

Report Card

2018





10

REPORTS

Literacy Lost

Canada's basic skills shortfall
DECEMBER 2018

Socio-economic Impact Study of a Calgary 2026 Winter Games

NOVEMBER 2018

Power without Borders

Moving towards an integrated western grid
NOVEMBER 2018

Success in the Making

Stories of partnerships between indigenous communities and natural resource firms
OCTOBER 2018

The 'Just in Time' Plan

CPTPP guide for small businesses in Western Canada
NOVEMBER 2018

Hot Commodity

Geothermal electricity in Alberta
JULY 2018

Unstuck

Recommendations for reforming Canada's regulatory process for energy projects
MAY 2018

The 'Just in Case' Plan

How Western Canadian small businesses can prepare for the potential end of NAFTA
FEBRUARY 2018

(two unpublished)

8

WHAT NOW? POLICY BRIEFS

Strong Ties

Canada & China's economic relationship
NOVEMBER 2018

The Fate of Projects

A review of outcomes from the federal EA approvals process
NOVEMBER 2018

Blueprints for work-based learning

OCTOBER 2018

TMX and Bill C-69

SEPTEMBER 2018

Canada and the U.S. – Beyond NAFTA

SEPTEMBER 2018

Rebooting Bill C-69

SEPTEMBER 2018

What next for TMX

SEPTEMBER 2018

Supply management myths, busted/Réfutons les mythes liés à la gestion de l'offre

AUGUST 2018

The 'Just in Time' Plan: CPTPP guide for small businesses in Western Canada

"I appreciate your thoughtful advocacy on this important agreement for Canada...I commend the Canada West Foundation on the work it has done to educate Canadian businesses on the benefits of the trade deal and how to realise its potential to capitalize on its benefits."

Hon. Francois-Philippe Champagne, Minister of International Trade

Canada West Foundation work on Bill C-69

"We echo your concern that now is not the time to introduce more uncertainty into Canada's natural resource industries...Our government appreciates all the work and advocacy the CWF has done on this very important issue."

Hon. Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan



8

HOSTED AND PARTNER EVENTS

Including:

- Pop-up Policy: **A Washington insider's guide to NAFTA**
- Roundtable: **Hon. James A. Richardson Discovery Roundtable: Indigenous Economic Engagement**

85

SPEECHES/ PRESENTATIONS

Including:

- **House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, pre-budget presentation on the skills economy**, Ottawa, ON
- **International Association of Impact Assessment Annual Conference**, Durban, South Africa
- **National Forum on Canada-China Investment**, Calgary, AB
- 8 presentations to Chambers of Commerce, business associations, universities on NAFTA guide

354

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Including:

- Winnipeg Free Press
- Calgary Herald
- Business in Vancouver
- Western Producer
- CBC
- Hill Times
- Real Agriculture
- National Post
- Globe and Mail
- Politico
- Washington Post
- Wall Street Journal

2032

MEDIA MENTIONS (broadcast, print, online)

858

LIKES (TWITTER)

954

RETWEETS (TWITTER)

159K

WEBPAGE VIEWS

Canada West Foundation work on Electricity

"It's time to move past those disagreements, work together, and get serious about a more integrated grid."
#westerngrid #powerwithoutborders

Pacific Energy Innovation Association
@PEIA_Vancouver

Hot Commodity: Geothermal Electricity in Alberta

"The publication looks top notch and we'll be sharing your hard work with our network."

Canadian Geothermal Energy Association (CanGEA)

CANADA WEST FOUNDATION

LEADING THE CHARGE ON

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Amendments to Bill C-69, Canada's potentially disastrous new impact assessment legislation for energy projects.

LITERACY

The true cost of poor skills in Canada's workforce and how doing better can give a big boost to economic competitiveness.

TRADE

The way forward in a global trade environment rocked by change and uncertainty to hold on to trade opportunities we already have in the U.S. – and to take more from new markets in the Pacific Rim.

ELECTRICITY

The urgent case to push past politics and build a more integrated western electricity grid as the West's choice for the most cost-effective energy future.

Canada West Foundation on Bill C-69

"A must read from the Canada West Foundation: Bill C-69 is the antithesis of what the regulatory reform effort hopes to achieve/via @globeandmail!"

Deborah Yedlin, @ddyedlin

The 'Just in Case' Plan: How Western Canadian small businesses can prepare for the potential end of NAFTA

"I'm sending you this email to obtain the consent of the Canada West Foundation to distribute the Canada West Foundation Paper titled The 'Just in Case' Plan, from February 2018, by Carlo Dade and Naomi Christensen, to the participants of the American Bar Association's International Law section."

CANADA WEST FOUNDATION

LEADING THE CHARGE ON

INDIGENOUS AND ENERGY RELATIONSHIPS

How to move on from years of distrust to build meaningful Indigenous-natural resources relationships – and the many different ways to get there.

CHINA

A realistic approach to build on existing strong ties and engage a complicated and aggressive China.

U.S. ENGAGEMENT

Province-state engagement: An underused tool that has proven to be our biggest asset to defend western interests in the U.S.

OLYMPICS

Why we should think beyond economics when it comes to the Olympics.

Canada West Foundation work on literacy

Terrific piece by @JanetCWF and @dataangelca in @globeandmail. Makes clear why Canadians should worry about how many of us lack the basic literacy and numeracy skills we need to evolve our learning and jobs.

Julia Deans, @juliadeans Founding CEO, Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation

The 'Just in Time' Plan: CPTPP guide for small businesses in Western Canada

I LOVE this! It should be the model for how every government promotes CPTPP (and trade agreements in general).

Deborah Elms, Executive Director, Asian Trade Centre, Singapore

Natural Resources Centre

Getting energy infrastructure built – responsibly

What we promised

The energy sector is clearly of great importance to the economies of all of the western provinces, albeit in different ways. Extracting, developing and getting that energy to markets in cost-effective, responsible and sustainable ways is critical. We promised to build on our work in *A Matter of Trust: The role of communities in energy decision-making* and *Up Front: Modernizing the National Energy Board*, to develop evidence-based recommendations to help energy projects (oil, gas, hydro and renewables) get built sustainably and with community support.

What we delivered

2018 was a highly divisive and inflamed year with respect to Canada's energy infrastructure, with the introduction of the federal government's Bill C-69 (replacing the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the National Energy Board), the federal court of appeal decision around the Trans Mountain pipeline and the pipeline's subsequent purchase by the federal government. The Canada West Foundation was highly influential in informing national discourse around these issues, in the media, within industry, and among government decision-makers both nationally and provincially, with the Government of Alberta noting it is "appreciative of the foundation's efforts to enhance the federal government's understanding of our collective concerns."

- CWF was interviewed for more than 60 media articles – print, radio and television – on the topic of energy infrastructure, due to massive interest in both Bill C-69 and the Trans Mountain decision.
- President and CEO Martha Hall Findlay was quoted in Senate debate on Bill C-69 for our work urging a better approach to the proposed legislation and in Senate debate on the Bill C-48 proposed tanker ban. She also appeared before the Independent Senators Group to explain concerns.
- We produced a major report analyzing Bill C-69, *Unstuck: Recommendations for reforming Canada's regulatory process for energy projects*, in May, and followed this with four *What Now?* policy briefs:
 - *The Fate of Projects: A review of outcomes from the federal EA approvals process*
 - *TMX and Bill C-69*
 - *Rebooting Bill C-69*
 - *What next for TMX*
- We published 10 op-eds in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Hill Times* and other media on energy infrastructure topics including greenhouse gas accounting; regulatory reform; Trans Mountain and other pipelines; Bill C-69; and energy decision-making.
- CWF experts participated as panellists and keynote speakers for events hosted by the University of Calgary School of Public Policy, the Independent Senators Group of Canada's Senate, the International Association for Impact Assessment, the Council for Clean and Reliable Energy (CCRE) Energy Leaders Roundtable, the Canadian Academy of Engineering, and the National Forum on Canada-China Investment and Trade, and others.
- We hosted two Pop-up Policy sessions, on Bill C-69 and transforming Canada's energy system, with audiences that strained our capacity.
- Our advice was increasingly sought by government decision-makers at the federal level and across several provinces; among both elected politicians, including Premiers, federal and provincial Ministers and their staff, and policy-makers; and by a number of Canadian Senators looking to educate themselves on Bill C-69 in advance of voting on it. Following that extensive engagement, our concerns and recommendations were echoed in public commentary by decision-makers.



What it means for Canada's West

Urgency surrounds Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, two major pieces of energy legislation which are both before Canada's Senate for debate and decisions in 2019. Energy decision-making will remain central to Western Canada – and the rest of the country – for decades to come. We helped government, industry and the public to cut through rhetoric and grandstanding, and to identify what the future implications are of actions being taken now. We need both economic prosperity and a sustainable environment; our work aims to achieve both.

Still to come

In 2019, we will continue to press for specific amendments to Bill C-69 and raise concerns about the environmental hypocrisy engulfing the Bill C-48 proposed tanker ban. With both bills before the Senate, it is crucial that this work take place now. We will also continue to work on issues that influence energy infrastructure, including legislation and regulations; carbon and climate policies; and reducing the polarization of public narratives around our energy future.

Getting electricity right

What we promised

The western provinces have different regional comparative advantages and needs with respect to electricity. In 2018, we promised to build on our *Power Up: The hydro option* paper and continue our work on electricity, including co-operation across the West on which electricity sources make the most sense for which customers, in which places, for which uses. We set out to determine how best to get that electricity from where it is produced to where it is needed and work on how greater co-operation and more integrated production and transmission of electricity can benefit each province.

What we delivered

- In 2018, we published our report, *Power without Borders: Moving towards an integrated western grid*. The report was extremely well-received, with readers declaring it “a really thoughtful and well-reasoned piece” and “a cogent, potentially impactful report.”
- We highlighted results in seven op-eds published across the country in the Hill Times, Star Phoenix (SK), Leader-Post (SK), The Province (BC), Edmonton Journal (AB) and the Winnipeg Free Press (MB). In addition, our electricity expert, Nick Martin, was interviewed for articles that appeared in the Globe and Mail, the Hill Times and Corporate Knights.

What it means for Canada's West

The economic case for a more integrated electricity grid in Western Canada is stronger than ever to help the provinces produce the abundant, reliable, affordable clean energy needed for their energy future. This will only work, however, if the provinces co-operate. Groups of entire countries such as the Nordic nations have found a way to surmount political and logistical hurdles, our report notes; Western Canada should be able to find a way to make a shared grid work, too.

Our work lays clear the rationale for co-operation, the structural, political and technical challenges and recommendations for overcoming those hurdles. In doing so, it puts well-researched and practical information into the hands of the decision-makers who can move it forward.

Still to come

In 2019, we will continue to push for a more integrated western grid through direct engagement with electricity stakeholders across the region. Our report demonstrated that there are incremental yet important steps we can take today to improve interprovincial electricity trade. We will expand the case for these steps and work with decision-makers to help make it happen.



Success in the Making

Stories of partnerships between Indigenous communities & natural resource firms

What we promised

Indigenous communities are increasingly forming alliances with natural resource firms to create economic opportunity and enhance self-sufficiency. However, too often these stories remain untold. We set out to highlight these stories of success – and the many different ways to get there – in an attempt to help others build sustainable partnerships. To undertake this project, our Natural Resources and Human Capital Centres worked with our Indigenous partners, Name to Place Consulting and Medicine Rope Strategies. Our approach was mindful of authenticity, culture, relationships and ethics in storytelling. In 2018, we promised to finish Phase 1 of the project – a series of roundtables to explore what success looks like; and to embark on Phase 2 – a series of deep-dive case studies in communities across the four Western provinces.

What we delivered

- We completed the Hon. James A. Richardson Discovery Roundtables, which brought together industry leaders, Chiefs, elders and Indigenous economic development leadership from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- The results of the roundtables were summarized in a report published October 2018, authored by Lana Garcelon, Derek Rope, and Marla Orenstein.
- Media interviews discussed our interim results: the Globe and Mail, Québec Science magazine, The Daily Oil Bulletin, and JWN.

- We embarked on the first two deep-dive case studies, with the communities of Lac La Ronge (SK) and Lax Kw'alaams (BC). Multiple visits were made to the sites to explore questions such as: what does a successful partnership mean to all parties? What factors and competencies are critical to success? How can successes be built on, or replicated by others?
- We established a dedicated public project site on cwf.ca to house information related to the *Success in the Making* project, so that the project results, as well as community videos, blogs, posts and other related materials, can be accessed freely.

What this means for Canada's West

It has become clear that successful Indigenous partnerships are key to both building stronger Indigenous communities and to getting energy (and other) infrastructure built. The work (and our own experience) shows that the partnership journey takes time, commitment, and openness to new ways of thinking and working together, both within communities and companies as well as between them.

Still to come

In 2019, we will publish the results of the first two case studies. We will also build on the relationships we have developed to ensure that more success stories are documented. In addition, we will share the emerging results to ensure that what we learn in the project can inform others as early as possible, and prepare a report examining the way forward.

Getting to 'Go'

Removing regulatory barriers to energy innovation

What we promised

Innovation is key to Canada's energy sector transition to a cleaner economy. But in many cases, regulatory processes are slowing, and sometimes preventing, the adoption of innovations that could reduce GHG emissions and lower costs. Our project proposed to analyze the nature of the regulatory barriers and recommend changes needed to reduce those barriers, while ensuring the system still protects Canadians' health, economic security and the environment.

What we delivered

- In July, we published our report, *Hot Commodity: Geothermal electricity in Alberta*. This report focused on a burgeoning clean energy technology – geothermal energy production feeding into distributed electricity generation – as a test case to understand regulatory challenges to innovative renewable and small-scale electricity innovations in Alberta.
- The report was followed by a formal presentation to the Government of Alberta on the province's geothermal energy policy.
- When Saskatchewan announced plans to build Canada's first geothermal plant, Vice President Colleen Collins was interviewed about our research, and opportunities and barriers to geothermal development in Alberta.
- We conducted interviews with a wide range of innovators across all four western provinces, including major incumbents; small businesses; academic innovators; technology accelerators; those working in oil and gas, in waste recovery, in clean tech and in energy distribution; and regulators from different provinces. These interviews helped us understand the scale and scope of the problem, and also identify illustrative case studies.

- The results of the interviews, along with our environmental scan of over 300 published research articles, are being turned into a background report that will be released in 2019.

- We began a partnership with the Energy Futures Lab, and are jointly hosting an initial workshop (January 2019) to look for solutions.

What it means for Canada's West

The energy sector, so important to the West, must be both cost and environmentally competitive. To that end, significant innovations are needed, all along the energy supply and transport chain. Where they are developed, competitiveness requires that they be capable of being implemented as quickly as possible. The whole energy sector, and ultimately the environment as well, will benefit from improved flexibility and adaptability of our regulatory approaches, without sacrificing health, safety and security.

Still to come

In 2019, we will publish the background report; hold a series of workshops to engage innovators, regulators and others who are instrumental to the successful adoption of innovation; and develop a publication that reports on the results of those workshops.

Trade & Investment Centre

The NAFTA “just-in-case” plan and North American trade

What we promised

In 2018, the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was uncertain. We promised to create a “just in case” guide to leverage our extensive and in-depth knowledge of the agreement and negotiations to give small businesses practical advice and case studies to prepare for what would happen if the U.S. withdrew from the deal. We also said we would continue to provide expert analysis, insights and recommendations on the important Canada-U.S. trade relationship and to be the voice of Western Canada on these issues nationally as well as in the U.S. and Mexico.

What we delivered

On the NAFTA guide:

- In February, we published *The ‘Just in Case’ Plan: How Western Canadian small businesses can prepare for the potential end of NAFTA* – a guide with case study examples of small- and medium-sized businesses from each western province.
- The guide was featured on CBC national TV, radio and online and covered across western media including smaller markets, e.g., Lethbridge TV and print. It was also the starting point for *What the West?* episode 008: *How not to freak out over NAFTA*.
- The guide was praised by the President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce as “outstanding work” and “well worth studying by Chambers and any business affected by NAFTA.” It was widely used and disseminated by Chambers of Commerce across Canada.
- We published three op-eds on the guide in the Financial Post, Edmonton Journal (AB) and The Province (BC).
- The guide was used and distributed by federal and provincial trade promotion staff in Canada and U.S.

- The guide was featured in eight speaking engagements to business associations, Chambers of Commerce, colleges and universities across Western Canada.
- The American Bar Association’s International Law section requested permission to distribute the guide to its members.

On North American Trade:

- With uncertainty hovering over talks for a new North American trade agreement through much of the year, we provided expert analysis, insights and recommendations on Canada and Western Canada’s trade interests in North America, including: nine op-eds on North American trade, 170 interviews in Canada, 13 interviews in Mexican media, six interviews in U.S., and three interviews in Chinese media. We produced *What the West?* special edition two-part podcast on the Mexico election: 014: *The Forgotten Neighbour – Mexico Election 2018* and 016: *Mexico’s new energy reality*.
- President and CEO Martha Hall Findlay served as a member of the Minister of International Trade’s Trade Expert Advisory Council, meeting regularly with the deputy minister, negotiators and 10 other trade experts to help shape Canada’s response to the biggest trade issues of the day. She still serves on this Committee.
- We produced the *What Now?* policy brief: *Canada and the U.S.: Beyond NAFTA*.
- CWF experts did 10 major presentations on Canada and North American relations, including U.S. Council of State Governments – Mid-west annual summer meeting in Winnipeg, which was accompanied by an op-ed in the Winnipeg Free Press.
- We held consultations with federal MPs, provincial MLAs, foreign embassy staff, Canadian federal officials and foreign embassies in Ottawa to deliver western views on North American trade and the NAFTA renegotiation.



What it means for Canada's West

At the government level, our work ensured that western perspective and requirements were inserted into national and North American discussions in Ottawa, Washington, D.C., individual U.S. states and Mexico City. At the same time, the uncertainty surrounding NAFTA was discouraging small and medium businesses. Ensuring that they were better prepared meant greater resiliency for western firms. Our reach on these issues extended from the grassroots with organizations like the Airdrie Chamber of Commerce to nationwide with our work featured, for example, on CBC.

New trade horizons in the Asia-Pacific

What we promised

We proposed creating an easy to understand, practical guide for small- and medium-sized businesses on how to capitalize on opportunities in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). We also said we would continue to provide expert analysis, insights and recommendations on how Western Canada can take advantage of the agreement – a trade deal which opens Asian markets for western businesses and which CWF was instrumental in advocating for and encouraging the government to sign.

What we delivered

→ We were credited with being instrumental in shifting the Canadian government from actively contemplating withdrawing from the CPTPP to eventually joining. CWF was the first organization to produce economic modelling of the agreement following the exit of the U.S. – numbers that were quoted in the Government of Canada's own economic impact report on the trade deal. These numbers were key to move the discussion on whether Canada should participate.

- We used our economic modelling numbers in Parliament testimony, public speaking to stakeholders, regular opinion articles in national and all western media, working with producer associations and to exert relentless pressure on the federal government to counter criticism of the CPTPP and move it to ratify the agreement.
- To ensure that Canadian businesses actually profit from the agreement, we took our extensive knowledge of the agreement and created *The 'Just in Time' Plan: CPTPP guide for small businesses in Western Canada*. We created fictional case studies of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from each Western province to highlight unique advantages in the agreement beyond simple tariff reductions. Readers declared that “insight and guidance for small businesses to enter new markets is a big gap in Canada – this is an excellent resource for small business trying to access TPP markets. Check it out if looking to grow via trade and export,” and “If you are in supply chain import/export in Canada, you need to read this report.”
- Canada's International Trade Minister at the time of the CPTPP signing praised CWF for our “thoughtful advocacy on this important agreement for Canada,” and for our work to educate Canadian businesses on the benefits of the trade deal and how to realise its potential to capitalize on its benefits.
- Manitoba's trade minister said our guide will help companies in that province “take the next steps” and find new trade opportunities in the Pacific Rim.
- We produced seven op-eds in western and national papers, 38 interviews in Canadian media, three interviews in U.S. media and three interviews in media in Asia.
- Our experts gave 12 presentations to exporters, agriculture producers including federal-provincial agriculture deputy ministers conference.
- The guide was sponsored by Government of New Zealand and Canadian Trade Commissioner Service.
- Our work received extensive co-operation and support from foreign embassies and governments to develop the guide and promote the CPTPP.

What it means for Canada's West

Early work by CWF demonstrated that the CPTPP is the biggest and most important trade agreement for the Western Canadian provinces. It gives Canada the modern, 21st-century agreement that businesses and the country need, and further reduces Canadian dependence on the U.S. We have done the most extensive work in Canada on the trade deal, including modelling and projections, and helped move the federal government to ratify the CPTPP agreement in a timely manner. This gave Canada first-mover advantages and opportunity to grow and diversify trade. Our guide used clear case study examples and accessible language to help small and medium businesses, especially in Western Canada, figure out the benefits of the agreement and how to take advantage of one set of rules for 11 markets. Our work on the CPTPP has raised the profile of CWF in Asia as an important and influential voice on Canadian trade and engagement in the region.

China

What we promised

Our Centre promised to produce a unique “China in-Western-Canadian media” newsletter; briefs on new trade or investment treaty negotiations in China; and a paper on Western Canadian food and agricultural trade and investment with China.

What we delivered

→ We created the “China Brief” a unique fortnightly electronic publication focused on Western Canada’s relationship with China, written by policy analyst Sarah Pittman. In 2018, we published 14 editions, including a special “deep-dive” six-month anniversary edition. The

brief is sent to close to 4,000 CWF subscribers who tell us they appreciate the overviews on economic developments and trends in China; have confidence in us to “Make best efforts to generate credible, verifiable commentary;” use it to figure out if and how to do business in China; and appreciate the overview (with personality) with a Western Canadian lens.

- CWF has become a sought after source of expert commentary on China for Canadian and foreign media. In 2018, we produced one op-ed and more than 25 media interviews, including six on Chinese TV.
- Extensive research, hiring new staff and preparatory work have laid the foundation for further work in the future.

What it means for Canada's West

China is already Canada’s second-largest trading partner, with an existing strong economic relationship even without a trade agreement. That’s good news for the West and all of Canada. Several trends – increased imports and exports, increased investment, and increased Canadian government attention – all point towards continued growth of the relationship. The Canada-China relationship overall, however, remains fraught – complicated by political, social and at times, economic tensions. We provided evidence-based analysis of existing opportunities and risks – and looked ahead to what may be on the horizon. Given the current tensions in the Canada-China relationship, having CWF rise to become an additional source of information, analysis and engagement focused on Western Canadian interests in the relationship is critical.

Still to come

A major paper on Western Canadian food and agriculture and related Chinese opportunities will focus on developing an agricultural trade engagement agenda focused on resolving non-tariff barriers.

Building more and better strategic trade infrastructure

What we promised

We proposed to conclude our work on how to improve trade infrastructure by linking the private sector and its sophisticated logistics supply and production chain information to government decision-making, to get trade infrastructure spending right.

What we delivered

We continued our work, but it was limited due to other, more immediate issues, including the plant protein opportunity for the Prairies. In addition, time originally programmed for infrastructure was shifted to demands to respond to Canada's trade disruptions with the U.S. and China. Work on strategic trade infrastructure continues in 2019.

- We presented on trade infrastructure issues to federal-provincial deputy agriculture ministers.
- We produced two op-eds, two media interviews and three presentations.

What it means for Canada's West

CWF has remained an important voice on trade infrastructure issues and arguing for Western Canadian interests.

Still to come

In 2019, we will produce a paper on improving Canada's trade infrastructure performance through bringing in critical private sector input in planning and prioritization. This "knowledge and intelligence" function is critical to providing information that is currently lacking in Canada to inform decision-making.

The plant protein opportunity

What we promised

The announcement that the federal government would fund creation of a plant protein supercluster in Western Canada renewed our work on realizing the plant protein opportunity in follow up to our December 2017 report *Sprouted: The plant ingredient opportunity taking root on the Prairies*.

What we delivered

- Our extensive contributions helped establish the Plant Protein Alliance of Alberta, and Trade Director Carlo Dade serves on the Board.
- We did eight briefings on plant protein for federal and provincial ministers and staff, municipal government officials, foreign investors and Canadian and Government of Alberta staff in Taipei.
- Our experts gave six talks, including presentation at the launch of the plant protein supercluster in Winnipeg in October 2018.
- Our media reach included two op-eds and six media interviews.

What it means for Canada's West

The plant protein opportunity is potentially transformative when it comes to economic diversification, and the Prairies are poised to lead. This is good news for a Western economy lately beset by bad news. However, this will only happen if government and legislation can move as quickly as the conditions that created this opportunity. We continue to provide some of the best and only analysis in the country for media, industry, producers and government decision-makers of the best way forward to take advantage of the plant protein opportunity.

Still to come

In 2019, we will continue work on the plant protein opportunity for Western Canada. The federal government has funded a plant protein supercluster on the Prairies and foreign investment and interest have increased. But questions remain as to whether the Prairie provinces have the necessary capacity, regulatory frameworks and other assets needed to fully realize this opportunity. Our study will lay out what needs to be done for the Prairies to dominate the sector.



Conditions on foreign investment

What we promised

We set out plans to conduct and publish a study to determine what types of conditions, if any, are needed to reduce barriers to foreign investment without causing harm to Canada.

What we delivered

At the request of the Government of Alberta we shifted gears to focus on research to support the recently established Invest Alberta (IA) agency. We have held meetings with IA staff to determine the agency's needs and conducted background research to formulate an appropriate research project. This work will be finished in 2019.

- Extensive preparatory work will enable delivery of the Invest Alberta report in 2019.

What it means for Canada's West

Canada's investment climate, both within and without our borders, continued to suffer in 2018. Our work with the Government of Alberta is intended to help tell the story of why Alberta is one of the most competitive places to establish a business or invest in a business in North America – and what other provinces can learn from it.

Still to come

In 2019, we will produce a report identifying whether Alberta's nascent investment promotion agency is designed for success – especially in an increasingly competitive world for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). The report will explore how other jurisdictions have designed their agencies. To the degree Invest Alberta is lagging in competing for FDI, the report will recommend changes to its design, operation and resourcing.

Human Capital Centre

Reduce friction in the Canadian labour market

What we promised

We recognized the need for a tool that would help to reduce the points of friction in the labour market, including: unfilled jobs compared to the number of unemployed people, the time it takes immigrants to integrate into the workforce, post-secondary graduates who struggle to find work, workplace incidents, and poor labour productivity. We planned to develop a reliable tool to show who gets hired, by whom, for what job, using what competencies, which would go a long way to reducing that friction. Our project would build on our prior work to produce an online resource, updated in real time, with data on which competencies are required for today's jobs.

What we delivered

- Supported by funding from Employment and Social Development (ESDC) we delivered a series of reports to ESDC on:
 - how the current methods of gathering labour market information are inadequate to the task;
 - how the information used to populate The Career Handbook – a tool to aid the decision-making and choices of people transitioning between education levels, and from job-to-job in the labour market – is outdated and inefficient;
 - how an alternative approach based on competencies could provide the basis of occupation descriptions in the Career Handbook and other labour market information tools; and
 - how an online tool could be designed to collect and house much more relevant, timely, accurate and valid information.
- We published an op-ed in the Globe and Mail and an article in Career Momentum.

What it means for Canada's West

ESDC continues to work on updating The Career Handbook, using many of our recommendations. Over time, this tool will enable people in career transition to make up-to-date and informed career decisions – thus making better connections for people looking for work and employers looking for people.

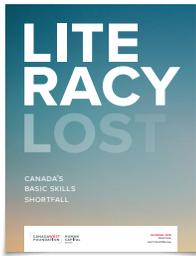
Still to come

We continue to push for an online competency tool approach to collect and house the full spectrum of data that can be gleaned from available labour market transaction. A short public report on this research, including our recommendation for real-time, accurate labour market information, is in the works for 2019.

The future of a coal town without coal

What we promised

The closure of coal-fired generating plants in Alberta will leave the economies of some towns reduced, if not decimated. We proposed a major study, with practical recommendations, to build the competency profile of a coal town that can be used by coal industry workers to find other work in other industries; by employers to recognize the competencies of coal industry workers for jobs they have available; and by municipal and provincial agencies working to attract new employers to the town. This research would provide a pilot for large-scale competency profiling that could be applied in other cases of workforce disruption due to technology or market disruption.



What we delivered

This project has been challenged because its size and scope take time and resources.

- We built a relationship with the economic development team in one small coal town. We helped the town's leadership understand the benefits of this approach to the human side of asset-based economic development.
- We made efforts to secure funding for the project.
- Our team informed and gained the support of officials in the provincial governments of both Alberta and Saskatchewan.

What it means for Canada's West

The date for transitioning from coal-fired electricity generation is approaching in Alberta and will soon be decided in Saskatchewan. Our innovative approach will be useful not only for the end of coal as fuel, but also in any region in the country which experiences a sudden loss of jobs.

Still to come

We continue the work of building relationships with leadership in a coal town and of securing the funding required to do this research project. Because there is interest at the government level, and from funders, we are hopeful that we will be able to continue with more work on the project, or one that would accomplish similar objectives, in 2019.

New, different work for laid-off oil and gas workers

What we promised

Laid-off oil and gas workers have significant competencies that can be useful in other sectors and occupations – the problem is that neither they nor potential employers realize it. We promised to begin a pilot project to work with up to 250 unemployed oil and gas workers to analyze their competencies, identify where those competencies are needed, and how to match people looking for work with available jobs. The project was intended to a) provide proof that the competency approach can work in the field with real people and real employers and b) identify where challenges lie in the implementation of the approach.

What we delivered

- In the winter and spring of 2018, we showed more than 250 people, most of whom had been laid-off from the oil and gas sector, how to view their skills and experience differently. With our assistance, they built an individual competency profile using an online platform. We also completed an informal assessment of participants' essential skills followed by formal testing of essential skills for those who were interested.
- Through the spring and summer, we recruited 16 employers – many of them large firms in industries and businesses beyond the oil and gas sectors. We showed them the competency-based approach to developing job profiles and worked with them to translate 40 of their regular job postings into competency-based postings.
- Our *What Now?* policy brief, *Blueprints for work-based learning*, discussed three exemplary programs providing employer-driven, competency-based learning for people, including youth, who typically have a hard time securing well-paying jobs.

- The project was covered in an in-depth feature story by the CBC, and picked up by additional Calgary media.
- Human Capital Director Janet Lane did a podcast interview on post-secondary education and jobs with ATB.
- Our work on the skills shortages problem was also covered by CBC TV and Conference Board of Canada interviews.

What it means for Canada's West

The project has proven that professionals from the oil and gas sector have transferable skills which employers in other sectors can put to good use. Tens of thousands of people were laid off from the oil and gas sector due to the downturn in oil process. Too many are still looking for quality, well-paying jobs and are prepared to take their talents into different sectors. However, many employers have not recognized that these people have skills that would enable them transfer into their jobs and do them well – after some time to adjust to the new context. The results of this project will help persuade employers to look beyond their usual candidates, and help displaced oil and gas workers to articulate their suitability for good jobs in other fields.

Still to come

The final stage of the pilot in 2019 will identify how to fill any skill gaps between what individuals can do and what they need to be able to learn to qualify for jobs in other sectors. The final reporting to individual participants about their transferable competencies was done at the end of January. We will publish a report covering our methods and our results.

Literacy skill loss – and why it matters

What we promised

The demand for high-level skills is increasing as our economy changes. However, Canadian literacy skills are, in many cases, insufficient to support workers' ability to learn new skills. We promised to conduct research to show the importance of building and maintaining literacy skills to ensure our workforce has the capacity to thrive in the new economy.

What we delivered

- In December, we published *Literacy Lost: Canada's basic skill shortfall*, by Janet Lane and T. Scott Murray. The paper shows that more than 40 per cent of the workforce does not have the skills to do their existing jobs well, let alone to learn new skills easily and efficiently. Some employers have adjusted to a shortage of workers with appropriate level of skill by reducing the level demanded by their jobs or by paying a premium for higher skilled employees – both of which reduce productivity. Improving average literacy scores, especially for people with the lowest skills, has positive economic impacts in terms of productivity and GDP growth. The paper offers recommendations and practical solutions for improving literacy for the workforce.
- The report release was covered by Kelowna News Talk Radio and extremely well-received by literacy organizations across Canada, many of whom widely shared the report with their own networks and on social media. Dissemination continues in 2019.

What this means for Canada's West

While some provinces have higher average levels of literacy than others, all would benefit from improving the literacy scores of those who are most challenged in the workforce. Improving the literacy rates of working-aged adults will improve the likelihood of unemployed, underemployed and precariously employed people securing and maintaining employment in the changing workplace. It will also improve our economic performance.

Still to come

A series of *What Now?* policy briefs discussing:

- The importance of and methods for improving the continuous learning capacity of working adults.
- The economic importance of improving literacy rates, especially for those with the lowest scores.
- The importance of the basic cognitive skills and other so-called “soft skills” and the order in which they are best learned in adulthood.

Success in the Making

Stories of partnerships between Indigenous communities & natural resource firms

What we promised

Indigenous communities are increasingly forming alliances with natural resource firms to create economic opportunity and enhance self-sufficiency. However, too often these stories remain untold. We set out to highlight these stories of success – and the many different ways to get there – in an attempt to help others build sustainable partnerships. To undertake this project, our Natural Resources and Human Capital Centres worked with our Indigenous partners, Name to Place Consulting and Medicine Rope Strategies. Our approach was mindful of authenticity, culture, relationships and ethics in storytelling. In 2018, we promised to finish Phase 1 of the project – a series of roundtables to explore what success looks like; and to embark on Phase 2 – a series of deep-dive case studies in communities across the four western provinces.

What we delivered

- We completed a series of Hon. James A. Richardson Discovery Roundtables, which brought together industry leaders, Chiefs, elders and Indigenous economic development leadership in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

- The results of the roundtables were summarized in a report published October 2018, authored by Lana Garcelon, Derek Rope, and Marla Orenstein.
- Media interviews discussed our interim results: the Globe and Mail, Québec Science magazine, The Daily Oil Bulletin, and JWN.
- We embarked on the first two deep-dive case studies, with the communities of Lac La Ronge (SK) and Lax Kw'alaams (BC). Multiple visits were made to the sites to explore questions such as: what does a successful partnership mean to all parties? What factors and competencies are critical to success? How can successes be built on, or replicated by others?
- We established a dedicated public project site on cwf.ca to house information related to the *Success in the Making* project, so that the project results, as well as community videos, blogs, posts and other related materials, can be accessed freely.

What this means for Canada's West

It has become clear that successful Indigenous partnerships are key to both building stronger Indigenous communities and to getting energy (and other) infrastructure built. The work (and our own experience) shows that the partnership journey takes time, commitment, and openness to new ways of thinking and working together, both within communities and companies as well as between them.

Still to come

In 2019, we will publish the results of the first two case studies. We will also build on the relationships we have developed to ensure that more success stories are documented. In addition, we will share the emerging results to ensure that what we learn in the project can inform others as early as possible, and prepare a report examining the way forward.



Canada West Foundation
cwf.ca

The Canada West Foundation is an independent, non-partisan public policy think tank that focuses on the policies that shape the West, and by extension, Canada. Through our evidence-based research and commentary, we provide practical solutions to tough public policy challenges facing the West, and Canada as a whole, at home and on the global stage. Our three research centres – Natural Resources Centre, Trade & Investment Centre, Human Capital Centre – focus on the big issues facing the West and Canada today.

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