

Reclamation Project breaks ground in Driftpile

November 19, 2014 - Representatives from Northern Lakes College, Shell Canada, Woodland Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) and Driftpile First Nations were in Driftpile, Alberta to break ground for their unique reclamation project. The project aims to reclaim land disturbed by oil and gas activity using plants traditionally used by First Nations people in the area.

The partners in this reclamation project have been working together with elders and council members from the Driftpile community to identify traditional and medicinal plants that will reclaim the land. Representatives from all partners involved in the project were on site for the very literal groundbreaking, where specialized machinery churned the densely compacted earth to prepare the ground for planting in the spring.



Back row pictured L to R: Laura Giroux (Driftpile Council Representative), Robert – (Heavy equipment operator), Dave Blackmore (WOLF), Tania Derraugh (Shell Canada), Leanne Laverick (Shell Canada), Milo Mihajlovich (Incremental Forest Technologies Ltd.), Mark – (WOLF), Randy Anderson (Northern Lakes College), Brad Hestbak (Northern Lakes College). Front row, members of the Driftpile community and volunteers on the reclamation project

Over the winter, the plants that have been carefully selected for their traditional and medicinal purposes will be cultivated in the NAIT Boreal greenhouses located in Peace River. By the spring, they will be ready for transplantation to the reclamation site.

A particularly important piece to this project is the knowledge-sharing between community elders and the youth volunteering with the project. This project will help to develop an enduring record of the traditional knowledge of plants, assist with the transfer of that knowledge between elders and youth, and provide them with a hands-on opportunity to participate in reclamation projects.

This project was initiated in March of 2013 with a \$300,000 donation from Shell Canada to support the reclamation and creation of partnerships.

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