



# WETLAND CENTRE AT EVERGREEN PARK WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

What we heard, what we learned, and where we're going  
next

Hosted by Evergreen Learning and  
Innovation Society and Ducks  
Unlimited Canada  
April 24, 2019

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
1.1 Workshop goals.....	3
2. What we Heard .....	4
2.1 Participants .....	4
2.2 Opening table-top discussions.....	4
2.2.1 Why did you say Yes to the workshop invitation?.....	4
2.2.2 What did you hope to achieve by participating?.....	4
2.2.3 Imagine no boundaries, what would a Wetland Centre look like in 2025?.....	5
2.3 Overview of the project leads and the Wetland Centre project .....	6
2.4 Round Table #1 – What’s working well, challenges, and gaps .....	6
2.4.1 For your organization or sector, what is working well with respect to wetlands?.....	6
2.4.2 For your organization or sector, what are the challenges and gaps with respect to wetlands? .	7
2.4.3 What are some ways that a Wetland Centre could benefit your organization or sector?.....	8
2.5 Round Table #2 – Potential Centre Activities Discussions .....	8
2.5.1 Table #1 - Research.....	8
2.5.2 Table #2 - Demonstrations.....	9
2.5.3 Table #3 - Training.....	9
2.5.4 Table #4 - Traditional Knowledge .....	10
2.5.5 Table #5 - Funding.....	11
2.6 Path forward table-top discussion.....	11
2.6.1 What is the best way for us to engage with you in the development of the Wetland Centre? ..	11
2.6.2 What sort of information would you like to see included in communications about the Wetland Centre? .....	12
2.7 Tour of the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre .....	12
3. What we learned.....	13
4. Moving Forward.....	14
Appendix 1 – What we learned details.....	16
Appendix 2 - Wetland Centre Strategic Planning Workshop Agenda.....	18



***Workshop was hosted by the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Society and Ducks Unlimited Canada***

**Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre**  
Inspiring Responsible Resource Development Through Innovation



***Thank you to the workshop sponsor, Keyera***



## 1. Introduction

On April 24, 2019 the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Society (ELIS) and Ducks Unlimited Canada's (DUC's) National Boreal Program hosted a workshop at Evergreen Park, County of Grande Prairie to introduce the Wetland Centre project and hear about the needs of potential Wetland Centre users.

ELIS received funding for a three-year project (September 2018 to July 2021) to establish a Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park. These funds are a result of a Provincial Court of Alberta sentencing order for an Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act infraction. ELIS contracted DUC to carry out the project, and DUC and ELIS are approaching the Wetland Centre as a joint project. While the project is funded for three years, one of the goals of the project is to explore potential models for funding and running the Wetland Centre beyond the end of the project.

The purpose of the Wetland Centre workshop was to provide attendees with information about the organizations involved (ELIS and DUC), about the project, and provide an opportunity for interested parties to get involved early and to help shape the future of the Wetland Centre. By attending this workshop the organizers hoped to raise awareness and understanding of the project and start to generate some initial ideas about the types of opportunities potential Wetland Centre users saw in the site.

### 1.1 Workshop goals

The workshop provided an opportunity for attendees to discuss their ideas and interests with people from a range of sectors and organizations.

The workshop organizers identified five goals for workshop participants:

- Learn about the plans for the Wetland Centre project and opportunities to get involved
- Interact with other participants from a range of sectors to discuss potential ideas and uses for the Wetland Centre
- Generate ideas for conducting new research, demonstrations, training, and other wetlands programming at the Wetland Centre
- Provide input that will impact the future direction and activities of the Wetland Centre
- Learn about boreal wetlands, meet the project leads, and take part in a tour of the Evergreen Centre

## 2. What we Heard

### 2.1 Participants

The workshop was well-attended with over 35 participants representing a wide range of groups and sectors including industry (oil and gas, pipeline, forestry), Indigenous (e.g., Duncan's First Nation, Asinuwuche Winewak Nation of Canada), research (e.g., NAIT Boreal), government (e.g., AEP, County of Grande Prairie, Alberta Innovates), consulting, ENGOs (e.g., Mighty Peace Watershed Association, DUC, ELIS), and others.

Over the course of the day, participants took part in round table discussions, listened to presentations about the Wetland Centre project, and toured the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre. Participants had many opportunities to meet, discuss, and share ideas with fellow attendees. The following section summarizes the information that was shared through presentations and discussions.

### 2.2 Opening table-top discussions

Workshop organizers asked participants to start the day by learning about their table-mates and engaging in table top discussions about the following questions (1) Why did you say Yes to the workshop invitation; (2) What did you hope to achieve by participating? and (3) Imagine no boundaries, what would a Wetland Centre look like in 2025?

#### 2.2.1 Why did you say Yes to the workshop invitation?

Participants attended the workshop for a number of reasons, including:

- Interest in learning more about boreal wetlands, sharing challenges and solutions related to working in and around wetlands, and increasing understanding of wetland requirements (e.g., Alberta Wetland Policy).
- Opportunity to be involved in the Wetland Centre project from the ground-up.
- Opportunity to spread knowledge and facilitate behaviour change across diverse groups.
- Wetlands are important areas – they are important to Indigenous communities, future generations, trappers, companies, and more.
- Help meet the needs and objectives of participants' organizations (e.g., research, training, education).

Many participants highlighted the need for wetland training, education, and information sharing across a diversity of audiences, from youth to practitioners, as a motivating reason for attending the workshop. Participants were interested in learning about the Wetland Centre project, in part to gain an understanding of how the project may align with the needs and values of their organization, sector, or community in relation to wetlands. As part of this discussion, there was a strong recognition of the importance of wetlands to many different groups, but also of the challenges many groups face when it comes to managing and working in these systems.

#### 2.2.2 What did you hope to achieve by participating?

Most of the desired outcomes identified by participants as part of the morning round tables fit under four themes: (1) learning about the project; (2) learning about wetlands; (3) learning about information and tools for working in wetlands and minimizing adverse effects; and (4) connecting with other individuals and groups interested in wetlands. More specifically we heard that participants wanted to:

- Gain an understanding of the Wetland Centre project including the vision and scope of the Wetland Centre, project specifics, and resources required.
- Learn about wetlands and wetland functions.
- Learn about (and share) wetland best management practices (BMPs), training, education, and research opportunities and projects. Some participants also hoped to identify new BMPs and solutions as part of the workshop.
- Connect with and learn from other workshop participants about what they're currently doing, their needs, and opportunities for synergies.

Most participants expressed a strong interest in the opportunity to share information about wetland challenges and identify potential solutions or paths forward. One table of participants expressed a desire to not only bring different groups together for discussion, but to connect social and environmental science streams and to connect western science and traditional knowledge on wetland issues. One table also noted an interest in investigating compensation for a large wetland project in the County of Grande Prairie.

### 2.2.3 Imagine no boundaries, what would a Wetland Centre look like in 2025?

To finish the morning round tables, we asked participants to envision what a successful Wetland Centre, located at Evergreen Park, would look like to *them* by 2025. By asking participants to reflect on their needs and ideas *before* providing information about the project, we hoped to hear from participants without unduly influencing the type of information we were looking for. Some of the themes that emerged from these discussions include:

- **Reputation** – the Wetland Centre is recognized for excellence and can serve as a national example for other provinces.
- **Working together** – a place that can bring diverse groups together (e.g., government, industry, Indigenous groups, public, non-profits, research, etc.) to share information and address challenges; a place that can provide opportunities and experiences for all groups ranging from school children to practitioners; increased collaboration between provinces.
- **Training and education for practitioners** – provide education and training to practitioners, post-secondary, consultants, operators and others; link to education and research organizations (e.g., GPRC); training on BMPs for avoidance, minimization, and reclamation.
- **Training and education for other groups** – provide opportunities to educate younger generations (e.g., school programs, tours, credit programs), the public (e.g., self guided tours), OHV users (e.g., work with local societies), and others.
- **Traditional knowledge** – incorporate traditional ecological knowledge; have demonstrations and interpretive signage that include traditional knowledge (e.g., signage for native plants including medicinal, cultural, and spiritual information); educate visitors about traditional knowledge of wetlands.
- **Best management practices and wetland research** – showcase innovative technologies, current research, and BMPs; focus on reclamation practices, before, during, and after disturbance; BMP training; demonstrate cumulative impacts and approaches to minimize; demonstrations and field trials for professionals.
- **Funding** – secure long-term funding from industry to carry out research projects.

- **Infrastructure** – physical building that people can visit, building that can be used as a research station, interpretive signage, paths, observation stations.
- **Other uses** – everything from a bird observatory, seed collection of native wetland plants, self-guided trails.

### 2.3 Overview of the project leads and the Wetland Centre project

The Evergreen Learning and Innovation Society (ELIS) received approximately three years of project funding (September 2018 – June 2021) to start at Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park, building on the existing model used by the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre. ELIS contracted Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) to carry out the project. In November 2018, ELIS and DUC hired Angie Kuysters with Incremental Forest Technologies as the project manager.

Kylie McLeod (DUC project lead) gave a presentation on the organizations leading the Wetland Centre project involved and how the project came to be. Angie Kuysters (Wetland Centre Project Manager) gave a presentation about the Wetland Centre project, progress to date, and future plans. Both presentations are available [here](#).

### 2.4 Round Table #1 – What’s working well, challenges, and gaps

As part of the first round table discussions, we assigned one of the following three questions to several tables and asked participants to join a table to answer a question that was of interest to them (?). Participants had an opportunity to engage in discussions at two different tables and were encouraged to pick tables with a different question each time. The purpose of this round table was to get a better understanding of the current successes, challenges, and gaps that organizations saw relating to wetlands, and the ways in which participants felt that a Wetland Centre could potentially address challenges and gaps.

#### 2.4.1 For your organization or sector, what is working well with respect to wetlands?

Participants identified a range of things that they felt is currently working well with respect to wetlands, these included:

- Development and access to improved mapping products (e.g., LiDAR, Wet Areas Mapping, Baseline mapping) and better software
- Improved technology (e.g., equipment) and improved practices; industry is getting better at minimizing adverse effects to wetlands
- Winter operations on frozen ground and a current code of practice that works well under ‘normal’ conditions
- Improved understanding of boreal wetland classes including wetland functions, and increased research being done on wetlands
- Both industry and government standards are improving (e.g., Alberta Wetland Policy encourages minimizing adverse effects) and there is motivation for continued improvement
- Some improvement in awareness of wetlands in the Agriculture sector and more incentives for good practices by private land owners
- Increased willingness to have open dialogue about challenges and potential solutions to working in and around wetlands



While participants identified numerous challenges that come with working in wetlands (see 2.4.2), they recognized improvements in the information and tools available (e.g., research, mapping, technologies) and the increased willingness and motivation by both industry and governments to address wetland challenges as some of the more significant ‘wins’.

#### 2.4.2 For your organization or sector, what are the challenges and gaps with respect to wetlands?

Participants identified challenges relating to wetlands that fell into several recurring themes:

- *Wetlands are difficult areas to work in (water levels and peat soils present operational challenges) and expensive areas to work in (e.g., limited time of year for operations, specialized equipment, fixing ‘mistakes’).*
  - Avoidance efforts not always recognized
  - High cost associated with working in wetlands
- *Regulatory requirements and processes are unclear*
  - The Alberta Wetland Policy is difficult to navigate
  - Knowledge gap relating to the policy and procedures to follow when working in and around wetlands
  - No reclamation plan for the province of Alberta and a regulation gap in terms of methods to reclaim, groups are experimenting individually
  - Reclamation criteria and certifications aren’t always clear or easy to interpret
- *Lack of awareness and lack of information and/ or access to information about boreal wetlands*
  - Mapping and access to mapping products can be difficult for industry
  - Require more knowledge of native plants and seed collection
  - Need for wetlands to be understood and considered from multiple perspectives (e.g., ecology, hydrology, traditional knowledge)
- *Information gaps relating to BMPs for working in and around wetlands*
  - Lack of information about wetland
  - Difficulty creating wetlands in the boreal (wetland compensation components of the Wetland Policy)
  - Information gaps relating to wetland hydrology and connectivity, how industry activities can affect hydrology and connectivity, and practices to avoid or minimize these effects
  - Reclamation successes and failures need to be documented and shared
  - Need more options for working under non-frozen conditions
- *Communication and consistency amongst sectors*
  - Miscommunication amongst sectors, different sectors working with different information and following different approaches
  - Opportunity for training (e.g., yearly workshops) that brings together different sectors so that information is shared
  - Need for information sharing – intellectual property vs. collaboration
  - Improved communication required between citizens and developers



### 2.4.3 What are some ways that a Wetland Centre could benefit your organization or sector?

Many of the topics that came up during the morning discussions about a Wetland Centre 2025 were revisited as part of this discussion. However, this round was more focused on specific needs of the organizations in attendance, particularly for practitioners working in and around wetlands.

- Promote the importance of wetlands – biodiversity, carbon storage, landscape connectivity, cultural/ spiritual values, other ecosystem services.
- Training for a variety of groups – from wetland identification, BMPs for operating in and around wetlands, policies and requirements, and more.
- Platform for exploring and sharing Indigenous worldviews and bringing together western science and traditional knowledge on wetland topics.
- Test wetland BMPs (or wise practices), carry out wetland and wetland BMP research, share results of research and demonstrations with diverse audiences.
- Expand the significance of Evergreen Park, promote western Alberta and the County of Grande Prairie, create a draw to showcase industry environmental innovation.

### 2.5 Round Table #2 – Potential Centre Activities Discussions

As part of the second round table discussion the workshop organizers assigned a different topic to each of five tables, the topics were: (1) Research, (2) demonstrations, (3) training, (4) traditional ecological knowledge, and (5) funding. Participants were asked to use the following questions as a guide but were not required to stick to them. At the end of two 20-minute sessions participants re-grouped to share key points from the discussion.

1. *What is your organization/ sector doing now for [insert table topic] relating to wetlands?*
2. *What would your organization/ sector be interested in doing for [insert table topic] relating to wetlands?*
3. *What are some ways that your organizations/ sector would be interested in leading, participating in, or benefiting from [insert table topic] at the Wetland Centre?*

#### 2.5.1 Table #1 - Research

Research on wetlands is a growing field and there is a range of current research projects including understanding industry impacts on boreal wetlands, testing wetland reclamation and restoration approaches, understanding the role of native plants in constructed wetlands, identifying all aspects of traditional use of wetland, and understanding the role of beneficial insects such as pollinators.

The discussions also identified several research gaps that participants are interested in seeing filled. These including demonstrating connections between wetlands and uplands, testing the effectiveness of current and developing new wetland reclamation and restoration techniques, and increasing understanding of regional hydrologic functions.

Some of the research topics that participants were interested in addressing or seeing addressed at the Wetland Centre include:

- Effects of linear disturbances on wetland function
- Effect of climate change on wetlands
- Carbon and nutrient cycling in peatlands
- Impacts of different practices on wetlands

- Downstream effects of impacts to peatland (e.g., temperature, flow)
- Role of wetland soils in reclamation success (or failure)

Participants recognized that there must be a commitment to sharing the results and learnings that come from any research at the Wetland Centre.

### 2.5.2 Table #2 - Demonstrations

Participants recognized that there are already several wetland demonstrations at the Evergreen Learning and innovation Centre (e.g., seismic line demos on conifer swamp and treed fen, well pad reclamation on fen). Others noted that groups such as the Foothills Stream Crossing Partnership holds training on evaluating and fixing crossings (e.g., culvert maintenance and repair), but that training is limited to members only.

Participants were interested in demonstrations on a few key topics including:

- Establishing woody vegetation on wetlands
- Wetland road crossings to avoid/ minimize adverse effects to wetlands
- Restoring natural hydrology after work has been done on wetlands

Participants identified several ways in which the Centre could be used for demonstrations including:

- Showcase research and innovative ideas
  - New environmental mitigation techniques for cleaning up spills and repairing the land
  - Show the risk and potential damage of spills (could be pictures of effected wetland)
  - Demonstrate movement of salt water (produced by industries) and how fast it travels compared to oil
  - Demonstrate construction techniques to do the least harm to wetlands
  - Demonstrate the outcome after wetland restoration
- Build a reputation for the Centre and the community
  - Continually add and change demonstrations to keep up with Best Management Practices and ensure the Centre is fresh and interesting
  - Other provinces or even countries come in and explain the new and innovative resources they are using
  - Showcase the work that community business, government, and recreation are doing in the community
  - Public buy-in - need to see what we are trying to do at the Centre and communicate the value of the Centre
  - Reaching out to local farmers, land owners to give land for demonstrations
- Show the value of wetlands
  - Having classification of wetland types as you go through sections of the project
  - Demonstrate the functions of our wetlands to our water system and ecosystems
  - Have a chronological timeline of an undisturbed wetland after 10 years compared to a wetland that has been restored and examine the difference

### 2.5.3 Table #3 - Training

Training discussions covered a range of opportunities from training for professionals to training for school children. Currently there is some wetland internal and/or external training available for

professionals depending on the company. Internal training includes in house company training such as spring field season refreshers. External training includes courses by an outside service provider such as wetland courses offered by the University of Alberta Faculty of Extension. For school children, wetlands are currently a portion of the grade 4/5 curriculum.

Group discussions identified a wide range of training opportunities including:

- Classification and delineation (e.g., for surveyors)
- Alberta Wetland Policy
  - AEP vs AER codes of practice
  - Clarification among different water designations
  - Constructed wetland training
- Access for school groups
- Operator training courses
- Wetland identification, classification, and mapping
- Training for credit (high school, certifications, professional associations)
- Holding summer camp or other field workshops for students

Participants thought that there could be opportunities for different organizations to partner for funding, as well as opportunities to standardize training across different organizations and sectors. Some participants saw the Wetland Centre as a potential 'one-stop-shop' that could serve a range of training needs.

#### 2.5.4 Table #4 - Traditional Knowledge

Participants at one of the tables discussed challenges and opportunities relating to wetlands and traditional knowledge. As part of these discussions, attendees identified an opportunity to improve the dissemination of information about traditional knowledge of wetlands. Discussions about the importance of wetlands and traditional knowledge about wetland species covered:

- Value and ceremony around plants that is sometimes overlooked
- In house studies based on Traditional Ecological Knowledge are very accurate but adoption as scientific data is a challenge
- There is a lack of effective communication between academia and communities/elders
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge should be incorporated into training to bridge the gap between TEK and current practices
- How will shared data be used? Fear?
- Current end land use may not align with TEK ecological community goals - early succession vs final stage communities
- How is value defined? Are we looking at "value" from all perspectives?
- Movement from economic tradeoff considerations to cultural tradeoff considerations.
- What TEK can we use to be informed on wetland construction and reclamation

Another theme that emerged from these discussions was the consultation process with Indigenous communities. Some of the information recorded included:

- There are currently gaps in collaboration between traditional knowledge and industrial activities
- There is a need for upfront consultation to inform planning and incorporate field procedures
- Move from regulatory requirement to meaningful conversation and information

- Disagreements within communities, between communities, and between communities and proponents as part of consultation processes can be an issue
- Can we have the Wetland Centre as an early consultation field site to have meaningful dialogue to influence wetland study or reclamation from a TEK perspective and work backwards

The robust discussions on this topic highlighted a potential role that the Wetland Centre could play in sharing information about wetland traditional knowledge and bringing together western science and traditional knowledge. This theme will be explored as we move forward with the Wetland Centre project.

#### 2.5.5 Table #5 - Funding

Participants discussed a range of ways that activities at the Wetland Centre could be funded, including the need for short-term funding to cover specific projects and the need for long-term funding to cover administrative costs (e.g., project manager, communications) and project costs.

The group recognized that covering project costs is often easier (than funding administration) as there are opportunities for government and other grants for research, training, and demonstrations. In-kind support from industry, contractors, researchers, and other groups would also help support specific projects and involvement of multiple groups would make for stronger projects. Certain projects, such as training for industry, could be able to recoup costs.

There was some discussion around charging for participation, for example charging admission, to use the Wetland Centre for training, or to conduct a research study or field trial at the Centre. However, several participants raised concerns about the barriers this would create for several user groups.

Costs that are typically harder to cover, such as administration, site management, and communications, could be covered by industry sponsorship or by fundraising efforts. The challenge and the key to success is to develop a funding model that provides enough certainty to plan.

### 2.6 Path forward table-top discussion

Before wrapping up at the end of the day, we asked participants to let us know what type of information about the Wetland Centre they were most interested in and the communication methods they felt would be the most effective for themselves, and for reaching a wider audience.

#### 2.6.1 What is the best way for us to engage with you in the development of the Wetland Centre?

Participants identified several ways in which they were interested in receiving information about the Wetland Centre, and approaches they thought would be helpful for reaching a broader audience:

- Wetland Centre website and established links from other websites (e.g., ELIS, County of GP)
- Vlogs/Blogs, online surveys and research webinars on website
- Regularly scheduled emails/news feeds
- Community visits - attending events, open houses
- Social media - Facebook, Twitter – also leveraging other established communication platforms (e.g., County of GP, government)
- Annual Workshop/Annual General Meeting/Annual Field Tours
- Establish an advisory group - subgroups with specific mandates (i.e. Communications, long term funding and governance)
- Engaging with other regional groups such as the Grande Prairie AIA branch, Grande Prairie AB Native Plant Council, watershed associations, other local groups
- Issue a newsletter and/or add to others (e.g., County newsletters)

- Posters in the community

## 2.6.2 What sort of information would you like to see included in communications about the Wetland Centre?

Participants identified the types of information they would be interested in receiving, including:

- Project progress and completed milestones
- New sponsors
- Upcoming events and training
- Research project details
- Opportunities to provide in-kind support/be involved/volunteer
- Workshops/education opportunities/tours
- Brag page (success stories/positive happenings)
- Contact information
- Opportunities to connect with others implementing BMPs/technologies ideas
- Shared resources (documents, etc.)
- Policy/regulatory updates
- Funding sources
- Online surveys
- Wetland-cam (videos/live feed nest cam style)
- Links to all partner sites
- Did you know/fun facts about the Wetland Centre

## 2.7 Tour of the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre

Most workshop attendees were able to take in the tour of the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre site. The purpose of the tour was to provide a brief, on-the-ground introduction to the types of demonstrations currently in place at the Evergreen Centre to give participants an idea of the type of research and demonstrations that could be done at the Wetland Centre.





### 3. What we learned

We were extremely pleased with the number and diversity of people who attended the Wetland Centre workshop. We recognize that attendees have very busy schedules and taking a full day to learn about a new project is a strong signal as to the level of interest. Feedback from attendees on the workshop evaluation forms indicated that most participants found that one of the most valuable parts of the day was being able to share information with people from a range of organizations and sectors.

From the day's discussions we learned that with respect to the Wetland Centre there is interest in:

1. Having an on-the-ground location to share information about wetlands including wetland values, functions, challenges, and approaches to avoiding, minimizing, or reclaiming, with a wide variety of audiences.
2. Using an on-the-ground location as a hub to bring together diverse groups to share information about wetlands, address common challenges, and develop and showcase innovative technologies for wetland avoidance, minimization, and reclamation/ restoration.
3. Showcasing traditional knowledge, bringing together western science and traditional knowledge, and creating opportunities for Indigenous perspectives as part of developing the Wetland Centre.
4. Regular project communications to share information about project developments and opportunities for involvement. Participants are interested in receiving information via digital communications (e.g., website, newsletter, social media), hosting a regular event/ workshop, and attending community events to share information about the project.
5. Understanding funding opportunities and constraints and developing an effective governance structure to ensure the Wetland Centre is financially and functionally sustainable in the long-term.

Throughout the day's discussions it was clear that there is a need for information (and access to information) about boreal wetlands (from wetland functions to regulatory requirements) and an interest in using the concept of a Wetland Centre as a platform to fill information gaps.



## 4. Moving Forward

*As follow-up to the Wetland Centre workshop the project team will:*

- Share this proceedings document and workshop presentations with attendees and other stakeholders
- Complete and launch a website for the [Wetland Centre](#) to share information about the project:
  - Promote the website through the ELIS website, DUC National Boreal Program website, and social media
  - Build a mailing list for Wetland Centre project updates, registration will be through the website

*As part of carrying out activities for Year 1 (present – August 2019) of the project and to meet the requirements of the Provincial Court of Alberta funding the project team will:*

- Continue Strategic Planning for the Wetland Centre project and work towards developing a ‘living’ Strategic Plan by August 2019
  - Continue stakeholder engagement and incorporate learnings from ongoing one-on-ones, the workshop, and other engagement into the Strategic Plan
  - Complete communication plan for the project and draft calendar (to be updated on an ongoing basis)

*As part of planning activities for Year 2 (September 2019 – August 2020) of the project and to meet the requirements of the Provincial Court of Alberta funding the project team will:*

- Continue to work with Evergreen Park to develop access and parking lot plans
- Plan on-the-ground activities at the site including access and pathways, with the goal of starting to work on the site over the 2019/2020 winter
- Plan for how to use the site for demonstrations and research activities including working with specific organizations to identify near-term opportunities
- Explore approaches for incorporating Indigenous knowledge and values into the Wetland Centre (e.g., work with interested groups to potentially develop a project/ grant proposal to further explore opportunities)

To explore the path forward for the Wetland Centre beyond the scope of the three-year Provincial Court of Alberta funded project:

- Organize an advisory group made up of a small number of interested organizations (5-6 representatives) to discuss options and provide recommendations for long-term funding and governance of the Wetland Centre.

*How can workshop participants and other interested individuals and groups stay informed and help the Wetland Centre move forward?*

- **Keep up to date with progress on the Wetland Centre project** – read the workshop proceedings and presentations, sign up for the new Wetland Centre newsletter, and keep an eye on this site for updates, news, and events.



- **Share information about the Wetland Centre with others** – help us raise awareness and ensure the right groups are at the table to carry out the Wetland Centre project and plan for the future of the Wetland Centre.
- **Share your ideas for potential projects** – is there a project you’re looking to lead that the could fit with the Wetland Centre? We’re interested in hearing about potential wetland research, demonstration, training or other projects that could utilize the site.
- **Help us fund the Wetland Centre and plan for the long-term** – for the Wetland Centre to be successful beyond the three-year project, we will need to build a community of in-kind and financial supporters. In addition to assembling and working with a small advisory group, we are interested in hearing your ideas.
- **Keep in touch** – contact us with questions, events or projects that may be a good fit, or anything else you think would be helpful for us to know about.

Contact information

*[Sign-up](#) for our newsletter for occasional email updates about events and news.*

Angie Kuysters  
Wetland Centre, Project Manager  
Incremental Forest Technologies  
E: [angie@iftech.ca](mailto:angie@iftech.ca)  
P: 780-832-1956

Kylie McLeod  
Wetland Centre, DUC lead  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
E: [k\\_mcleod@ducks.ca](mailto:k_mcleod@ducks.ca)  
P: 780-930-1273

## Appendix 1 – What we learned details

### Interest

- There is a genuine interest, respect and concern for wetlands! People are busy and schedules are tight. People had to sacrifice other things in order to attend the workshop
- There is a recognition that wetlands are an important and valuable part of the landscape
- Working in wetlands is affecting all sectors in the region including oil and gas, forestry, agriculture, and municipalities
- There is a demand for more research and training about wetlands and how industrial and recreational activity impact wetlands – people genuinely care
- There is a high level of interest and need within the region to increase knowledge of wetland functions and how they are impacted by activity

### Avoidance not always viable – other alternatives

- The impacts of climate change need to be considered in terms of wetlands. The traditional “winter season” has shortened in the last few years
- There is a need for better understanding of the Alberta Wetland Policy and how to implement on the landscape
- Wetlands research is a priority within the scientific community and the area offers excellent opportunities due to location and complexity of wetland classes present
- There is a need for a better understanding of the Alberta wetland Policy and what that looks like on the ground
- “Avoidance” is not always a viable option today and not necessarily always the best option
- People are using many different communication methods to stay informed on a personal and professional level. Most communication is electronic and social media is highly used

### Bringing people together

- Bringing people together from different sectors, backgrounds and interests is meaningful, valuable and necessary for the success of the wetland centre project
- There are more organizations and groups that are involved in wetlands than we were originally aware of

### Indigenous knowledge

- There is a strong link to wetland areas for Indigenous stakeholders and a desire to be involved in the wetland centre from a training perspective as well for Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

### Other audiences

- Stakeholders agree that training youth about wetlands and how our activities impact them is very important
- The education and training should be extended to the general public, not just practitioners
- There is a desire for the Wetland Centre to be all encompassing...industry, recreational, municipal, etc.

- Ability to use the site for multiple uses is important including recreation, bird watching, etc.
- The wetland centre should be designed with multiple options for tours from self-guided to guided

#### Communications

- Attendees heard about the workshop through several different sources – Eventbrite, word of mouth, website
- One workshop is not enough – this should be an annual event and continue to communicate throughout the project
- Communication throughout the project is encouraged and important to stakeholders
- Advertising and communicating about the ELIS site and the Wetland Centre must be both broad and focused in scope to ensure all potential groups are reached

#### Funding and governance

- Long term funding and governance is a common question and focus among stakeholders and must be addressed
- There are many different resources available to assist in exploring funding opportunities
- Goals of the workshop attendees were centered around understanding the project scope and how they may be able to be involved in the project

## Appendix 2 - Wetland Centre Strategic Planning Workshop Agenda

**April 24, 2019**

**Evergreen Park – TARA Centre LSM Room**

*The success of the Wetland Centre depends on the involvement of potential users like you. Thank you for taking the time to learn about this project and share your ideas.*

9:00 – 9:15 – Opening remarks and workshop overview

9:15 – 9:45 – Opening table top discussions

9:45 – 10:15 – Introduction to the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre and Ducks Unlimited Canada's National Boreal Program

10:15 – 10:30 – Coffee break

10:30 – 11:00 – Introduction to the Wetland Centre project

11:00 – 12:00 – Round table session #1 – Focus on current wetland challenges, gaps, and opportunities

12:00 – 1:00 – Lunch

1:00 – 2:00 – Round table session #2 – Focus on potential Wetland Centre activities (e.g., training, research, demonstrations and other at participants request)

2:00 – 2:45 – All participant interactive activity and closing comments

2:45 – 3:00 – Break and walk to Evergreen

3:00 – 4:00 – Tour of the Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre

**Thank you to our workshop sponsor:**



**This workshop is hosted by:**



**Evergreen Learning and Innovation Centre**  
Inspiring Responsible Resource Development Through Innovation