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## Alberta students win \$12,000 for environmental initiatives

**CITY OF WETASKIWIN, ALBERTA, MAY 16, 2023** - The top ten finalists in the Caring for Our Watersheds contest showcased their creative ideas for environmental initiatives at an event hosted by the Battle River Watershed Alliance at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin, Alberta last Friday.

For the contest, students are asked to submit a proposal that answers the question, “What can you do to improve your watershed?” As part of the competition, students must research their local watershed, identify an environmental concern, and come up with a project proposal to implement a realistic solution in their local watershed.

Over 500 students participated in this year’s competition from 17 schools in Alberta. The top ten finalists came from Cardston, Claresholm, Calgary, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat and Magrath to present their proposals. The finalists received a cash prize plus a matching amount for their school – \$12,000 was awarded. Along with the cash prizes, the contest sponsor (Nutrien) also provides an additional \$10,000 to help contestants implement their ideas. The top three finalists included a project from Bishop Lloyd Middle School in Lloydminster to limit the spread of invasive species, and two projects from students at Centennial High School in Calgary including a week-long initiative to engage students and willow staking to prevent erosion and increase slope stability.

The finals included a lineup of judges from Edmonton Public School Board, City of Calgary, Nutrien, Heartland Generation, and four Alberta Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils.

Caring for Our Watersheds is an international program. Students in Canada, the United States and Argentina are engaged in improving their watersheds through this program. The Canadian contest started in 2007 through the Battle River Watershed Alliance with help from the Battle River Community Foundation in Camrose, Alberta.

A family member from this year’s winning team shared their experience with the contest: *“I wanted to thank you for the amazing experience you created and facilitated for Emmett. He has learned so much along the way, from the start of the project to the presentation to when he finally installs the stations. He has learned not only about our watershed but so many life experiences as well... Many thanks to all of you and so appreciate everything you do for the youth of today.”*

Thank you to all the students, teachers, and volunteers who participated in this year’s Caring for Our Watersheds contest, sponsored by Nutrien and hosted by the Battle River Watershed Alliance.

The success of Caring for Our Watersheds relies on teachers, students and community volunteers. If you would like to be involved in the 2024 contest, please visit [caringforourwatersheds.com](http://caringforourwatersheds.com) or contact Kandra Forbes, [kandra@battleriverwatershed.ca](mailto:kandra@battleriverwatershed.ca)

### Media Inquiries:

Battle River Watershed Alliance – Kandra Forbes, Education Lead, P: 780-672-0276

E: [kandra@battleriverwatershed.ca](mailto:kandra@battleriverwatershed.ca)

Nutrien – Chloe Sprecker, P:403-225-7341 E: [chloe.sprecker@nutrien.com](mailto:chloe.sprecker@nutrien.com)

**2023 Caring For Our Watersheds Alberta Winners**

Place	Award	Proposal Idea	Student Name(s)	School
1st	\$1000	Brush Off, Invaders	Cassy Setter & Emmett Sherbinin	Bishop Lloyd Middle School (Lloydminster)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	\$900	Our Eco-Week	Moses Mo	Centennial High School (Calgary)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$800	Willow Staking	Jade Pham	Centennial High School (Calgary)
4 <sup>th</sup>	\$700	Trees & Beads	Taylor Ball & Kypstin Watters	Dr Roy Wilson Learning Centre (Medicine Hat)
5 <sup>th</sup>	\$600	Environmentally Friendly Cosmetics	Sarah Franklin, Zoe Murphy, Alexa Sharp & Nora Vukadinovic	Elboya School (Calgary)
6 <sup>th</sup>	\$500	Sustainable Irrigation	Aria Vanhala	Magrath High School (Magrath)
7 <sup>th</sup>	\$450	The Weird, Abstract and Educated	Paige Smyth & Stella Wagner	Dr Roy Wilson Learning Centre (Medicine Hat)
8 <sup>th</sup>	\$400	Bat Boxes	Mary-Ann Toone	Willow Creek Composite High School (Claresholm)
9 <sup>th</sup>	\$350	Saving our bees and environment	Callie Ayers & Kalia Slarks	Cardston Junior High School (Cardston)
10 <sup>th</sup>	\$300	Cover crops for gardens - let's stop erosion!	Bree Poissant & Jayla Senior	Crescent Heights High School (Medicine Hat)