



# Alberta Wilderness Association

*Presents*

## ***Lorraine Mitchelmore***

President and Country Chair, Shell Canada Ltd.

special guest speaker for the

### **2013 Martha Kostuch Annual Wilderness and Wildlife Lecture**

Over much of the past century Alberta's natural environment has been caught in the grip of ever increasing resource extraction. Riches from Alberta's lands have economically benefited many here at home, nationally and internationally. But now there is growing recognition from within the province and from outside that Alberta cannot maintain its water and air quality, its arable soil base and its indigenous wildlife without major changes towards ecological sustainability. Alberta has literally raced into its present environmental predicament; now, in determining our future, how can AWA best bridge gaps and maintain forward momentum towards a goal of ecological sustainability? How will we best work with a variety of partners to secure a legacy of abundant native wildlife and natural wild spaces, of clean water and air, and the soil base we depend upon for food supply, all of these being integral parts of ecological stability?

AWA invites speakers for our annual Wilderness and Wildlife Trust Lecture, to challenge AWA to seek new directions and ways to increase its effectiveness.

We are excited to have Ms. Mitchelmore be our 2013 lecturer, as someone who has taken industry in new and more caring directions; as someone who has found ways to move Shell Canada into longer term community and environmental responsibility; as someone AWA has been able to work with in round table situations, and as someone who AWA knows is committed to making a difference.

*The 2013 Wilderness Defenders Award recipient will be Roger Creasey (posthumous).*

*Two Great Gray Owl Awards will be presented, to Paul Sutherland and Nuno Fragoso.*



Alberta Wilderness Association

455 - 12<sup>th</sup> St. NW • Calgary, Alberta • October 25, 2013  
Reception 6:00pm • Lecture and Awards 7:00pm  
Members \$50 • Non-members \$75  
Reservations required, space is limited: (403) 283-2025  
Online: [www.AlbertaWilderness.ca/lecture](http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca/lecture)

# Lorraine Mitchelmore on the Importance of Collaboration and Finding Common Ground:

## The Sixth Annual Martha Kostuch Lecture

By Christyann Olson, AWA Executive Director



I first met Lorraine Mitchelmore, President and Country Chair of Shell Canada Ltd., at AWA's offices 10 years ago. She was part of a Shell team working on the company's Waterton field. Historically, AWA's relationship with Shell has been rocky. AWA was part of the Prairie Bluff blockade in the 1980s, a demonstration Shell didn't take kindly to. The company served an injunction against AWA and some members of the board.

By 2002 both parties realized this pattern of behaviour wasn't getting us anywhere – a theme Lorraine developed in her Kostuch lecture. I like to think both AWA and Shell took some bold steps then to set some of our differences aside and promote what we could agree on. Lorraine helped Shell develop its life-cycle plan for the Waterton field and announce some protection in the front canyons of the Castle.

Since then Shell and AWA have worked to maintain a positive relationship. This certainly doesn't mean we always agree with each other. We don't. AWA applauds the positive and criticizes the negative. When Richard Secord, AWA's President, suggested we should invite Lorraine to offer the Martha Kostuch Wilderness and Wildlife Trust Fund Lecture, I thought it was a great idea. As we do with all our lecturers, we invited Lorraine to challenge us and I believe she did that in her lecture. I also think she made points where we should challenge her.

Two themes stood out for me when I listened to Lorraine deliver her lecture: collaboration and common ground. I hope her audience, like me, was pleased to hear Shell's President first congratulate AWA for our

"ecocentredness," for our history of standing up and advocating for what is voiceless in our politics – wildlife and wild habitats. I suspect Lorraine's appreciation for our values comes, at least in part, from the importance of place and landscape in her personal value system. This is what I heard when I listened to her talk about growing up on the ocean in her home, Newfoundland and Labrador, where "that horizon and the salt air is just in your blood." Alberta's landscapes, whether she's experienced them through boots, saddles, or

is to find ways of providing the energy needed to promote this development that strikes an optimal balance between social, economic, and environmental needs. Such circumstances demand we find common ground. Ignoring these people and their plight is not, in her view, an option.

I would have been shocked if Shell's President didn't make the case that her company recognizes these needs and is making great strides in pursuing them. I'm sure not everyone in the room shared Lorraine's optimistic

*"But in order for us to make progress and really quick progress we have to change the way we think. We need to see environmental performance in Canada...as a source of competitive advantage, as an opportunity rather than a cost."*

- Lorraine Mitchelmore

cross-country skis, are going some distance in filling the void of being away from home.

President Mitchelmore reminded us of the challenges and opportunities we face, circumstances that loom ever larger with each passing year of this new century. Billions of people live in abject poverty. We, rich and prosperous nations, need to help these people develop what's needed for them to enjoy healthy livelihoods. The challenge, of course,

assessment of where the Canadian petroleum industry is today. It's certainly true, for example, that her industry's oil sands operations have made significant reductions when it comes to the tonnes of greenhouse gases emitted per barrel of petroleum production. These reductions, however, are more than made up for by dramatic increases in total bitumen production. This is why Environment Canada predicted in October 2013



Lorraine Mitchelmore, President and Country Chair of Shell Canada Ltd.

PHOTO: © K. MILHACHEON

that the oil sands will increase total oil/gas sector emissions by 23 percent between 2005 and 2020.

President Mitchelmore offered a key example of collaboration in her speech, the Quest Carbon Capture and Sequestration Project, that she hopes will deflate greenhouse gas emissions predictions such as Environment Canada's. In Quest the collaboration is between Shell, its partners in the Athabasca Oil Sands Project, and the provincial and federal governments. Together they are developing the world's first industrial scale carbon capture and sequestration project. The project, located at the company's Scotford upgrader/refinery operations, will capture one-third of Scotford's greenhouse gas emissions or more than one million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. The ambition behind this technologically-driven approach to climate change, if the approach proves to be effective and economic, is to capture and store securely 20 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. Shell's project is being closely followed in Europe, particularly in Britain, where the reaction so far has been more positive than Canadian oil sands operators have come to expect.

Shell then is an important facilitator of this industrial-scale experiment. So too though is the public purse. The federal and provincial governments are picking up two-thirds



Lorraine Mitchelmore, Morgan Yate, and Glen Sine moving through the crowd after a thoughtful talk and rousing discussion of the importance of balancing social, environmental, and economic considerations in our lives.

PHOTO: © K. MILHACHEON

of the project's estimated \$1.35 billion price tag. Alberta has dedicated a whopping \$745 million to the project; Ottawa is contributing \$120 million. It was good to hear that all of the technical information regarding this project will be made available to interested parties. That's the least our \$865 million should buy us.

I have to confess how much I would like to see the Alberta government commit hundreds of millions of dollars, ok...even one hundred million dollars, to a program to buy back oil sands and other petroleum leases and forestry tenures in the boreal natural region. Imagine how much good we could do for woodland caribou if we reduced the promise of industrial activity in critical habitat that is implicit in existing, yet to be developed, leases. Build, in other words, on the important first step taken this spring when Alberta stopped issuing new mineral leases

in west central Alberta.

Lorraine also talked about important examples of collaboration between Shell and conservationists. In British Columbia, Shell relinquished tenures in the Klappan area in the northwest part of the province, much to the approval of the Tahltan First Nation. For its part the BC government will not issue future petroleum tenures in the Klappan. In Alberta, as we describe elsewhere in this issue of WLA, Shell partnered with Ducks Unlimited to establish the Shell Buffalo Hills Conservation Ranch southeast of Calgary. Shell's \$3 million contribution to this project means that Shell has set aside 9,000 acres for conservation in Alberta, an area equal to 35 percent of the lands Shell is mining and otherwise using in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area. These examples of conservation offsets illustrate well the benefits of collaboration and that search for common ground.

President Mitchelmore also used a portion of this year's Kostuch lecture to recognize the invaluable contributions Roger Creasey made to conservation in Alberta. This year AWA added Roger's plaque to those found on the north wall of the main floor of Hillhurst Cottage School. Roger was tragically taken too early in life from his family and from the Shell and AWA communities, communities that will miss his spirit and insight as we move forward. I know Roger would have welcomed the themes of Lorraine's lecture. She told those who didn't know Roger about the important role he played as a bridge-builder between the industry, academic, and activist worlds. He moved easily among all three communities and helped more than a few of us find common ground over the years.

This year's lecture ended with a very generous gift from Shell to AWA. President Mitchelmore presented me with a \$50,000 cheque that will be used to support and improve AWA's library, the Roger Creasey Memorial Library. AWA greatly appreciates this donation as we do Lorraine's public commitment to collaboration and to trying to make her adopted home a place that finds a better balance between social, environmental, and economic values. 🌱