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Welcome to 2017

Happy New Year from all of us at the Canada West Foundation. 2016 was a trying year for the West and across the country and many of those challenges remain. There is also more need than ever for the kind of evidence-based research and sound policy solutions at which the Canada West Foundation excels.

This fall, Martha Hall Findlay focused on reaching out to as many Foundation stakeholders as possible – donors, decision-makers (political, bureaucratic, business and otherwise) and more. This "listening tour" garnered excellent input as to what our priorities should be over the next 12–24 months. We are now finalizing workplans for the three Centres, but count on seeing major work on aboriginal economic engagement; how to match skills with jobs based on real-life competencies, particularly in the energy and other resources sectors; how best to get from innovation to adoption and how

this can help diversify western and Canadian economies; how to capitalize on our agri-food and agri-tech opportunities; and what we in the West, and Canada as a whole, need to do to ensure trade opportunities, particularly in the age of Donald Trump.

We are excited this year to reconnect with old friends, build new relationships and continue doing work that makes a difference in the West and Canada.

Order of Canada honour for Foundation board member

Congratulations to our [Board member Oryssia Lennie](#), who has been named to the Order of Canada. Oryssia's career spans years spent as an Alberta public servant where she was part of some of the province's defining moments. She is also a former Deputy Minister of Western Economic Diversification and is credited with improving federal-provincial relations. You can [read a Postmedia feature on Oryssia's career and appointment](#). The ceremony will take place at a later date.

We're growing – help us spread the word as we expand our team

The Canada West Foundation has a fast-paced, thoughtful and dedicated team – and it is growing. We are hiring two new policy analysts this year. Anyone interested [can find the posting on our website](#). Please also pass it along to anyone else you think might be interested.

A few highlights

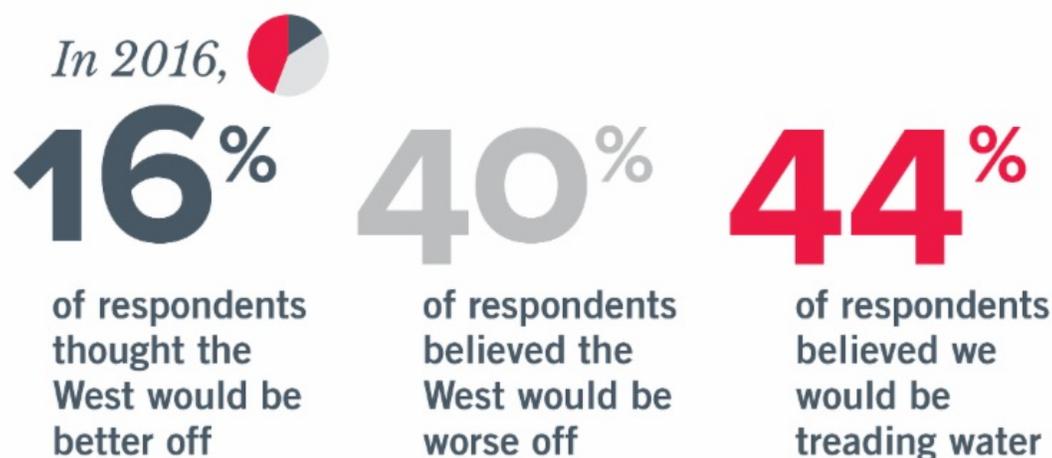
- You can read our Globe and Mail op-ed by Janet Lane and Christopher Rastrick on [how to get Alberta oil and gas workers back on the job this year](#). It is all about a competency-based approach that can help workers figure out what kind of jobs they are qualified for, and can successfully pursue, outside the energy industry as the province's economy continues to diversify.
- We regularly make appearances before Senate committees. Recently, Trevor McLeod gave an in depth presentation to the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources in Ottawa on a key issue facing the country: [the effects of transitioning to a low-carbon economy](#); Carlo Dade spoke to the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade [on North American trilateral relations](#), including getting fired up about getting serious on trade issues. You can find [all our presentations on our](#)

[website](#).

Lastly, as a think tank focused on evidence-based policies, this piece rings particularly true for our team – and is a good read for us all (apologies in advance for the coarse language): ["Why Bullshit is No Laughing Matter"](#) by Gordon Pennycook.

POLL: How will the West fare in 2017?

Last year was a tough one economically. In January we asked you how you thought the West in particular would fare by year's end. Just 16 per cent of you thought we would be better off; fully 40 per cent believed we would be worse off, and 44 per cent believed we would be treading water.



How much has changed in a year? We want to know your outlook for 2017 (and as always, we welcome your comments): [Take our one-click poll](#).

Results from last month's poll:

Do you believe the approved Trans Mountain pipeline will get built?

Yes, eventually: 57 %

No, won't happen: 33 %

I'm not sure: 10 %

We welcome your comments

Want to talk about anything you read in this newsletter? Have an idea you would like to share? Send your comments to: feedback@cwf.ca.

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