



Science Outreach – Athabasca presents... Ancient Landscapes and Prehistoric Human Activity in Alberta’s Oil Sands

Most of us associate the words “oil sands” with industrial development. Few realize, however, that Alberta’s oil sands region has yielded a wealth of archaeological resources, largely discovered in the course of assessment and mitigation studies required by Alberta’s conservation legislation. These studies have revealed a rich and varied pattern of habitation and resource use by indigenous groups, extending back to roughly 10,000 BC—an intensity of landscape use currently unparalleled elsewhere in Canada’s boreal forest.



Geological and palaeoenvironmental research has linked the onset of human habitation to a catastrophic postglacial flood that scoured the Lower Athabasca basin, stripping away surface sediments to expose bedrock containing stone suitable for tool manufacture—while also making surface mining of bitumen deposits possible. In this presentation, Brian Ronaghan and Robin Woywitka introduce the remarkable archaeological record of the oil sands region, delving into some of the key evidence and as yet unanswered questions.

Speakers: Brian Ronaghan, former director of Alberta’s Archaeological Survey, and Robin Woywitka, Archaeological Survey regional archaeologist

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2018

Time: 7:00 to 8:30 PM

Place: Athabasca University Governing Council Chambers

Free event! Door prizes!

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