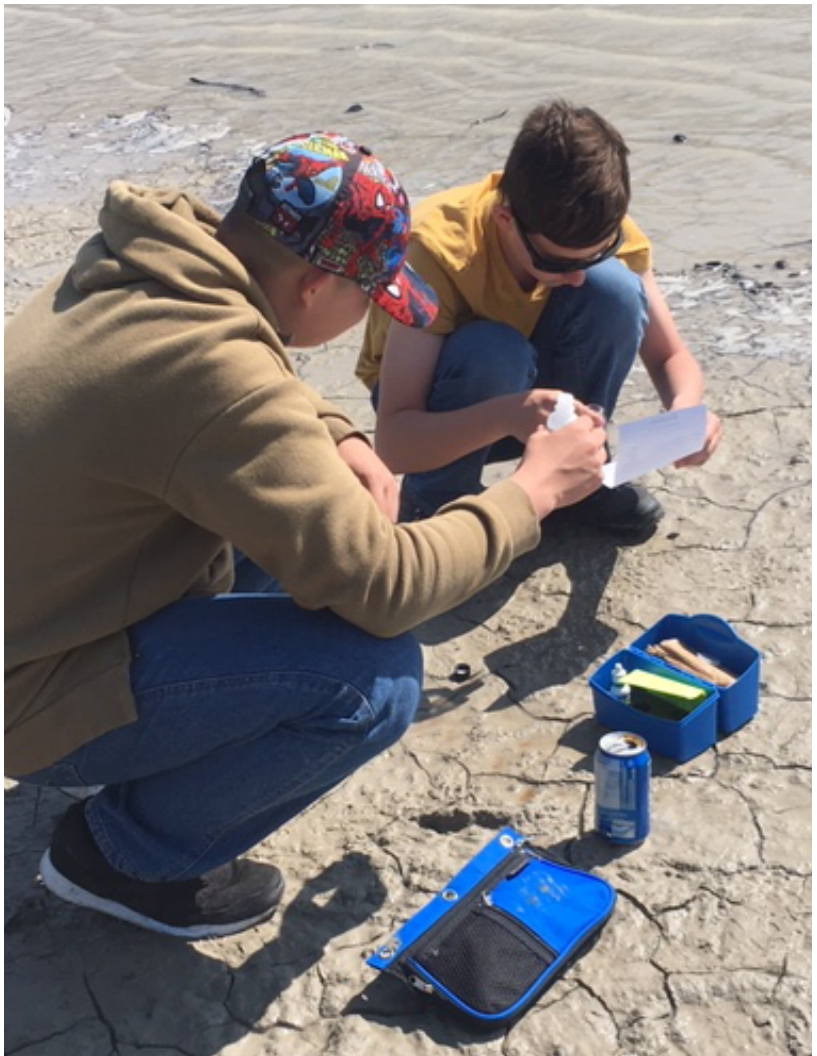
EcoPitch

Our version of Dragon's Den, but with less money and nicer judges, this public event welcomes student groups to pitch their environmental dream project live to a panel of judges. The winning teams receive a grant to make their project a reality.

Emerald Educational Engagement Grants

Our newest granting stream for Junior High and older, the Emerald Educational Engagement Grant program invites groups to binge-watch the Emerald Documentary Series, participate in conversations with the support of study guides, and pitch an environmental project based on one of the videos.





Thank you to our sponsors.

Our Partners



- Alberta Recycling Management Authority
- Hoopla Media
- Studio Hazel
- Calgary Foundation
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- McLennan Ross LLP
- Naheyawin
- Press + Post





Alberta
Emerald
Foundation

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The AEF is a registered nonprofit charity CRA BN 13380 0771 RR0001

