



Creating the Grounds for Change

FOR SUPPORTERS & FRIENDS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTRE

SUMMER '13

OUR VISION

An Alberta where the environment is a priority, guiding society's choices

OUR MISSION

Ensure that Alberta's laws, policies and legal processes sustain a healthy environment

OUTCOMES

Alberta will have strong and effective environmental laws, policies & legal processes

Albertans will be actively and meaningfully engaged in decisions and processes that affect the environment

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Thank you for protecting the spaces and the species we love

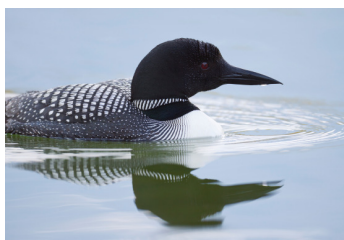
When was the last time you heard a loon call - that iconic, yet haunting sound of Canadian wilderness? For me, it was last weekend at Lakeland Provincial Park where my husband and I took our first canoe camping trip. I have never heard, nor seen so many loons. It was magical.

I reflected on the importance of parks and the importance of people like you who ensure that Alberta has these protected places.

Your generous support has created a network of parks and conservation areas throughout Alberta that protects not just loons and other wildlife, but also protects wilderness experiences that are becoming more of a rarity in today's society.

With your support, parks

planning and legislation have improved. From our work in the late '90s to stop the *Natural Heritage Act* that threatened protected areas in Alberta, to our current work with the *Land Use*



Your donations protect parks, wildlife, and the chance to experience nature

Framework, the Environmental Law Centre strengthens the laws that protect wildlife and wilderness areas. On Page 2, we share how you can influence the

conservation of more parks in Alberta.

Parks Day, July 20, is a terrific time to celebrate and experience our parks and protected areas. I hope you'll spend time in your favourite national, provincial or urban park. While you're there, take a minute to appreciate the sights and sounds of the wilderness. Then take another minute to appreciate your role in protecting that place.

Without you and your support for these spaces, fewer Albertans will hear the loons' call. But because of you, others may get the chance to hear and see the most iconic emblem of the Alberta wilderness. Thank you.

Kim Kiel, Fundraising Coordinator & ELC Donor

Join us online!

Connect with us and other supporters on our website, blog and Facebook page. You can read and share stories, see how your gifts make a difference, learn about upcoming events, or find other ways to join us in protecting the environment.

www.elc.ab.ca (sign up here to receive News Brief, our e-newsletter sent 6 times per year)

<http://environmentallawcentre.wordpress.com/> (timely commentary and perspective on top issues)

<https://www.facebook.com/environmentallawcentre>



Your support strengthens Canada's environmental laws.

“Man shapes himself through decisions that shape his environment.”
~Rene Dubos

Gerry Protti, AER Chair, gave our friends and supporters an inside scoop on the new regulator



Oh, Canada...what's happened to our environmental laws?

Your support is needed to protect and improve Canadian legislation

Last year, the federal government passed an omnibus budget bill that dramatically weakened Canada's environmental laws. Over ten pieces of environmental legislation were modified or withdrawn, resulting in significant changes to federal environmental assessment laws, fisheries laws and the operation of the National Energy Board. In short, these changes weakened environmental protection in Canada.

The Environmental Law Centre raised awareness of these changes through many articles, blog posts, presentations, a webinar and an interview on Alberta Primetime. We also provided the federal government with our comments on changes to federal environmental assessment laws.

With our recent publication of *A Model Environmental and Sustainability Assessment Law*, we hope to show how good environmental assessment laws

can improve decision-making and protection in Canada.

While some changes have been fully applied, the federal government has not yet declared all the changes to fisheries law to be in effect. With your support, we can use this window of opportunity to reverse the suggested changes, and avoid a huge step backward for Canada's environment.

Visit www.elc.ab.ca to link to our blog to learn more

Protecting your Parks

Right now, support from our donors and funders allows us to take part in Alberta's Land Use Framework, a comprehensive planning process that will guide development and protection in Alberta for years to come.

As a stakeholder, we promote Alberta's parks and protected areas and support the clear

identification and protection of conservation areas within regional plans. Your support allows us to help conservation groups, individuals and municipalities who wish to increase protected areas in the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP). The SSRP will be released in the coming weeks, and we will be one of the first to provide our analysis and

advice on strengths and weaknesses. The North Saskatchewan Regional Plan (NSRP) is the next in line, and your support ensures that the Environmental Law Centre is at the planning table to create lasting change.

Want to do more?

Comment on the forthcoming SSRP and join in the planning for the NSRP - watch our website for news & updates!

Thank you for making Green Regs & Ham a success!

What do you get when you invite the Chair and the CEO of the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) to join the Environmental Law Centre for breakfast? Green Regs & Ham!

On June 14 in Edmonton and June 17 in Calgary, we hosted an inaugural series of events that saw 188 people come out

to hear about how environmental decisions would be made under the new regulator. A great mix of people including the conservation community, regulators, environmental lawyers and industry joined us at this "sold-out" event. You can view the AER's slideshow on our website: www.elc.ab.ca.

We owe a BIG thank you to our sponsors, Devon Canada, Kallisto Energy and Cenovus Energy for sponsoring the breakfast.

We are busy planning the next event and invite your topic & speaker suggestions.

Send your ideas to Kim at kkiel@elc.ab.ca

Move over, mudboggers!

Donor dollars provide seed funding to tackle destructive off-highway vehicle use in natural areas

A flood of motorized users is testing the limits of the land and land managers. The public land laws that direct resource developments in Alberta do little to prevent access to old roads and cut lines. These areas attract unmanaged random camping, destructive off-roading and mudboggling. This abuse destroys waterways, disrupts wildlife and poses safety risks and user conflicts. Rural municipalities bear the burdens of ensuring safety and restoring damaged areas, rather than benefiting from planned recreational activities.

Environmental groups and responsible recreationalists agree on the need for better infrastructure, education and

enforcement, but these actions are not fully supported by current policies.

Thanks to a private donor who provided the seed funding to kick-start this project, we have researched and tested policy reform options through the Max Bell Public Policy Training Institute. This project recently received funding from the Calgary Foundation to engage user groups and key decision makers. Further support would let us address the role of the resource industries in managing access to abandoned roads. Many other environmental



Photo Courtesy Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development Staff

Your support allows us to find new policy solutions to prevent this kind of backcountry abuse

groups have sought our help on tackling this complex issue.

Given the current flood reconstruction, regional plans, potential changes to parks legislation and proposals for a trails act occurring in Alberta, we are seizing the opportunity to gain traction on developing better policies and practices to manage off-highway vehicle use. Thanks to all of you for supporting work that will lead to new tools to protect Alberta's beautiful backcountry areas!

Meet our new President

When then-President Gavin Fitch announced that he would step down from a post he'd held for 7 years, we knew he would leave big shoes to fill.

Gavin, a partner at law firm McLennan Ross LLP, brought countless volunteer hours of leadership and wise counsel to the Centre, and during his time he led the organization to develop new strategic priorities and a new fund development strategy. McLennan Ross is a major donor to the Environmental Law Centre and recently made a three-year commitment to support our mission. We are grateful for Gavin's contributions and are glad that he

remains on the board as Past-President.

Ably filling Gavin's shoes, is David Poulton, the principal of David W. Poulton Environmental Strategies, a consultant on environmental and resource policy with expertise in fostering cross-sectoral collaborations. Dave is a graduate student in the Natural Resources, Energy and Environment program at the University of Calgary Faculty of Law. His research interests include conservation offsets and other market-based instruments for conservation. Dave served as Executive Director of the Southern Alberta Chapter of the



Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society from 2000 to 2008, and Conservation Director of that organization from 1999 to 2000.

Dave is also an avid outdoors-person and brings his personal commitment to protecting the environment to our Board.

We are thrilled he's bringing his expertise and time to his new role on the Board.

"I'm pleased to serve on the Board because I believe that law should be an effective vehicle for bringing environmental concerns into decision-making, and that the processes for doing so should be accessible to members of the public. The ELC is a respected voice for those issues."

**David Poulton,
President**



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The Environmental Law Centre protects the environment through strong laws, policies and legal processes. We believe that Albertans should be meaningfully and actively engaged in decisions that affect the environment. Donating to the Environmental Law Centre is a powerful statement of your commitment to protecting the environment and responsibly developing our natural resources.

Your tax-creditable donation makes a difference. It supports the thousands of people who annually access our online and in-person environmental information services. This year, we hope to raise \$120,000* and thanks to you we are nearly half-way there! Please contact us with any questions you may have.

*It will cost us approximately \$10,000 to reach our fundraising goals



We want to hear from you

This is our first donor newsletter, and we'd like to know what you think about it and our work. We appreciate all feedback and suggestions; your responses are very important to us. Mail to: #800, 10025 106 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1G4; Fax: 780-424-5133; or email your scanned reply to: kkiel@elc.ab.ca. **Thank you for your support.**

How often would you like to receive this newsletter (2 times/year or more)? Would you prefer to receive electronic or paper versions?	
What would you like to read about in future issues?	
What is your greatest environmental concern?	
Why do you support the Environmental Law Centre? Which projects or programs are most important to you?	

Please accept my gift to the Environmental Law Centre:

My Name: _____ Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$ _____
(Cheques payable to Environmental Law Centre or donate online at www.elc.ab.ca)

Address: _____ Please charge my Visa MasterCard Am/Ex

City: _____ Prov. _____ PC. _____ Card Number: _____

May we publicly acknowledge your gift?
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