



Report to Donors 2015

Your support makes a huge difference!

This report summarizes the 2015 accomplishments that you helped achieve. Our impact is significant and we have much to celebrate.

Our Collective Impact:

For environmental NGOs, Alberta EcoTrust is a long-standing and critical source of funding, training and capacity building. The programs and projects we have invested in have demonstrated a tremendous cumulative and collective impact on Alberta's natural systems.

We have seen the capacity of environmental nonprofits and charities overall increase and we see movement towards authentic collaboration. We also believe our programs and financial contributions to Alberta's environmental organizations have contributed significantly to the spirit of cooperation that transcends sector boundaries in Alberta. With results from an extensive two-year review of Alberta's environmental community, new approaches like change labs and our annual Environmental Gathering, we expect to see even more cohesion and traction on big strategies that will lead to greater impact.

Our investments don't just focus on water, land use and climate change. They transform our communities. Close to 14,000 Albertans will directly benefit from our 2015 investments.

Outcomes and Indicators of Success in 2015 include:

Expanding meaningful relationships and engagement among and between ENGOs, business and government on environmental issues of shared importance.

- Providing insight and as a member on the Leader's Council in the provincial government's Alberta Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Initiative and into the new government's Fall budget.
- Developing a new grants program in contract with the City of Edmonton that aligns with the City's new Energy Transition Strategy.
- Presenting results of our Mapping What Matters Report on the capacity, issue focus and connections of 167 environmental groups operating in Alberta to forums in Calgary and Edmonton and to several corporate and environmental partners.

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Cows and Fish has been very pleased to partner with Alberta EcoTrust, as part of the Grant Review Committee, as well as through a variety of other initiatives. The emphasis Alberta EcoTrust places on generating collaboration and respect between diverse organisations and sectors is really valuable, and something we have been very pleased to be a part of in our work.

The thoughtful and strategic opportunities that Alberta EcoTrust has developed, including training for environmental conservation organisations, developing network analysis, and tapping into sage leaders in our sector, is a real benefit to our organisation and others, and we are very pleased to be involved in such good work.

Norine Ambrose
Executive Director,
Cows and Fish



- Delivering a new social lab Project Blue Thumb in partnership with the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance, actively engaging 30+ stakeholders to improve water quality in the region.
- Convening an Advisory Committee of Partners and grantees to oversee the planning of our first Environmental Gathering in Feb 2016 to improve how NGOs work together in the future.

Investments in nonprofits enable learning, action and results that improve grantees ability to effectively address complex environmental challenges while providing an important forum for shared learning, cross-sectoral engagement, and collaborative decision making.

- \$170,000 was invested in 11 environmental nonprofits for projects to protect Alberta's water, land and air. Details are on our website and reports available upon request.
- \$120,000 was invested in 4 nonprofits through the EcoCity grants program.
- Feedback from partner organizations on value of participation and results remains positive.

NGOs develop new skills necessary to design and evaluate impactful projects and have access to relevant trainings/activities that increase resilience and effectiveness.

- 130 participants benefited from Alberta Ecotrust hosted training opportunities.
- Pre and Post survey results remain positive. For example: A “Year One” evaluation with Project Blue Thumb participants reported significant improvements in: breadth and depth of personal networks; knowledge of factors influencing watershed management; confidence in lab approach to influence change and prototype initiatives in making real world changes.
- Coaching remains critical to ENGOs in developing proposals, delivering projects and reporting results.

There are many beneficiaries of this partnership:

- Our partner organizations benefit from leadership development, community learning and new cross-sectoral relationships formed as part of the grant review and monitoring process.
- Individual organizations and the environmental nonprofit sector benefit from critically needed funding, connections and capacity to deliver their missions.
- Close to 14,000 individuals will directly benefit from involvement in projects and programs that our environmental grants have supported in 2015. As a result of their combined programs and projects, all Albertans benefit from a healthier environment.

In June and December of 2015 we shared a series of exciting success stories that our partners and donors have made possible. You can read these stories on our blog or in the attached Appendix.

How we leveraged your investment:

Your investment in our partnership reinforces our credibility as a viable and respected vehicle for collaboration and leadership on environmental protection in our province.

With your investment we were able to leverage over \$800,000 – in funding from individual, industry and foundation funders.

Your annual investment is leveraged many times in dollars alone from other donors and then allocated by Alberta EcoTrust to a variety of organizations protecting and stewarding the environment. These dollars are then leveraged by each recipient organization to raise additional funds, and other resources like volunteers, in their local communities.

How we collaborate with other organizations:

Alberta EcoTrust was founded on the principles of fostering collaboration and trust between industry and nonprofit environmental organizations. Everything we do is based on this cornerstone framework.



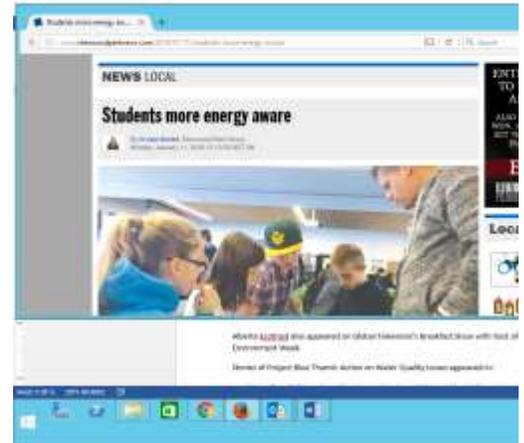
In 2015, our partners included: Accenture Inc.; Alberta Council for Environmental Education; Alliance Pipeline; Athabasca Watershed Council; Bow River Basin Council; Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society-Southern Alberta; Cenovus Energy; CH2M Hill; ConocoPhillips Canada; Cows and Fish; Encana; Environmental Law Centre; Green Calgary; High Prairie Regional Environmental Action Committee; Imperial; Land Stewardship Centre of Canada; Miistakis Institute; Nature Alberta; Pembina Institute; Pembina Pipeline Corporation; RBC Foundation; Southern Alberta Group for the Environment; Suncor Energy Foundation; TAQA North; Water Matters.

We also collaborate with other funders and capacity builders to deliver programs aimed at elevating the skills and abilities of the nonprofit sector. With additional funding from one of our partners we collaborated with the Institute for Conservation Leadership to offer an online course to help groups of nonprofits and their partners meet the challenges of cooperative work. We also worked with Accenture to develop a Project Management workshop for nonprofits and participated as part of an international cohort on Social Labs with Reos Partners.

Known Publicity

Alberta Ecotrust grantees include mention of Alberta Ecotrust on their sites and in their media promotion a few examples include:

- <http://www.630ched.com/2015/01/20/michael-phair-takes-new-post/>. AEF mention as funder of North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society.
- <http://www.sherwoodparknews.com/2016/01/11/students-more-energy-aware>. AEF mention as funder of Inside Education's Project.
- <http://www.sherwoodparknews.com/ur/story/1089552> Same as above.
- <http://www.vueweekly.com/community-hopes-solar-energy-will-power-700-homes/>. AEF mention as funder of Keeper's of the Athabasca's solar energy project.
- <http://www.bnn.ca/News/2014/6/13/Energy-Watch-Whos-making-the-call-on-Northern-Gateway.aspx> (Mention related to Sheila Leggett, founding board member of Alberta Ecotrust.)
- A 15-minute movie made by the Biosphere Institute includes examples of projects we've funded in the region although it does not name AEF, view at <http://www.sharingtherange.com/>



Alberta Ecotrust also appeared on Global Television's Breakfast Show with host *Jill Belland* during Environment Week.

Stories of Project Blue Thumb: Action on Water Quality Issues appeared in:

- Water Canada Magazine – How to accelerate social innovation in the water sector. <http://watercanada.net/2015/idea-generator/>
- Mountain View Gazette - Social lab created for watershed management, Tuesday, Jul 07, 2015 - <http://www.mountainviewgazette.ca/Social-lab-created-for-watershed-20150707>

We are active in promoting Alberta Ecotrust and our partners where ever possible at numerous initiatives promoting cross-sectoral collaboration, nonprofit sector capacity and protection of our environment. See ImagineCalgary Blog <http://www.imaginecalgary.ca/blog/2013-12-20/alberta-ecotrust-explores-environmental-community-hub>

What people are saying about us:

“At Cenovus, we’re committed to being a responsible developer of one of Canada’s most valuable resources – the oil sands. And taking care of the environment is an important part of what we do. That’s why we partner with organizations like Alberta Ecotrust. Their deep understanding of the Alberta environmental non-profit sector allows them to facilitate strategic, collaborative partnerships between a variety of stakeholders across the province. They challenge all of us to help create a healthy ecosystem for all Albertans.” - **Kendall Dilling, Vice-President Environment & Regulatory, Cenovus Energy**

“Land Stewardship Centre and Alberta EcoTrust have built our successful, long-standing relationship on a solid foundation of common priorities, mutual respect and a collective desire to be encouragers and enablers of others. Together we can, and do, go further than we ever could alone.” **Brian E. Ilnicki**
Executive Director, Land Stewardship Centre

Suncor benefits from EcoTrust’s unique model of collaboration which allows companies and community organizations to work shoulder to shoulder, and to learn from each other. When we work together in this way there is no hierarchy – only mutual respect, lots of intellectual capital and a passion to shape a better world. **Arlene Strom, Vice President, Sustainability and Communications, Suncor Energy**

“Alberta EcoTrust helps us connect with others groups working on similar issues in Alberta. By bringing together the corporate sector and the environmental community, Alberta EcoTrust supports projects that we all care about.” **Katie Morrison, Conservation Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta Chapter**

Closing



Your investment in Alberta EcoTrust has been invaluable to our ability to support the advancement of collaborative environmental solutions that benefit all Albertans.

Sharing our collective accomplishments with employers, colleagues, friends and family is a great way to further the impact of your investment.

With your help we will continue to improve the collective and cumulative impact that environmental nonprofits, industry champions

and government can achieve together to move the needle on Alberta’s most pressing environmental problems.

We sincerely value your support and look forward to working together with you in 2016 and beyond.



Thank you to our 2015 Partners, Funders and Donors.

Each and every donation is valued and necessary in the fulfillment of our mission.

Visionary Partners

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