

Media Release

For Immediate Release

For more information on Olds College, please visit www.oldscollege.ca or call 1-800-661-6537.

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About Olds College:

Founded in 1913, Olds College's vision is to be the premier Canadian integrated learning and applied research community specializing in agriculture, horticulture, land and environmental management. Located 45 minutes north of Calgary, Olds College prepares students to contribute provincially, nationally and internationally through careers in agriculture, horticulture, environmental land management, agribusiness, and rural entrepreneurship. Olds College provides certificate, diploma and applied degree programs, and participates with other institutions in offering post-diploma degrees. Olds College is further dedicated to nurturing innovation, learning, applied research and commercialization for agribusiness through the School of Innovation.

Olds College, Provincial Ministers, usher in new era of environmental research

OLDS, ALBERTA, October 15, 2009 – A new era of environmental research and education was ushered in today as Olds College and key provincial ministers gathered on Olds College campus for the official groundbreaking of the College's Botanic Gardens III and Treatment Wetlands.

On hand for the event were the Honourable Rob Renner, Alberta Minister of Environment, Honourable George Groeneveld, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Honourable Ted Morton, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

"The construction of this research-based wetlands is the first of its kind in Alberta," said Rob Renner, Minister of Environment. "It's a double-pronged scientific approach that will treat the College's storm and waste water while providing us with solid information to help improve our management of Alberta's wetlands."

Following addresses from several notable speakers including Minister Renner, a cheque for \$490,700 was presented to Olds College by David Poppitt of Westcreek Developments. The donation is part of an innovative pilot project that will serve as mitigation funding, investments required of all developers who are unable to avoid displacing wetlands in the normal course of construction. Prior to this pilot, only one other organization in Alberta has been authorized to receive mitigation funding. If deemed successful, Alberta may soon have more resources available for protection and restoration of its wetlands.

"This is a tremendous day for Olds College and a celebration of what we are capable of with the support of industry and government. This several-million-dollar outdoor research laboratory truly marks the beginning of a new chapter in Alberta's Water for Life strategy," said Jordan Cleland, Vice President, Advancement, Olds College. "A significant portion of the province's wetlands have been lost to date. We are in a position now to apply our specialty in real life, hands-on solutions towards preserving the environment while simultaneously researching how wetlands can clean various "grey waters" and industrial waste water -- and it couldn't be timelier."

Several other key partners instrumental in the progress of the Botanic Gardens III and Treatment Wetlands include Henry Heuver, Project Chair and donor of \$1 Million, Denis Westhoff, noted engineer behind the design of the wetlands, the Town of Strathmore and the City of Calgary, who have invested \$40,000 with an eye towards reducing urban impact.

See attached backgrounder for more details