



Environmental
Law Centre



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Message from

the President of the Board

Dear Friends of the ELC,

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2023 and look ahead to 2024, I am honoured to address you as the President of the Board of the Environmental Law Centre (ELC).

The year 2023 was one of change and progress for our organization. For over 40 years, the ELC has been a reliable, credible source for research and analysis for Albertans that influence environmental law and policy reform. To remain relevant to the needs of our stakeholders, we continued on our course for growth and developing the capacity to step into new opportunities.

Just as environmental challenges present opportunities to develop alternative economic drivers and force us to seek solutions that maintain healthy ecosystems, changing times present opportunities for developing resiliency that positions us for greater influence. Our small team of legal specialists has expanded to include new staff members who will focus on brokering relationships that will provide new opportunities for the ELC to scale our services in Alberta and throughout the region. While we have supported Alberta's lawmakers for decades, our services are needed to fill a gap in environmental legal analysis across the Prairies. We are grateful that your faithful support will enable us to expand our services to meet a demonstrated need in the movement toward ensuring a healthy future for all Canadians.

It has been my pleasure to lead a dedicated board of legal and environmental specialists who are behind the vision of the ELC and to support an Executive Director who has dedicated his career to executing the mission of the ELC. Together we seek to serve our constituents to the best of our ability, and it is with your continued support that we can do so.

Thank you for joining the ELC on the mission to shape laws and policies that will sustain our land, communities, and quality of life. Together we will create a more sustainable future.

With gratitude,



JoAnn Jamieson
The President of the Board

Message from

the Executive Director

It is hard to look back at 2023 without considering the smoke filled skies much of Alberta faced throughout the summer. The wildlife smoke that blanketed much of our province was a stark reminder of how nature remains the final arbiter in the world: of water, of air, of forests. It is a reminder that our lives on the planet can be precarious and that we should take action to minimize our impacts on nature, to maintain the services that the environment provides. This is where law and policy play a key role. Whether mitigating our greenhouse gas emissions or ensuring rivers retain sufficient flows for aquatic health in drought; clear and accountable laws and policies are needed.

It is in furtherance of these laws and policies that the ELC also had some significant milestones in 2023. Most notable, the ELC has become an affiliated institute at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Law. Our new office space is set among the law reports, jurisprudence and journals we fondly remember from our days in law school. I see this move as an opportunity to further our work in evaluating the laws and policies and working across disciplines in pursuing law reforms for better protection of the environment.

In late 2023 we also diversified our staffing, welcoming Tracey DeGraaf in the role of Director of Strategy and Engagement, leading the centre in new partnerships and new directions.

Finally, program highlights also come to mind from 2023 as we looked at demystifying Alberta's and Canada's constitutional challenges when it comes to the environment in the *Battleground Environment Series*. While the environment has continued as wedge issue in politics, the centre remains committed to seeing all levels of government doing better when it comes to the laws and policies that protect the environment.

As we make our way into 2024 it seems likely that the environmental challenges we face are not diminishing, and our laws will need to evolve to live up to this challenge. Even with smoke filled skies our mission remains clear.



Jason Unger
Executive Director



About the ELC

The ELC is an environmental non-profit that provides legal education and seeks law reform for a sustainable future. We have been providing high-quality legal research and analysis on environmental challenges for over 40 years.

Vision:

A society where our laws secure an environment that sustains current and future generations and supports ecosystem health.

Mission:

Advocate for laws that will sustain ecosystems & ensure a healthy environment and to engage citizens in law creation and enforcement.

Core Areas



**Sustainable
Communities**



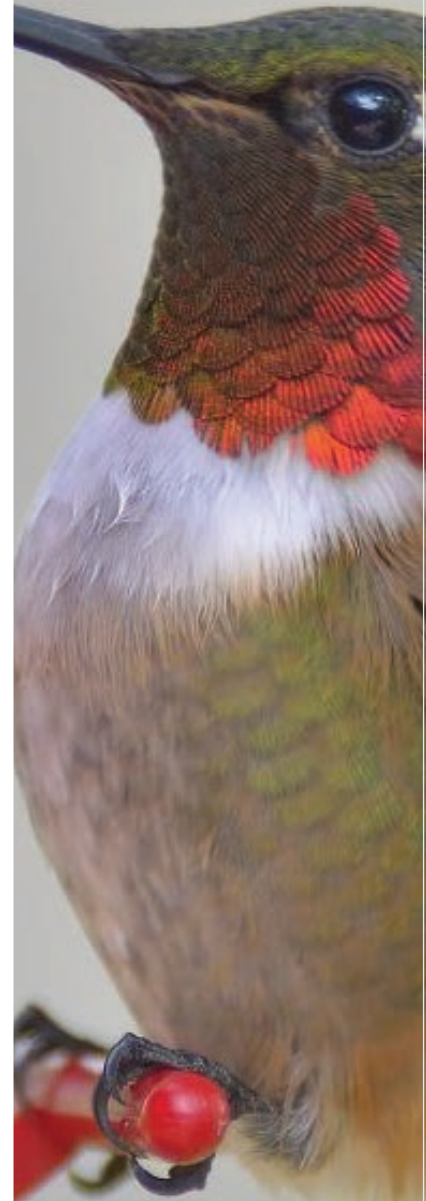
**Climate
& Energy**



**Nature &
Biodiversity**

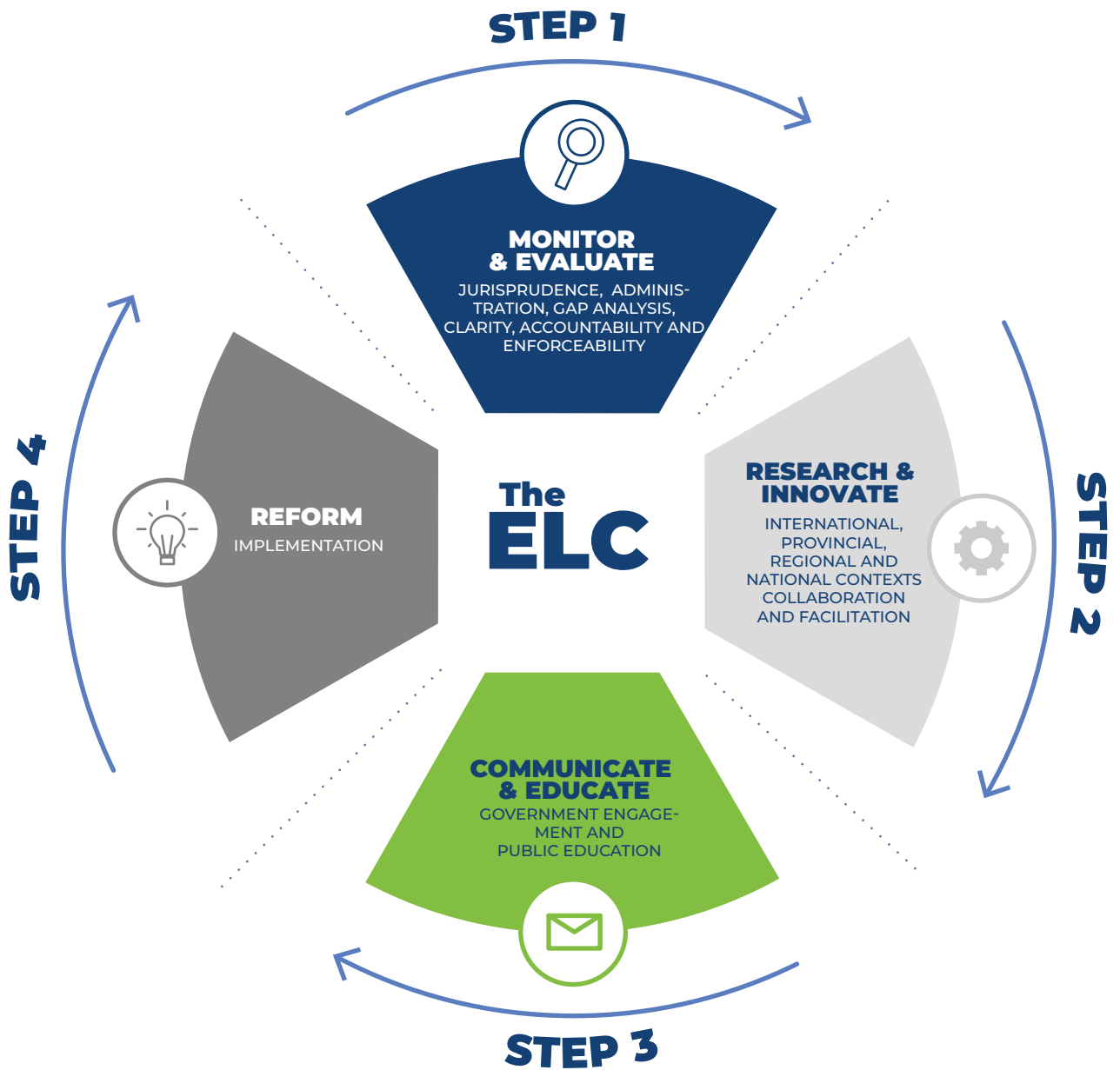


**Core
Environmental
Principles**





Our Process



for more about the ELC, click [here](#)

ELC in numbers



40 years
in policy and
legal review



Over **350**
policy review reports
and articles since
inception



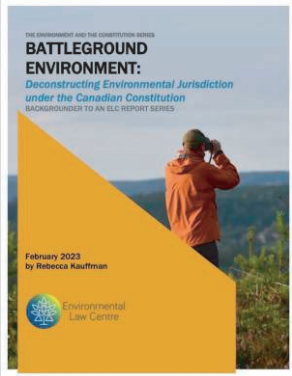
Over **120 hours**
of legal education
and related training



24 partners
across different
industries over
the years

for more about the ELC, click [here](#)

2023 Reports and Publications



BATTLEGROUND ENVIRONMENT Deconstructing Environmental Jurisdiction under the Canadian Constitution.

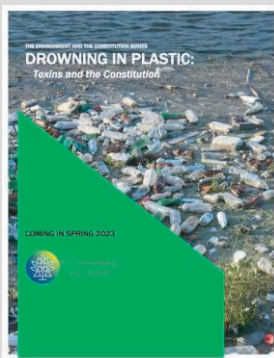
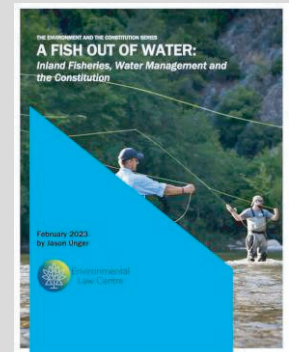
An introduction to the constitutional tensions regarding environmental jurisdiction.

[Click here to read more](#)

A FISH OUT OF WATER: Inland Fisheries, Water Management and the Constitution

This report provides a review of the constitutional divide and what it means for aquatic systems and its related concerns. It also examines federal and provincial legislation and regulatory approaches.

[Click this link to read more](#)



DROWNING IN PLASTIC: Toxins and the Constitution

The report discusses relevant case law and provides an overview of the regulatory framework at provincial and federal levels on toxic pollution.

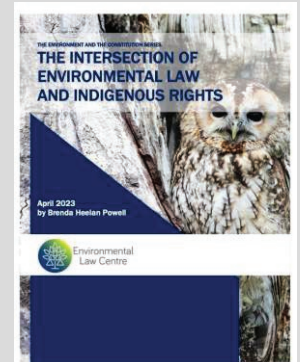
[Click this link to read more](#)

for more publications and reports by the ELC click elc.ab.ca/publications/

2023 Reports and Publications

THE INTERSECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS.

This report looks at the intersection of environmental law and Indigenous rights: how settler colonial laws have impaired treaty rights and looks at potential paths forward. [Click this link to read more](#)



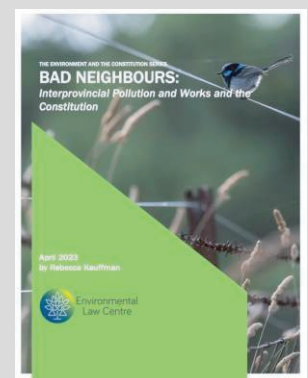
THREATENED JURISDICTION: Species at Risk

The report considers constitutional jurisdiction to manage species at risk, the flora and fauna that are at risk of disappearing from the Alberta landscape. [Click this link to read more](#)



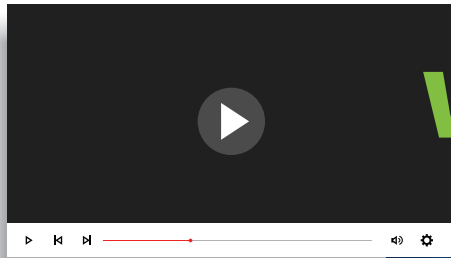
BAD NEIGHBOURS: Interprovincial Pollution and Works and the Constitution

This report looks at interprovincial works and interprovincial pollution; it examines the challenges these pose for the federal and provincial governments. [Click this link to read more](#)



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Legal and Policy Education



WEBINARS
covering the
BATTLEGROUND
series

505
attendees
in 2023

- 1** **Battleground Environment:**
Species at Risk and Fisheries and
Water Management
- 2** **Battleground Environment:**
GHGs and Toxic Substances
- 3** **Battleground Environment:**
Impact Assessment and Interprovincial
Matters
- 4** **Battleground Environment:**
The Intersection of Environmental Law

COMMITTED TO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY EDUCATION

The ELC is committed to educating the public on environmental law and policy. In the last year the ELC held 5 webinars with focus on varying relevant issues regarding preserving a sustainable environment for posterity. These resources remain free and readily accessible on the ELC website.

More ELC Reports and Publications



It's Getting Hot in Here:
GHG Regulation and the Constitution

All Things Considered:
Impact Assessment and the Constitution

To access the above and more here elc.ab.ca/publications/

OUR REACH

Reports and Blogs



47,903 downloads of ELC Reports

SUCCESS STORIES

4,285
views on our 2023 blogposts

Our reports are influencing and shaping Environmental Law and policy in Alberta and beyond. The ELC's work is seen by lawyers, students, faculty and industry experts locally and in Canada.

79
Daily website visits

Total Blogposts in 2023

18

Daily page page views

117

Alberta Users

30%

WHAT DO OUR NUMBERS MEAN?

Our blogs have engaged close to 10,000 concerned Albertans this year.

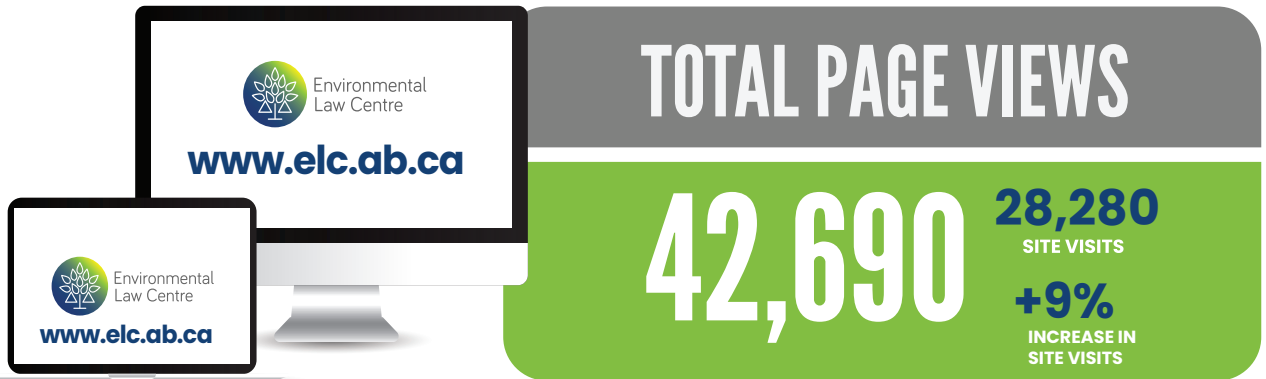
The 2023 blogpost views and daily page views show the ELC has become a hub of information for those interested in environmental law and policy.



CLICK HERE
to support the ELC

OUR REACH

Website and Social media

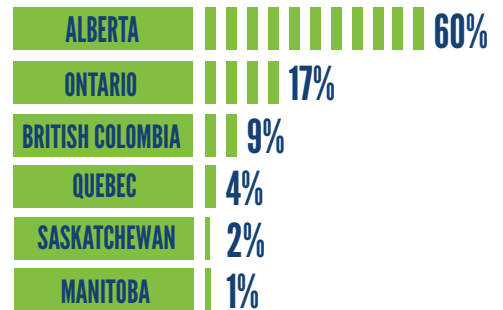


SUCCESS STORIES

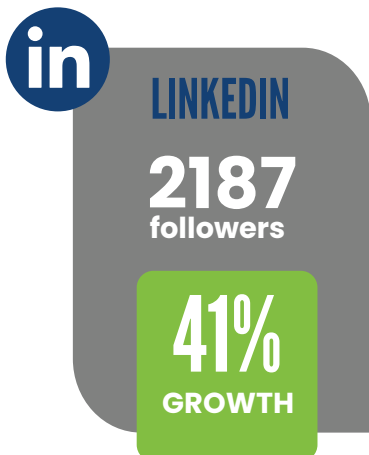


The ELC website showcases evidence-based resources on environmental law and policy in Alberta. The website has experienced a 9% increase in engagement and our social media channels have experienced significant growth.

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD



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to support the ELC



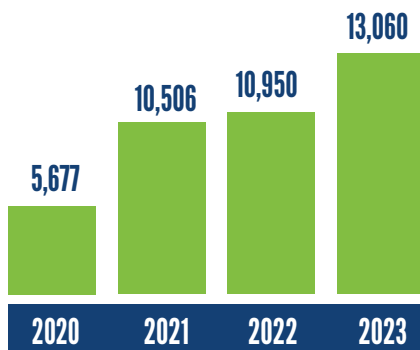
ALBERTA ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS 101

www.albertaenvirolaws.ca



13,570 VIEWS
OF THE
MATERIAL

YEAR TO YEAR GROWTH



SUCCESS STORIES

19%

The Alberta Environmental Laws 101 website is a curriculum-based resource that supports environmental education in high schools.

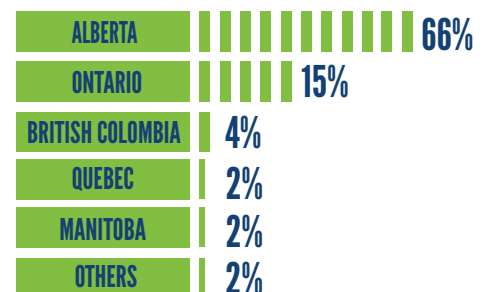
The website has seen steady growth over the last few years showing increasing nationwide relevance.

Our curriculum pages see as much as 1400 page views over 200 webpages of educational material.

TOP PERFORMING LESSONS

- Environmental racism in Canada
- Alberta's environmental protection and enhancement Act
- Which laws apply to species at risk in Alberta
- Lesson plan charter rights freedoms
- Fundamentals of law(common law)

PROVINCIAL SPREAD



**CLICK
HERE**
to support the ELC

ELC in Pictures

Friends and partners at the event.



The Executive Director, Jason Unger and the Dean of the Law Faculty, Barbara Billingsley at the launch of the new ELC office at the University of Alberta.



Some ELC staff at the launch .



Plans for 2024

PROJECTIONS

PROGRAMS AND REPORTS

The Drought Series, Contaminated sites report, Endangered Species, Environmental accountability in decision making.

EVENTS

Webinars and Friends of the ELC partners' appreciation event.
Stay tuned for the relaunch of the ELC's Green Regs and Ham Breakfast.

FUNDING PARTNERS

Alberta Law Foundation (albertalawfoundation.org)

Alberta Real Estate Foundation (aref.ab.ca)

Edmonton Community Foundation (ecfoundation.org)

Alberta Ecotrust (albertaecotrust.com)

ACADEMIC PARTNERS

Faculty of Law, University of Alberta
(www.ualberta.ca/law/index.html)

NETWORK PARTNERS

Alberta Environmental Network
(www.aenweb.ca)

Canada Environmental Network
(www.rcen.ca)

for partnerships and engagements,
reach Tracey via elc@elc.ab.ca

Our Donors & Partners

The ELC wishes to extend it's gratitude to all our donors and partners who gave generously throughout the year. Your dedication to protecting Alberta's ecosystems and promoting conservation efforts inspire us every day, and we are deeply grateful for your partnership in our journey towards a more sustainable future.

As we reflect on the progress made in the past year and look ahead to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, we are reminded of the crucial role that each donor plays in shaping our collective impact. Your generosity and belief in our mission empower us to continue advocating for meaningful reforms and driving positive environmental change. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the ELC

Funding Partners



Academic Partner



Network Partners



The **ELC** provides an opportunity to join in securing a sustainable future for all Canadians and Albertans. [Click here to give](#)



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We'd love to hear from you. We appreciate all feedback and suggestions. **Mail to** W218 Law Centre, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB T6G 2H5 **Fax:** 780-424-5133; **Email** your scanned reply to: elc@elc.ab.ca or **make your gift securely online.** *Thank you for your support!*

Please accept my gift to the Environmental Law Centre:

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. _____ PC. _____

May we publicly acknowledge your gift?

Yes No, I prefer to remain anonymous

Make a secure donation online: www.elc.ab.ca

Charitable tax receipts will be issued for all eligible donations.

Yes, I'd like to become a monthly Sustaining Donor!

Please debit \$ _____ each month from my:

Bank Account (enclose a voided cheque)

Credit Card (fill out details below)

Or: **Enclosed is my one-time gift of \$** _____

(Cheques payable to Environmental Law Centre)

Please charge my Visa MasterCard

Card Number: _____

CVC Code: _____ Expiry: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Environmental Law Centre

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elc@elc.ab.ca

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Toll Free: 1-800-661-4238
Charitable Registration
#11890 0679 RR0001

The **Environmental Law Centre** seeks charitable donations to support its legal information and law reform initiatives. These charitable donations are tax-deductible. The ELC estimates that the costs for our fund-raising efforts will be \$25,000 and we seek to reach \$135,000 in charitable donations.

If you have any questions please contact **Tracey DeGraaf at elc@elc.ab.ca or 780-424-5099.**