



October 2, 2009

## **Bow Habitat Station ready to educate Alberta's next generation of environmental stewards**

### ***Sponsored learning opportunities support exhibits and programs***

*Calgary...* Students will learn about the relationship between human activities and the health of Alberta's aquatic ecosystems and fish populations at the newly completed Bow Habitat Station.

Hands-on learning, interactive displays, and programming that aligns with the Alberta Education science curriculum will help students become environmental stewards now and in the future. Exhibits showcasing Alberta's southern, prairie marsh, Rocky Mountain, and northern-boreal habitats will also show students the interconnections between the province's many aquatic ecosystems.

"Bow Habitat Station will help young people understand how every turn of the tap, every drain of the sink, and every flush down the gutter affects fish, their habitat and our own water supply," said Minister of Sustainable Resource Development Ted Morton. "With our sponsors, we have provided a learning experience that will help students to make informed lifestyle decisions for the health of Alberta's environment and communities for years to come."

BP Canada provided \$225,000 for the facility's Nature Theatre, and HSBC Canada provided \$100,000 for the Discovery Room, a specialized learning area. In 2003, Ducks Unlimited Canada provided \$450,000 to construct the Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland and is also finalizing plans to build sampling docks for the interpretive wetland's outdoor programming. The Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society continues to support the facility's fish hatchery operations, educational programs and fundraising. The Alberta government provided \$9.7 million for the building upgrades, and the Centennial Legacies Program provided \$5 million for the exhibits, as a lasting legacy of Alberta's 2005 centennial.

"I am excited that we have begun to use the education potential of this facility," said Lloyd Horn, President of the Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society. "Education is the key to responsible environmental choices, and the place to start is with our youth."

Bow Habitat Station's exhibits and programs are open to schools and organizations that register for programs. Bow Habitat Station also consists of the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery and Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland. The interpretive wetland is open to the public.

For more information about Bow Habitat Station, visit [www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs](http://www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs).

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

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To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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## Bow Habitat Station

Bow Habitat Station in Calgary is an integrated facility where students can learn about Alberta's aquatic habitats, fish species and fisheries management. The Bow Habitat Station consists of:

- Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery;
- Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland; and,
- education programs and services (new feature).

### Education Programs and Services

Bow Habitat Station's exhibits and programs are open to schools and organizations that register for programs. Education programs are integrated with the elementary science curriculum. The interpretive wetland is open to the public.

Four main galleries, a multimedia theatre and other learning areas occupy 900 square metres. The four galleries include:

- Fantastic Fish Gallery - explores the diversity of Alberta's fish species through 12 large aquaria, life-size models of fish and fish anatomy.
- Fish Forever Gallery - features lifecycles, management, hatchery story and fishing exhibits to showcase the important role of fish as environmental indicators and how they are managed to keep fish in our future. The gallery also features exhibits about the many other uses of fish.
- Water Gallery - features water quality, water use and water cycle exhibits to tell the story of fresh water in Alberta.
- Wet Alberta Gallery - explores the variety of aquatic habitats in Alberta where visitors can feel what it is like to walk on a peatland bog or crawl through a beaver lodge.

At the BP Nature Theatre, students watch "The Big Show," a celebration of Alberta's natural diversity and our role in stewardship for the province's aquatic ecosystems. The Discovery Room will intrigue students with questions such as: how do you tell the age of a fish?

### Sponsors and Partners

- BP Canada Energy - funding for BP Nature Theatre and Coldwater Stream.
- Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society - continued involvement in fish culture operations, educational programs and fundraising.
- Ducks Unlimited Canada - funding for Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland and sampling docks for the wetland's outdoor programming (in progress).
- HSBC Canada - funding for Discovery Room.

The City of Calgary maintains the Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland. The new exhibits were made possible through the Alberta government's Centennial Legacies Program, which invested funding into community projects to leave lasting legacies as part of Alberta's 2005 centennial celebrations. Government departments also worked together to build and maintain Bow Habitat Station:

- Alberta Sustainable Resource Development - led exhibit development, develops outreach and educational programs, and manages fisheries operations.

- Alberta Infrastructure - built facility, interpretive wetland and coldwater stream and is responsible for general subsurface maintenance of the wetland and coldwater stream.
- Alberta Environment - reviewed all Water Gallery content.

### **Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society**

Founded in 1992, the Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society is committed to educating visitors to Bow Habitat Station about the importance of Alberta's aquatic resources. Members come from all walks of life and are united by their love of fish, wildlife and natural environments. The society supports the vision of Bow Habitat Station through fisheries work, fundraising, habitat enhancement, public outreach and special events.

Contact the Bow Habitat Station Volunteer Society at 403-297-7066 or [bhs.vs@gov.ab.ca](mailto:bhs.vs@gov.ab.ca)

### **Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery**

Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery has been an important part of Alberta's fisheries management program since 1973. One of the largest enclosed fish hatcheries in North America, Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery raises 1.7 to 2 million fish annually for stocking into Alberta's waters. Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery raises a variety of fish species, which may include rainbow, brown, brook, cutthroat and bull trout and Arctic grayling.

### **Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland**

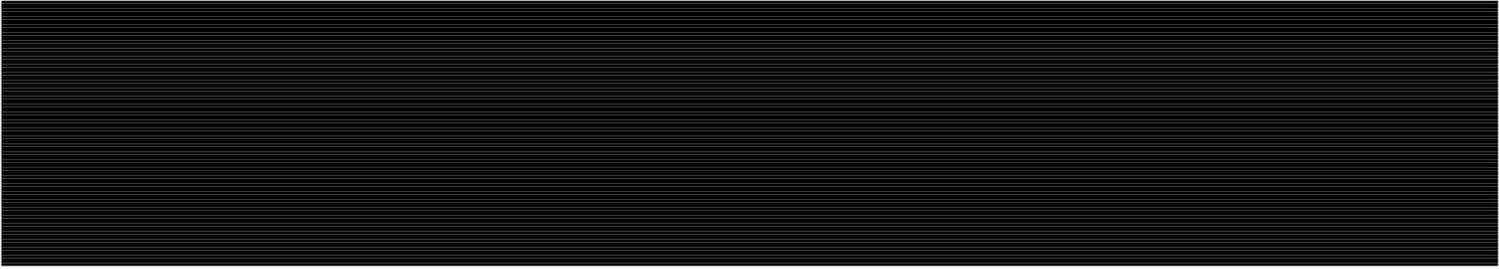
Built between 1999 and 2002, the park guides visitors on three unique trails showcasing several aquatic habitats found in Alberta and the wildlife and plant species that call them home. Visitors can also enjoy the BP Canada Coldwater Stream. Built in 2004, this representative stream course features an interpretive trail with signs describing the aquatic and riparian habitats commonly associated with a flowing waterway. The wetland park is part of the Bow Habitat Station's education programs.

For more information about Bow Habitat Station, visit [www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs](http://www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs), e-mail [bowhabitat.info@gov.ab.ca](mailto:bowhabitat.info@gov.ab.ca) or call 403-297-6561.

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## **Education Programs at Bow Habitat Station**

*Calgary...* Education programs align with the Alberta Education science curriculum to enhance student learning in the exhibits, Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland, and Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery. Education programming staff will encourage students to explore and investigate through hands-on interaction with their environment.

Staff are developing education programs in phases and will evaluate the programs' success to refine them and expand them over the next three years. There are four programs for 2009-10:

- SENSEsational (Grade One) - students will use each of their senses to discover how they differ from a trout, and they will further their investigation in the Aqualab and Pearce Estate Park Interpretive Wetland.
- Water is Life (Grade Two) - as students drink with a dinosaur, they will discover why water is essential to life. Students will engage in activities in Bow Habitat Station, exploring the importance of water, its many uses, and characteristics.
- Trout Tales (Grade Three) - students study the life cycle of a trout from egg to adult, including the fry stage. Students will investigate trout growth, development needs, and adaptations.
- March through the Marsh (Grade Five) - Students will explore wetland ecosystems and discover Alberta's biodiversity.

Bow Habitat Station also provides two programs for students of all ages:

- Bow Habitat Station exhibits tour and viewing of "The Big Show"; and,
- Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery tour.

For more information about programs or to register, visit [www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs](http://www.srd.alberta.ca/bhs) or call 403-297-6561.

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