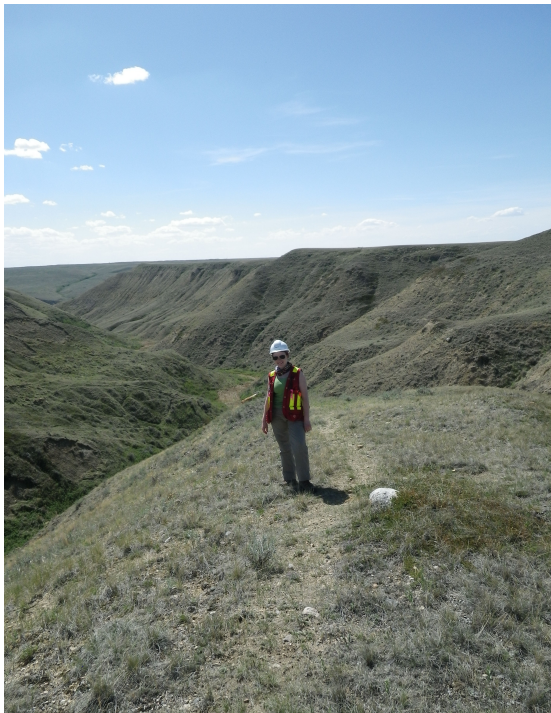


LRIGS Master's student Caitlin Low.

Caitlin Low, a current MSc student in the NSERC CREATE Land Reclamation International Graduate School (LRIGS) program, has always loved the outdoors. Despite her busy research and study schedule, she tries to get outside at least once a week to hike, bird watch or star gaze. She often does all three activities at the Beaverhill Natural Area east of Edmonton.

Happily, Caitlin's research also takes her outdoors. For the past couple of years she has been investigating the effects of pipeline right of ways on endangered plant species in prairie ecosystems in southern Alberta. Her research is focused on potential pipeline effects on populations of slender mouse ear cress (*Halimolobos virgata*) and tiny cryptanthus (*Cryptantha minima*).



Her research is not without challenges. Last summer she was charged by a female pronghorn antelope. While walking along a pipeline in her study area she noticed, out of the corner of her eye, a couple of pronghorns move into nearby sagebrush. Without warning, one of the pronghorns came back out of the bushes and started running toward her. "Pronghorn don't really look that big from a distance, which is how you usually see them, but they sure do look big when running toward you!" The animal stopped a fair distance away and proceeded to follow Caitlin for the remainder of her walk along the pipeline. She later realized that the pronghorn was likely an anxious mother trying to protect its young.

Caitlin's interest in land reclamation started at an early age. She still recalls a trip as a young girl with her parents to visit a reclaimed mine site in the Rockies. The mine company had site tours open to the general public and the idea of doing something tangible to fix landscapes disturbed by human activities has captivated her ever since. "Development

is a reality; resources are going to be extracted and we need to be able to manage that appropriately.”

Caitlin will complete her MSc and program in LRIGS by the end of the year. After that she has plans to work as a land reclamation consultant in Alberta for the next few years and is exploring the possibility of land reclamation work overseas.

