

# Portage College receives three year accreditation for natural resources program

Last week, Portage College received the coveted three-year accreditation for their Natural Resource Technology program by the North American Wildlife Technology Association (NAWTA). The accreditation is a necessary acknowledgment of the program's dedication to quality and industry standards.

"At Portage in the NRT program we teach about the five elements that make up the environment soil, water, plants, animals and air. Being certified by NAWTA is a very important pillar in establishing credibility of our program," said Al Bertschi, Coordinator of the Natural Resources Technician Program at Portage College.

Portage College hosted

a one-week conference and professional development seminar for the accreditation committee and representatives from 16 accredited institutions across North America. The evaluation committee was in Lac La Biche and surrounding areas to review course objectives and to observe the program staff on competency and credentials in order to determine what kind of accreditation the College would receive.

"Portage has provided NAWTA a perfect place for meetings, professional Development, and current Wildlife Management near Lac La Biche. The Field Labs are more than appropriate to facilitate Wildlife Learning," said Jim Westerhold Executive Chair of NAWTA.

With Portage gaining a remarkable three-years of accreditation, the College is able to now look at further growing their Environmental Studies offerings. Currently, the Natural Resources Technology program is one of only two programs in Alberta that is accredited by NAWTA.

Students who graduate from this two-year diploma program will have the knowledge and skill set to pursue a career in the Environment and Wildlife field. Wildlife technology is learning about all aspects of wildlife. Students learn to identify various



wildlife, how to monitor wildlife through tracks, trail cameras, none destructive DNA sampling, habitat and the protection of habitats, safe handling techniques when required and the laws of the land protecting wildlife. The Lakeland region is particularly important for demonstrating the importance of courses like erosion control and spill response,

and how those particular areas of study have value in a wildlife program.

The program is currently taking applicants for the first year of the NRT program beginning in September 2015. If you are interested in a hands-on outdoor immersive learning experience, please call: 1-866-623-5551 or email [al.bertschi@portagecollege.ca](mailto:al.bertschi@portagecollege.ca)



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