

# Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park

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Wetland Centre Strategic Planning Workshop  
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# Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to establish a Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park. This will be accomplished through three project phases over the three years:

- ▶ Phase 1 - planning for the Wetland Centre
- ▶ Phase 2 - building support and infrastructure
- ▶ Phase 3 - implementing planned activities



# Project objectives

1. Develop a Strategic Plan for a Wetlands Centre at Evergreen Park, including implementation plans for using the Centre as a location for delivering wetlands training and for demonstrating wetland best management practices.
2. Build the infrastructure and marketing materials needed to support tours, training, and to attract key audiences to the Centre. Build support, both monetary and in-kind, to ensure the continuation of the Wetland Centre after three years.
3. Start to implement the Strategic Plan so that activities such as site visits and wetlands training can be carried out at the Centre in the third year. Secure long term financial support for the Centre.

# Project Funding

- ▶ We are receiving three years of project funding from the Court of Alberta to carry out the activities described on the following slides.
- ▶ These activities will form the backbone of a Boreal Wetland Training and Demonstration Centre; however, additional funds will improve the outcomes and reach of this project.
- ▶ An important part of this project will be securing long-term funding sources to continue to support the Wetland Centre after the three years of funding.

# Long term vision for a Wetland Centre

Though the original project proposal and core funding was for three years, as part of the project we will develop a long term financial plan to support the Wetland Centre. So that it can continue to provide:

- ▶ wetlands training
- ▶ publicly accessible wetland BMP demonstrations
- ▶ testing practices
- ▶ tours and educational opportunities



# Why a Wetland Centre at Evergreen Park?

- ▶ On the ground demonstration, research, and training sites meet a hard-to-fill need and can help bring diverse groups together
- ▶ Opportunity to build off of the excellent work and relationships built by ELIS
- ▶ Evergreen Park is a relatively central location and a hub for industry activity in north west Alberta
- ▶ Good diversity of boreal wetland types present within a small accessible area

# Why a Wetland Centre: Importance of boreal wetlands

- ▶ Alberta's boreal is over 30% wetlands, and some areas of the province are over 50% wetlands
- ▶ Wetlands provide important ecosystem goods and services and are sensitive systems. For example,
  - ▶ Caribou habitat
  - ▶ Carbon storage
  - ▶ Water storage and movement across the landscape
- ▶ Boreal wetlands are diverse, not well understood, and can be difficult to identify (e.g., conifer swamps)

# Why a Wetland Centre:

## Challenges working in wetlands

- ▶ Boreal wetlands can present unique difficulties for industry operating in and around wetlands - weak organic soils and high water tables
- ▶ Safety concerns (e.g., deep peat systems can have significant subsurface water flow even through the winter)
- ▶ Infrastructure concerns (e.g., roads flooding or culvert maintenance)
- ▶ Wetland are increasingly valued, providing opportunities to share information can help support legislative and regulatory requirements (e.g., Alberta Wetland Policy and Water Act requirements), industry certification (e.g., SFI, CSA, FSC), and social license needs.



# Why a Wetland Centre: A space for collaboration

- ▶ The Wetland Centre will provide a space where industry and other stakeholders can test and demonstrate BMPs
- ▶ Applying BMPs can directly benefit the environment by minimizing or avoiding impacts to wetlands
- ▶ Providing a space where BMPs can be tested and learnings can be shared across companies and across industries can promote the adoption of these practices

# Why a Wetland Centre: Opportunities for training

- ▶ Understanding wetland types and functions is important for everyone working in Alberta's boreal, from practitioners to decision-makers
- ▶ The site has a diversity of wetland types which provides opportunities for site tours to discuss the value and challenges of operating in wetlands, as well as more in depth training opportunities
- ▶ As activities at the site expand (e.g., demonstrations or trials introduced) there may be other types of training that can be offered

**We identified a need, we  
received funds to start,  
what comes next?**

# Year 1 - Planning

- ▶ Hire a project manager - **November 2018**
- ▶ Develop a strategic plan including e.g.,
  - ▶ Overarching information about the Centre
  - ▶ Marketing and engagement strategies
  - ▶ Draft financial plan
- ▶ The strategic plan will also include implementation plans for two key themes:
  - ▶ Delivering wetlands training at the Centre
  - ▶ Demonstrating best management practices (BMPs) for wetlands



**Talk to people!!**

# Strategic Plan: January - September 2019

- ▶ February - March, consult with stakeholders & write strategic plan
- ▶ April 24, 2019 stakeholder workshop
- ▶ April - May, finalize strategic plan

Through this process we will be identifying key activities and needs for Years 2 & 3 (and beyond) - from access, to facilities, to engagement strategies



# Year 2 - Building

- ▶ Building support for the Wetland Centre by developing marketing materials, reaching out to key audiences, and building relationships
- ▶ The development of infrastructure (e.g., signage, fencing, walkways)
- ▶ Coordinating in-kind demonstrations and research projects where opportunities exist
- ▶ Initiating long-term financial planning for the Centre



# Year 3 - Implementing

This is when key pieces of the Strategic Plan and associated Implementation Plans will be initiated, including:

- ▶ Facilitating a wetlands implementation project, for example delivering wetlands training to Indigenous practitioners
- ▶ Coordinating additional implementation projects including in-kind requests for demonstrations and research projects
- ▶ Conducting site tours of the Wetlands Centre
- ▶ Secure long term funding and develop a post-project plan with input from the ELIS Board and DUC



# Strategic Planning

- ▶ Started developing a draft Strategic Plan in January 2019
- ▶ Over March and April, we have been reaching out to stakeholders for input - both one-on-one and through this workshop
- ▶ Will be incorporating input from stakeholders and working with ELIS and DUC to develop the 'final' Strategic Plan in early summer
- ▶ The Strategic Plan will be a living document, we do not expect to have all of the answers!
- ▶ Want stakeholders to feel included and engaged through the Strategic Planning process, but also beyond

# Strategic Planning: Name, mission, vision

The *mission statement* guides the day-to-day operations and decision-making of the organization.

- ▶ What do we do today?
- ▶ For whom do we do it?
- ▶ What is the benefit?
- ▶ Purpose and values of the organization

The *vision statement* is about what you want to become. It's aspirational. Vision statement questions look like:

- ▶ What are our hopes and dreams?
- ▶ What problem are we solving for the greater good?
- ▶ Who and what are we inspiring to change?

# Strategic Planning - Wetland Centre Goals

These are a starting point, they are not final! We want to hear your ideas for goals.

We identified some initial goals for the Wetland Centre, based on the proposed project and what we believe are gaps that the Wetland Centre can help fill:

- ▶ Raise awareness and understanding of boreal wetlands, their functions, values and the diversity of wetlands found in Canada's boreal.
- ▶ Provide a permanent physical location for industry, government, and other stakeholders to collaborate, test, and demonstrate industry best management practices (BMPs) for working in/around boreal wetlands.
- ▶ Educate visitors, including public, government and industry, about approaches to minimize impacts to wetlands using demonstrations resulting from these collaborations.
- ▶ Provide a location for wetlands training for practitioners including training for industry, contractor, Indigenous, government, post-secondary and other audiences.
- ▶ Provide an area with multiple wetland classification types for research purposes to increase our knowledge of wetlands and continually innovate and improve industry practices

# Strategic Planning: Site development

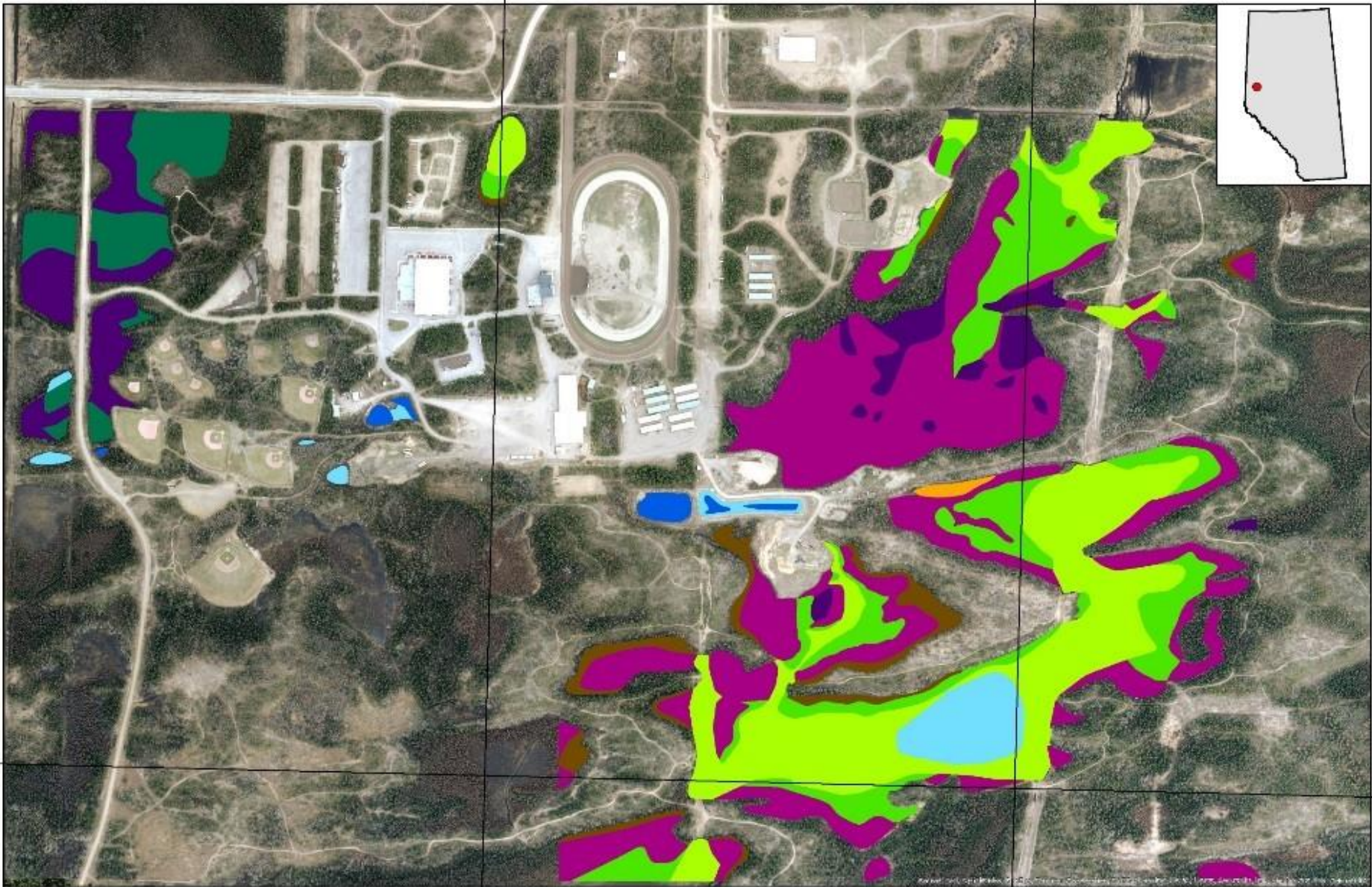
Some of the themes around site development that we are addressing in the Strategic Plan include:

- ▶ Site development approach (i.e. what where? How do we want to use the area within the MOU to meet a wide range of needs over time?)
- ▶ Site development goals (i.e. what can we aim to achieve in Years 1, 2, and 3 on-site)
- ▶ Potential constraints and challenges to site development (e.g., time of year when activities can take place, other activities in the park, OHV use)
- ▶ Future considerations (e.g., future developments at Evergreen Park, other activities in the areas)



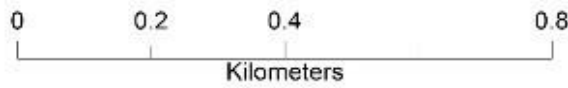
118°45'W

118°44'W



Projection: WGS UTM Zone 11N

 Conifer Swamp	 Graminoid Rich Fen	 Mixedwood Swamp	 Shrubby Rich Fen	 Treed Rich Fen
 Emergent Marsh	 Hardwood Swamp	 Open Water	 Tamarack Swamp	





Potential site access

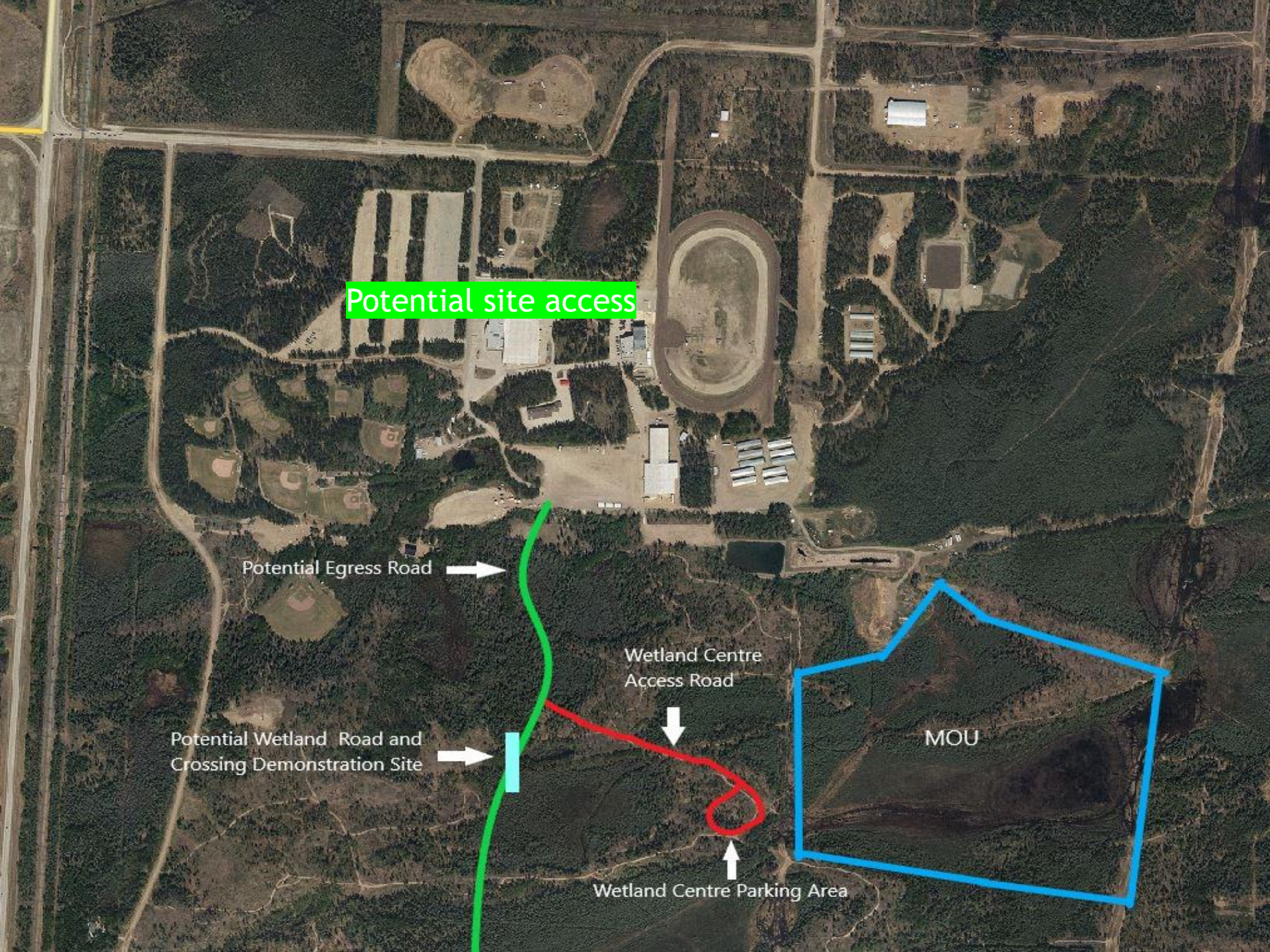
Potential Egress Road

Potential Wetland Road and Crossing Demonstration Site

Wetland Centre Access Road

Wetland Centre Parking Area

MOU





# Strategic Planning: Activities at the Centre

We identified three main priorities for the Wetland Centre project that fit with DUC and ELIS' mission and goals.

These include:

- ▶ Practitioner training - specifically introductory wetland and wetland BMP training, but recognizing other opportunities
- ▶ Research - primarily field trials and applied research projects
- ▶ Wetland BMPs (\*note, because the nature of the court order there is strong interest in identifying opportunities for pipeline demonstrations, but not exclusively)

# Strategic Planning: Other activities?

As part of today's discussions we will be asking for your input on the types of activities you are interested in seeing at the Wetland Centre. They may fit into one of these three themes, or it may be something completely different - we want to hear all of your thoughts!



# Strategic Planning: Key stakeholder groups

- ▶ Industry - oil and gas, pipeline, forestry, other
- ▶ Government - federal, provincial, municipal
- ▶ Indigenous
- ▶ Contractors
- ▶ Research
- ▶ Environmental NGOs
- ▶ Other potential visitor or land user groups e.g., education, public, OHV users

Who is missing? Are there groups not on this list or not here today that you think should be a part of this project?

# Strategic Planning: Stakeholder engagement approach

Balancing limited capacity with high interest in the project!

- ▶ Stakeholder identification and registry
- ▶ One-on-ones with key stakeholders
- ▶ Today's workshop
- ▶ Identifying ongoing approaches for working with a diverse group

We will be asking for your input on how to best engage yourself or your organization in this project.

# Strategic Planning: Communications and Marketing

Communications about the Wetland Centre is going to be a very important part of what makes this project a success.

Future communications may include:

- ▶ blog posts, tweets, news articles, or any other activities that can be used to promote and raise awareness of the Wetland Centre
- ▶ a Wetland Centre website.
- ▶ other marketing materials as needed, including materials for potential partners and funders. For example:
  - ▶ Project brochure
  - ▶ Letters or mini-proposals requesting funding support
  - ▶ Project power point

# Strategic Planning: Short and long-term funding

As part of strategic planning we are identifying potential short and long term funding opportunities.

- ▶ Short-term funding (Years 1-3) needs are predominantly on a project-by-project basis, to carry out research, demonstrations, training, or site infrastructure.
- ▶ Long-term funding (beyond Year 3) needs will also be for projects, but will also require us to find administrative/operational funding (e.g., Project Manager's time).

Opportunities include a range of grants, in-kind and financial support from partners, fundraising, and other.



# Strategic Planning: Other considerations

- ▶ Health and safety
- ▶ Avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts
- ▶ OHV users and trails

# How we will use the input we receive today

Where do we go from here?

- ▶ A summary of today's workshop will be shared with everyone who registered for the workshop.
- ▶ The feedback today will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan that is currently being developed.
- ▶ Follow-up with individuals and organizations who participated here today (and others who were not able to make it) as needed.
- ▶ Identify activities that require further consultation and those that we are able to move ahead with.



Questions?