

Caring for Our Watersheds Final Competition 2022

The Caring for Our Watersheds (CFOW) program asks students in grades 7-12 to submit a proposal that answers the question, “What can you do to improve your watershed?” Students must research their local watershed, identify a concern, and draft a written proposal containing one realistic sustainable solution.

The CFOW program began in Alberta in 2007 and was brought to Manitoba in 2010. The contest is currently offered in Canada within Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; in the United States within Colorado, California, Ohio, Chesapeake Bay; and in Argentina.

Nutrien Ltd. is the founder and sponsor of the CFOW program. They provide \$17 000 in cash prizes for the top 10 entries and their school or club. An additional \$10 000 in implementation funding is available for all participants to turn their ideas into reality. From a dance awareness show to education initiatives and shoreline cleanups, **over 80 projects have been implemented** across the province since the contest began.

This year, despite the number of school cancellations due to the weather and the pandemic, there were still **250 submissions** from **370 students** from **22 schools** across the province!

Proposals submitted by students were judged by a panel of experts to determine the top 10. Those top 10 competed in a verbal final competition, and the results were announced at a live event held at the Harry J. Enns Wetland Discovery Centre at Oak Hammock Marsh on Saturday, April 30th. Here are the results:

Final Place	Award	Student Name(s)	Proposal Name	School
1	\$1,000	Harriet Newcombe, Avnish Bhandal, & Tavian Pettitt	The Effervesce-fence	Shaftesbury High School
2	\$900	Jenna Lavallee	Food For All	Lord Selkirk Regional
3	\$800	Jerzy Halas	Project Yellow	Lord Selkirk Regional
4	\$700	McKenna Green & Ethan Nemetchek	The Future of YOUR Hockey Sticks	Westwood Collegiate
5	\$600	Breanna D’Agruma & Rae Baxter	The Story of Frog Plains	West Kildonan Collegiate
6	\$500	Olivia Johnson	Let’s Bike!	Lord Selkirk Regional
7	\$450	Ye-Eun Ryu	Redefining Canine Playtime	The King’s School
8	\$400	Trisha Ramilo	Webcomic	The King’s School
9	\$350	Ais Virtucio	Bird’s Eye View	West Kildonan Collegiate
10	\$300	Chloe Betanio	A Plan for the Disposal of Cosmetics with Terracycle	Miles Macdonell Collegiate

Now the real work begins as the ultimate goal is to implement the winning projects. Getting students involved in these environmental projects is key to the future health of our watersheds. To accomplish this, youth engagement is necessary. The proposal creation is just the start; we really see the students shine through the implementation phase. Seeing the students turn their ideas into a reality is what makes this

contest so special for everyone involved. The program coordinator, Amanda Benson, will work with each student and support them throughout their journey.

For contest information, please visit www.caringforourwatersheds.com.

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