



**Alberta  
Emerald  
Foundation**

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

# Annual Report

## 2020-2021

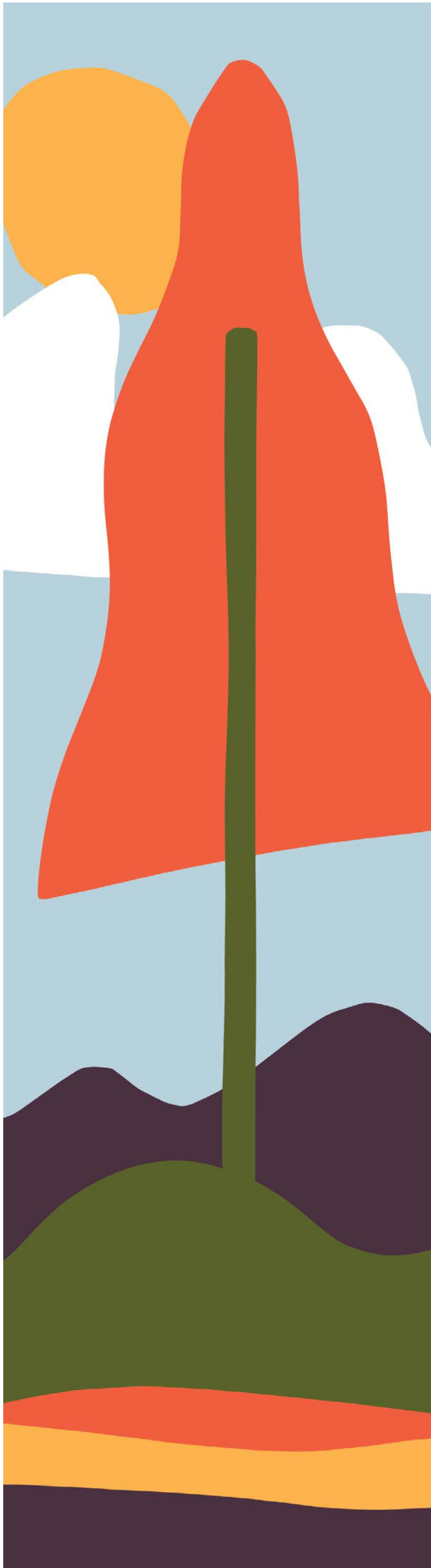
Celebrating

**30**  
**YEARS** 

as Alberta's  
environmental  
good-news  
storytellers.

Since 1992

[emeraldfoundation.ca](https://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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# Board & Staff

## Executive Committee

### Chair

Mark Brostrom

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

### Vice-Chair/ Communications Committee Chair

Lee Funke

*Consultant, Torque  
Communications*

### Past-Chair/ Resource Development Committee Co-Chair

Andy Etmanski

*President, ETCON  
Environmental Services Ltd.*

### Treasurer

Rebecca Grant

*Finance Advisor,  
LNGCanada Pipeline*

### Governance Committee Chair

Maegan Lukian, B.Sc., EP

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

### Resource Development Committee Co-Chair

Kari McDonald

*Cheif Operating Officer  
Yellow Bike Solutions Inc.*

## Directors

Alyssa Belanger

*Watershed Coordinator –  
Lesser Slave Watershed  
Council*

Mortimer Capriles

*Director of Sustainability  
and Innovation – Goodwill  
Industries of Alberta*

Dick Ebersohn

*Manager, Climate  
Change & Environment –  
Environmental & Safety  
Management, City of  
Calgary*

JoAnn Jamieson

*Partner –  
McLennan Ross LLP*

Peter Koning

*Director, Sustainable  
Development Integration –  
ConocoPhillips Canada*

Katherine Rogers

*Graduate Student,  
University of Alberta,  
Department of REES*

Theresa Wynnyk

*Company of Women on the  
Screen Inc.*

April Moon

*Asset Performance  
Liquids Pipelines –  
Enbridge*

Debbie Rheinstein

*Teacher for Calgary Board  
of Education*

## Staff

### Executive Director

Gregory Caswell

### Communications & Outreach Coordinator

Sabrina Huot





# Board Reports

## Chair

### **MARK BROSTROM**

The Foundation's Executive Director, Gregory Caswell, and new Communications & Outreach Coordinator, Sabrina Huot have had a busy, productive and successful year as they continue to navigate the Foundation operations during these challenging times. The team continues to streamline our programs, elevate the presence of the Foundation, with the focus on achieving our mission of being our province's environmental good-news storytellers. Our community also continues to provide positive feedback as the Alberta Emerald Foundation evolves with these changing times.

Both the staff and board have risen to the challenges of navigating the evolving landscape that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present us with. 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.

With the completion of our milestone 30th year of operation, we are grateful to our sponsors, donors, and funders for their support of our programs. The future is bright as we commit to our community to showcase their achievements and inspire others to become environmental stewards.

## Governance

**CHAIR:** MAEGAN LUKIAN

**MEMBERS:** MARK BROSTROM, GREGORY CASWELL, JOANN JAMIESON, STUART CHAMBERS

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.



### Resource Development

**CHAIRS:** ANDY ETMANSKI & KARI MCDONALD

**MEMBERS:** GREGORY CASWELL, PETER KONING, KATHERINE ROGERS, THERESA WYNNYK, APRIL MOON

After another challenging year of due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Resource Development Committee (RDC) is proud to share of the ways that the Foundation has been able to make progress despite barriers and fiscal challenges. This year, the Foundation focused on creating new access points for individuals, organizations, and business to be brought into activities of the Foundation through the Tell Your Story series and Webinar Wednesday program. Through the establishment and maintenance of the robust year-round communications plan and strategy, donations and contributions have been shown to rise through participation in events throughout the year instead of focussed on certain parts of the year (i.e., the Emerald Awards). This investment into innovation by the Foundation places the Alberta Emerald Foundation in a role as a centre for resources, and a community hub for other non-profits and environmental partners to learn from and collaborate with. This allows for the important messages and inspirational work that the AEF highlights and uplifts to reach further and more diverse audiences, which further assists the Foundation in gaining a more diverse sponsorship that will be able to see their target audience captured under AEF outreach activities. Furthermore, this strategy has allowed for “Alumni” of the Foundation’s Emerald Awards to stay connected and involved with the Foundation’s activities, and creating opportunities for previous Award Winners to “give back” to the Foundation through donations and support.

The RDC has worked together to build-up support for the Foundation, relying on “in-house” skills and abilities to engage with donors and diversify funding resources. A major change over the previous years has been the approach to sponsorship levels, allowing for a more diverse group of sponsors to come in to support the Foundation at various levels. Rather than having only a select few donors that contribute large amounts, the current strategy focuses on bringing in a larger number of smaller donors. This task involves an added element of introducing the AEF to new funders and creating new relationships while maintaining the long-held relationships with core donors.

Despite the hard work of the RDC, there have been a few drawbacks over the last year. A major challenge that the RDC faced was finding out the Foundation is not eligible for funding from the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission (AGLC). Unfortunately, this revenue stream is inaccessible for the Foundation, but this also provides clarity about the ways that the Foundation can continue to raise funds and where to devote energy toward.

The RDC looks forward to welcoming new members and diversifying the perspectives and goals of the Committee further with new inputs. Also, to look forward to is the Emerald Lifestyle Card, which was in the planning phase at the end of this fiscal year and will be discussed in next year’s report.



### Communications

**CHAIR:** LEE FUNKE

**MEMBERS:** MORTIMER CAPRILES, DEBBIE RHEINSTEIN

2020-21 was the 30th anniversary of the Alberta Emerald Foundation and this special anniversary was a central theme for many of our communications activities throughout the year.

The focus of our Emerald Awards is normally devoted entirely on our award recipients. However at this year's Emerald Awards we had the opportunity to partially turn the spotlight on our work as a Foundation. During the event many of our stakeholders were asked to share their important memories and accolades for the important work of the Foundation over the last three decades.

Of course this year's event was once again a virtual awards ceremony due to COVID-19 restrictions. Our production partners have continued to demonstrate they are among the best in the business as the event was a complete success despite the tremendous technology hurdles.

Among the other key highlights this last year include our continued focus as the environmental good news story-teller through a wide range of initiatives. This includes working collaboratively with our partner, Hoopla Media, on our popular Emerald Speakers Series, What On EARTH Can We Do? Podcast, and our Tell Your Story series to help organizations be better communicators.

We also supported the launch of our new Emerald Lifestyle Card. While the card serves as an opportunity to raise funds it also promotes our sponsors and businesses that are focused on a sustainable lifestyle. In the upcoming year our committee will be focusing on how we can promote this initiative and encourage more Albertans to embrace the Emerald Lifestyle Card.

Through these combined initiatives we are building stronger audience engagement, and elevated awareness of our Emerald recipients and our Foundation. These events have resulted in an increase of followers on all of our social media platforms which benefits both recipients and our sponsors.





### Finance

#### **TREASURER:** REBECCA GRANT

This past year has been one of growth and adaptation for the Alberta Emerald Foundation. With last year's external climate, the Foundation was able to take the lessons learned from 2019/2020 and adapt their plans and ways of working to set themselves up for success in 2020/2021.

This year, the Foundation managed its funds very well and did not need to withdraw from the Calgary Managed Funds, as they did in 2019/2020. This successful management was achieved by constantly reviewing expenses and ensuring all spending was done nimbly. Overall, the Foundation's expenses came in under budget. Sponsorship revenue was not as strong as previous years and this is a clear reflection of the external market and is also reflective of the 2019/2020 results. However, with that said, the Foundation has begun to "think outside of the box" and develop new and creative means for sponsorship.

The Foundation's cost-conscious mentality will be carried forward into the 2021/2022 fiscal year. This is evident with the Foundation creating a strong bottom-up budget to understand the climate and ensure all revenue and expenses are realistic.

Going forward, the Foundation must continue to take these challenges and turn them into opportunities to find sustainable sponsorship that will contribute to their long-term strategy. We look forward to seeing the future success of the Foundation and executing its future strategy.











# 30th Annual Emerald Awards

For the past 30 years, the Emerald Awards have showcased and inspired our province's environmental achievements across all sectors, from business, education, government, nonprofit, and beyond.

In honour of the Emerald Awards' 30th anniversary, the AEF engaged in a community consultation to refresh the categories and nomination form. The outcome is a more robust and inclusive slate of categories that both celebrates organizations that have established a legacy of environmental stewardship, and projects that have achieved excellence in addressing and mitigating the effects of local, regional and global environmental issues.

The 30th Annual Emerald Awards Call for Nominations closed on February 16, 2021 with 47 submissions from all corners of the province. This was a considerable increase from the previous year, and cause for celebration considering this was achieved during the pandemic. All nominations were provided to our third-party panel of judges who were tasked with selecting the shortlist and recipients.

## Emerald Awards Judging Session

Similar to last year, our judges conducted their judging session using Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Using this platform has continued to be a success, as it allows us to bring together judges from across the province while reducing the amount of emissions that would have otherwise occurred due to travel.

Our judges selected 32 nominations to appear as part of our shortlist, 13 of which were announced as the recipients at the 30th Annual Emerald Awards on June 1, 2021.

## Emerald Awards Shortlist Announcement

The Emerald Awards judging session concluded with a public announcement of the 30th Annual Emerald Awards Shortlist. On March 26, we shared the 30th Annual Emerald Awards Shortlist Announcement alongside our long-time sponsor and three-time Emerald Award recipient, Syncrude Canada Ltd. More than sixty people joined us for the virtual presentation.

The video was launched on [emerald.foundation.ca](https://emerald.foundation.ca) and the AEF's YouTube channel. The video was viewed 136 times and reached over 413 people.



# 30th Annual Emerald Awards

## The Emerald Awards Event

Based on the successes of last year's Emeralds, as well as the uncertainty around pandemic-related restrictions, we held a virtual celebration again this year. We enlisted the Edmonton-based virtual platform GreenShows, which incorporates carbon offsets, and Hoopla Media, our longtime Sharing Stories partner, as our producer. The event was hosted by Naheyawin's Hunter Cardinal and featured performances by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, and Edmonton's poet laureate, Nisha Patel.

The Emerald Awards were viewed, live, by 208 audience members from 27 different communities, including some viewers from B.C. and Ontario. After the live event, the recording was shared on our Facebook and YouTube. Collectively,

to date, the video has been viewed 518 times and has reached 920 people.

Now that signs are suggesting that the pandemic is nearing its end, we are starting to explore what the Emerald Awards event looks like in the future. We look forward to working with our stakeholders in developing a meaningful, accessible, and inclusive celebration.





# 30th Annual Emerald Award Judges

Each year, 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**

*Environmental Instructor  
Norquest College*

## **Christine Hornung**

*Ecologist and Visual Artist*

## **Amelia Altmiks**

*Bachelor of Arts Student  
MacEwan University*

## **Sarah Fulton**

*Senior Advisor,  
Environmental and Social  
Risk Management  
Export Development Canada  
(EDC)*

## **Sarah Levine**

*Environmental Lawyer*

## **John Parkins**

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

## **Ryan Smith**

*Senior Environmental Planner  
Shell Canada Ltd*

## **Katie Kohlenberg**

*Project Manager  
EcoAmmo Sustainable  
Consulting*

## **Bradley Peters**

*Executive Director  
Alberta Lake Management  
Society*

## **Kathryn Wagner**

*Program Director  
Inside Education*

## **Melissa Radu**

*Sustainability Manager  
Explore Edmonton*





# 30th Annual Emerald Award Recipients

## Project/Initiative Categories

Showcasing the Albertan environmental projects and initiatives that have addressed and mitigated the effects of local, regional, and global environmental issues by achieving excellence aligned to current environmental priorities.

### **Air**

*presented by City of Calgary*

Calgary Region Airshed Zone: We Care  
About the Air You Breathe

*Calgary*

### **Business**

*presented by Edmonton Community Foundation*

YYC Growers & Distributors  
*Calgary*

### **Water**

*presented by Jamieson Laurin + Co.*

Pigeon Lake Watershed Management  
Plan: Caring for the Lake Together

*Pigeon Lake*

### **Energy**

*presented by Bio Energy Solutions*

ATCO and Three Nations Energy:  
Charting the Path Towards A Sustainable  
Future  
*Fort Chipewyan*

### **Waste Management**

*presented by Alberta Recycling Management  
Authority & Beverage Container Management  
Board*

StyroGo  
*Calgary*

### **Infrastructure**

The Confluence  
*Waiparous*

### **Public Engagement & Outreach**

The Albertan Environmental Network,  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
(Northern & Southern Alberta Chapters):  
Defend Alberta Parks  
*Alberta-wide*

### **Shared Footprints Award**

*presented by The Government of Alberta*  
Vermilion River Watershed Alliance:  
Vermilion River Watershed Restoration &  
Enhancement Project  
*Vermilion*





# 30th Annual Emerald Award Recipients

## Legacy Categories

Celebrating an organization or individual's legacy of environmental excellence in addressing and mitigating the effects of local, regional, and global environmental issues.

### **Community Group or Non-Profit**

*presented by Syncrude Canada Ltd.*

Solar Alberta  
Edmonton

### **Community Group or Non-Profit**

*presented by Syncrude Canada Ltd.*

Solar Alberta  
Edmonton

### **Education**

*presented by Alberta Beverage Container  
Recycling Corporation*

Lacombe Composite Highschool:  
EcoVision  
Lacombe

### **Youth**

*presented by City of Edmonton*  
Jade Janzen: Lives with Less Plastic  
Cochrane

### **Lifetime Achievement**

*presented by Capital Power*

Pat Letizia  
Calgary





# Sharing Stories Content

This year, we were pleased to create the second seasons of our sharing stories content, and develop annual virtual launch events for each. These events served as an opportunity to gather as a community and to build excitement for our content.

## Emerald Documentary Series

The second season of the Emerald Documentary Series features the 29th Annual Emerald Award recipients in their own documentary short created by Hoopla Media. The series was launched through the virtual event platform, GreenShows on January 13, 2020.

This special event was attended by 71 people, all eager to see our province's EcoHeroes on the big screen. The videos are available on our website and YouTube channel, and have been viewed over 2,623 times to date.

## Emerald Speakers Series

In 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.

In honour of Earth Day, we launched the pre-recorded Emerald Speakers Series videos and offered a live Q&A session with the presenters using GreenShows. This event was attended by 27 viewers from across Alberta.

These pre-recorded speaker series videos are available on our website and YouTube channel and have been collectively viewed over 100 times.

## What On EARTH Can We Do?

Our podcast, hosted by Executive Director Gregory Caswell and Colleen Nuc from Hoopla Media, invites our audience to learn what on earth we can do to become better environmental stewards with our Emerald Award recipients. Each episode tackles a different theme, including community collaboration, green events, and so much more!

The podcast launched on January 10, 2020 and has since been downloaded over 2,291 times. 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 continue to publish our monthly newsletter, Elevate, which now has just under 1,000 subscribers, an average 26% open rate, and a 3% click rate, which are all above industry standards.

We were pleased to be a featured guest at City of Calgary's 2021 Climate Symposium, where we shared a curated selection of our Emerald Documentary Series videos. We hope this leads to other opportunities to share our content at other events around the province.

Check out our content!











# Tell Your Story

In August of 2020, we launched our new program, Tell Your Story. In celebration of our 30th anniversary of being Alberta's environmental good-news storytellers, we embraced the opportunity to support our community in their communications and marketing efforts. We have developed an expanding collection of resources which include tutorials, webinars, and partnerships with the vendors we work with.

The program supports the AEF in the following ways:

- It provides a new connection point with our community.
- It further delivers on our mission, filling a need that had not yet been addressed.
- It creates new funding opportunities.

Since its launch, we have posted 29 tutorials, hosted four webinars with an average audience of 30 people, and have showcased our partnership with seven vendors. We look forward to expanding on this content in the upcoming year.



## MARKETING SOUP: THE INGREDIENTS EVERY BRAND NEEDS TO GROW

with Janis Galloway of PRESS + POST

May 12, 2021 at 2 p.m.  
Admission = Pay What You Can  
Available now at [emeraldfoundation.ca/tys](https://emeraldfoundation.ca/tys)

**Tell  
Your  
Story**

**Tell  
Your  
Story**

I EAT  
PUBLIC  
SPEAKING  
FOR  
BREAKFAST





# Emerald Youth Grants

Sponsored by: **Syncrude**

The AEF believes in supporting Alberta's young people in their environmental education and efforts. In order to help support these efforts, The Emerald Youth Grant program was created and launched in 2020, taking the place of our previous Youth Environmental Engagement Grants. This new grant program empowers students and youth (under 25) to make their dream environmental projects a reality

through a \$750 grant, of which 30 are available.

This year, with the support of our sponsor, Syncrude Canada Ltd., we distributed a total of \$22,500 in grants to youth-led and youth-targeted environmental projects across the province. Some examples of the projects we helped to fund include an outdoor no dig vegetable garden, a garbage cleanup of the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, and tree planting.



# Thank you to our sponsors & partners

## Annual Sponsors



## Category Sponsors



## Partners

- Hoopla Media
- Naheyawin
- Press + Post
- Studio Hazel
- GreenShows
- DoBetter Marketing
- Kaden Ave





Alberta  
Emerald  
Foundation

## Contact Us

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Coordinator**

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

