

## **Alberta non-profit receives Environment Week Award**

**June 7, 2018 (Calgary, AB):** The 'CreekWatch Citizen Science and Stewardship Program' offered by the RiverWatch Institute of Alberta was honoured with an Emerald Award during this year's Environment Week. Now in its 27<sup>th</sup> year, the Emerald Awards are presented every June by the Alberta Emerald Foundation, coinciding with Canadian Environment Week.



**Carmen Boyko, Emerald Foundation Executive Director and Reed Froklage, RiverWatch Institute of Alberta, with the Emerald Award for 'Shared Footprints'**

"RiverWatch Institute of Alberta, your efforts truly epitomize the best of Alberta by displaying vision, innovation and sustainability. Thank you for all your hard work, and congratulations again on being recognized for your outstanding environmental achievements."

Rachel Notley  
Premier of Alberta

"This award recognizes and celebrates projects that go beyond normal land management practices to have a positive impact on the environment. Recipients have demonstrated land and water stewardship, built shared knowledge, improved air quality and/or reduced land disturbances."

Jim Saunders  
Chair, Alberta Real Estate Foundation  
Shared Footprints Sponsor

"This year, 50 nominations were received. Each and every one of those nominations is an inspiring story of a community group, school or business that has taken the extra step to undertake an extraordinary environmental program or project,"

Andy Etmanski  
Board Chairman, Alberta Emerald Foundation

"CreekWatch enables community volunteers to become more knowledgeable and engaged with the health of their local creeks. We don't tell volunteers how healthy their creek is – instead, we provide them with the support and tools to research and discover

on their own. It's about community-based environmental monitoring, and receiving an Emerald Award is exciting confirmation that the work of our volunteers is valued."

Reed Froklage  
RiverWatch Citizen Science Coordinator

Each year since its beginnings in 2015, CreekWatch and approximately one-hundred corporate and community volunteers in three Alberta cities have taken-up the challenge of answering: "How healthy is our local creek?" Equipped and trained in using portable water quality labs, CreekWatch volunteers have collected and analyzed samples from more than a dozen urban stormwater creeks. From these different locations, an annual report card is produced evaluating the relative health of Alberta's creeks.



**Reed Froklage collects water quality data from an Alberta creek in support of the CreekWatch Citizen Science Program.**

CreekWatch participants contribute further by offering a hand in stewardship events involving shoreline clean-ups, invasive weed removal and tree planting. Additionally in 2016, as part of its shoreline activity along Calgary's Bow River, CreekWatch participants came upon – and later helped remediate -- a major stormwater plastics spill of some half-million industrial plastic pellets scattered along 10 kilometers of riverbank. Because of this keen detection work, a 760-hour shoreline remediation by CreekWatch followed.

Major CreekWatch funding is in partnership with HSBC Bank Canada, with additional Edmonton funding through Dream Development, Invistec Consulting and Raywalt Construction. Expert advice was contributed by staff at EPCOR, City of Calgary and Alberta Environment and Parks. Hundreds of monitoring hours and thousands of data points were generated by community and corporate volunteers.

For more information regarding the RiverWatch Institute of Alberta and the Emerald Awards, please contact:

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