

Stand up for Canada

As Albertans, we know that we live in one of the most beautiful provinces in one of the best countries in the world. From the spectacular Rocky Mountains, through the foothills, the boreal forests and into the grasslands of the prairies, we have it all, except a coast line of course.

We are blessed with impressive natural resources that are the envy of many, that provide, through development and export, a great bounty for all Canadians. It should be no surprise that the 3 provinces that contribute substantially through equalization payments to the rest of the other provinces and territories of Canada are Alberta, BC and Saskatchewan, all with a high natural resource economic profile.

There are challenges however living, working and playing in northern latitudes due to the extremes in weather conditions and difficulty to access those resources for portions of the year, but with a population that is small, relative to the vast expanse that is Canada, we have become leaders in inventing and developing technologies, techniques and equipment to deliver these resources to consumers to improve their way and value of life.

Increasingly over time, public support for natural resource development in Canada has diminished, not in a small part due to the influence from activists, protestors and obstructionists, many funded by foreign interests, who stand to benefit financially from our inability to fully develop and deliver our own resource projects to completion. These activists have many stripes, are well organized and will use any and all means to swing the public approval meter to their side and as an industry, we have so far, largely been reactive rather than proactive in recognizing and responding to the threat.

It's time for resource companies to change their approach and start genuine communication with real people in the communities, by winning the war of trust and respect and by appealing to their emotions, beliefs and values.

People generally form their own opinions on facts, right or wrong, from early experiences, education and direction from parents, teachers, mentors and media and yes; there are alternate facts, fake news, and biases. We have to acknowledge this and find ways to prove that future projects are in the highest standards of public interest and in-line with the values shared by the middle majority. There will always be radical believers at either end of the environmental argument so a genuine approach showing how these concerns will be addressed is paramount. It should never be the economy versus the environment, both should have equally high standing.

A bond of trust has to be established directly with the public, they don't particularly care what you know, they do however want to know that you care, and at present this trust has yet to be won by our industry leaders.

In our current system political approval is necessary to bring projects to completion and our politicians tend to reflect wherever public sentiment is residing, as that is where they gain and secure power every 4 or 5 years or so, regardless of the project viability. We can't rely on, or expect meaningful political support for natural resource development until and unless the public is first supportive and aware of the specific benefit to them.

My hope for 2018 and beyond is that Canada, now 150 years in the making, comes to realize that it is more than just a collection of competing Provinces and Territories, more than a collection of competing Urban and Rural interests and more than any existing divides between the ethnic variety and aboriginal peoples that are Canada.

From Wikipedia

The name of Canada has been in use since the founding of the French colony of Canada in the 16th century. The name originates from a Saint-Lawrence Iroquoian word kanata (or canada) for "settlement", "village", or "land"

It is time for us to put Canada first and demonstrate the pride we feel about working in the many natural resource industries that provide and improve the quality of life for all Canadians. The real environmental champions are

those that live, work and play in the environment and we must continue to strive to respect the environment and use all means possible to improve and pass these treasures on to future generations.

Canada and Canadians need to stand up and be counted in support of all of our industries that are shadowed by our biggest trading partner to the south, which is also our biggest competitor.

At the moment political turmoil and intrigue in the US resembles a plot from a James Bond movie, "From Russia with Love", or "GoldenHair", with Bond girls, action, fighting, back stabbing and more as they struggle for power, taking on all comers in an attempt to achieve world domination.

There is an immediate imperative to get our act together and get necessary resource projects built and delivered, particularly pipelines from our resource rich areas to tidewater so that we can effectively compete.

The CAGC strongly supports The Canadian Association of Drilling Contractors (CAODC) which has championed the Oil Respect Campaign that reaches out to all stakeholders across Canada with information, stories, facts, videos and organizes events. Their website is a great resource for promoting Oil & Gas projects. www.oilrespect.ca/

Oil Respect is a campaign to stand-up for Canada's oil and gas industry, one of the most regulated and technologically advanced industries in the world. Each year our industry safely produces, refines, transports, and distributes products from jet fuel to fertilizer while providing well-paying jobs and billions of dollars in tax revenues for all Canadians. Yet, despite these facts, government policy and popular sentiment seem increasingly intent on marginalizing the sector and divesting from resource development.

ResourceEd is a fantastic educational toolbox of information, techniques and advice to enable industry leaders to take on the challenge to meaningfully connect with, and improve relationships with the public. With more than 30 years of natural resource operations and management leadership under his belt, Steve Simons founded Beyond.Action Strategy Consulting, and created ResourceEd, an online and classroom training program, for natural resource people and their organizations. <https://beyondaction.mykajabi.com/>

*"Introducing game changing perspectives and insights on gaining and sustaining public confidence for natural resource industries. Let's face it, natural resource industries in Canada (and elsewhere) are facing challenges unlike any other industry on the planet! Public confidence has been rocked, and it shows up as polarized, politicized and positional, economy versus environment, standoffs. Protest after protest are dividing communities, causing strife and damaging relationships. Projects killed. jobs lost. It's not normal. ResourceEd is dedicated to teaching natural resource organizations, industries and communities what they need to know to **stand up and be heard**".*