



2021

# ANNUAL REPORT





# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

**44,784**  
BCWF Members

**18**  
New Lifetime Members

**105**  
Fish and Game Clubs across  
B.C. affiliated with the BCWF

**8,531**  
CORE graduation certificates issued  
(11% increase over last year)

**2,098**  
Students enrolled in CORE  
online course  
(6% increase over last year)

**2,814**  
Youth reached in the National  
Archery in the Schools Program

**110**  
Youth engaged in BCWF  
Youth Program summer camps





**36**

Women engaged in the new  
Women Outdoor Skills & Experience Program's  
3 workshops

**252**

Wetlands across B.C. received  
maintenance, monitoring, and/or  
restoration work

**12**

Conservation Webinar Series  
presentations with 2,900+ regis-  
trants and over 4,000 views on  
YouTube

**221**

Wetland sites assessed  
through the Wetlands Ecosystem  
Services Protocol

**6,191m<sup>2</sup>**

Riparian habitat enhanced/surveyed

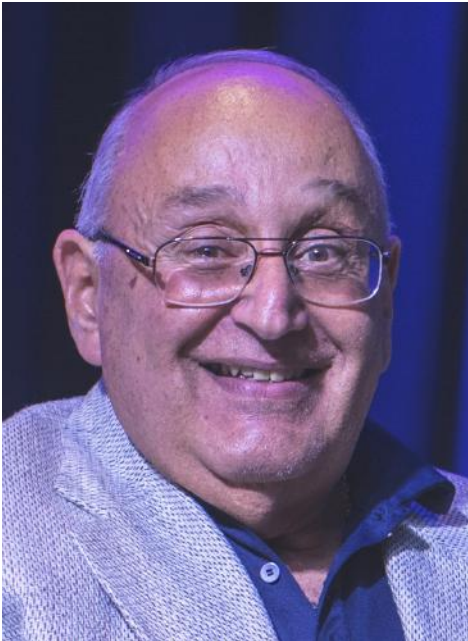
**384**

Participants in Wetlands Education  
Program workshops

**>5 tons**

Garbage and debris removed  
from the Fraser River

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



The game wardens who founded the B.C. Wildlife Federation in the 1950s, recognized three core values to form the basis of our Constitution:

1. That humanity is the steward of this planet. Its job is to put more animals on the landscape, fish in the waters, and birds in the sky.
2. That we must protect the habitat for all those things that have no voice.
3. That it is incumbent upon us to make this world better than we found it and create a viable future for all things yet unborn.

We understand that this is what connects our past with the future, through the gift of the present.

We appreciate that when we sit around a campfire at night, staring quietly at the starry canopy above us, that somehow we have connected our family to the past and at the same time connected our aspirations to the future.

The challenges we conservationists face are eternal: how to access and conserve scarce resources, continue to locate and harvest wildlife and fish, and safely teach new generations to use sustainable harvest tools like firearms to feed natural foods for our families. That we still educate, appreciate, and make recommendations to government and to all people for these purposes, is proof of our success. We are the premier conservation organization in the province, and the beacon for all who come after us to follow.

As BCWF President, I have found grit inside me. Without an Executive Director for the first nine months, I had to be President and Executive Director. The challenge was daunting – twelve-hour days, seven days a week for months became normal. I participated in 38 webinars, attended 168 meetings, and met with 65 MLAs, MPs, and government officials. I presented to the Provincial Standing Committee for the Budget, to the Provincial Firearms Safety Legislative Committee, and to the Provincial and Federal Outdoors and Firearms Caucuses.

Externally, federal, provincial, and municipal governments had their budgets constrained as their revenues were reduced and their costs dramatically increased. Fish and wildlife were not a priority in 2021. The provincial budget has been pared down almost 10% over four years. Co-management of the land and resources is the operative principle of the provincial government's mandate, over science-based decision-making for wildlife, fish and habitat management.

Internally, BCWF club membership and staff retention have been priorities of mine with positive results and continuing improvements planned.

As the pandemic changed the way we live, working from home became normal. Communicating face-to-face was replaced with electronics, and we lost the emotional connection people need to feel that their communications are direct and effective. Without this important connection, finding solutions to some challenges has required creativity.

With this realization, I decided on two priorities. My first priority was to coalesce an executive team, sharing all information and decision-making because we were without an Executive Director. My second priority was to form a trusting, efficient working team in the office. I empowered BCWF directors and managers and encouraged our staff to grow and develop new skills. Instead of micromanaging staff, I aimed to act as a resource and explain the BCWF culture when appropriate. We also obtained all the building permits necessary to run a legal and safe office, and had cameras installed for increased security. I also insisted wherever possible, we hire employees, not contractors. Now a comfortable, trusting, encouraging work environment has been established, and working for the BCWF family has become a career, not a job.





This year saw notable staff achievements. Neil Fletcher, our Director of Conservation Stewardship, acquired significant funding and achieved international recognition for our organization through the Wetlands Workforce initiative. Cidalia Martin assumed the responsibilities of Director of Programs and Operations and took on the day-to-day running of the office efficiently and tirelessly. Sue Prasloski, our Director of Finance and Administration, in conjunction with our expert volunteer Treasurer Alison Carleton, carefully maintained, administered, and scrutinized our finances.

My greatest accomplishment was hiring Jesse Zeman as our Executive Director. Jesse Zeman was mentored by Al Martin and the top pick of the current and past Presidents. Jesse brings something special to our BCWF family, and his vision for the BCWF has been close to me throughout the last year. He has moved into his role in the confident, capable way Al Martin and the past Presidents knew he would.

In a tumultuous year locally and globally, I have worked to lead by example. I am committed to exemplifying the best qualities in leadership and have felt a strong responsibility for each individual who is part of our family and the organization as a whole. For me, the B.C. Wildlife Federation comes first.

I would humbly like to thank the clubs and members for the opportunity to allow me to represent them. I would like to thank the Executive, the Board of Directors and the staff for the assistance they have given to me which allowed me to fulfill my responsibilities.

Yours in Conservation,

Chuck Zuckerman, BCWF President

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Most of my past year was spent in the role of Director of Fish and Wildlife Restoration. My team and I focused on the Southern Interior Mule Deer project, Interior Fraser Steelhead, watershed security, and forest management, focusing particularly on controlled burns. In 2022, we helped raise the BCWF's profile through issues that affected our members and brought the public into the conversation about conservation via interviews both in national media and on television.

For the Southern Interior Mule Deer project, our PhD candidate Chloe Wright from UBC-Okanagan has begun data analysis and is working on her thesis now. Sam Foster, our PhD candidate from the University of Idaho will begin his data analysis in the summer of 2022. Both should be complete in 2023. This project also ties into the Cougar Project, which is being conducted by PhD candidate Siobhan Darlington at UBC-Okanagan. This project has been a fantastic collaboration and I would like to thank our partners at Okanagan Nation Alliance, Bonaparte Indian Band, University of Idaho, UBC Okanagan, Fish and Wildlife Branch, and of course our amazing volunteers. The project will continue after both our PhD candidates have completed their work, as we move to ongoing monitoring and on-the-ground restoration. Additionally, the documentary "Community for the Wild," available on Telus Optik, will premiere at the Wasatch Mountain Film Festival in Salt Lake City.

On the Interior Fraser Steelhead, we have continued to focus on the science of steelhead recovery with Freedom of Information requests, Access to Information, webinars and working with provincial government staff. Bycatch, non-selective fishing, habitat, and pinniped related issues continue to be front and center. This year was also a record low return for Skeena steelhead.

We have worked intensively with the Watershed Security Coalition and expect the government to move out on public consultation on the watershed security strategy and fund in 2022. The BCWF has spent years on this file working with partners and advocating for this outcome. Given the floods, fires and record low returns we are seeing for a number of B.C.'s anadromous shift, a forward looking plan and fund is the right direction we need to go.

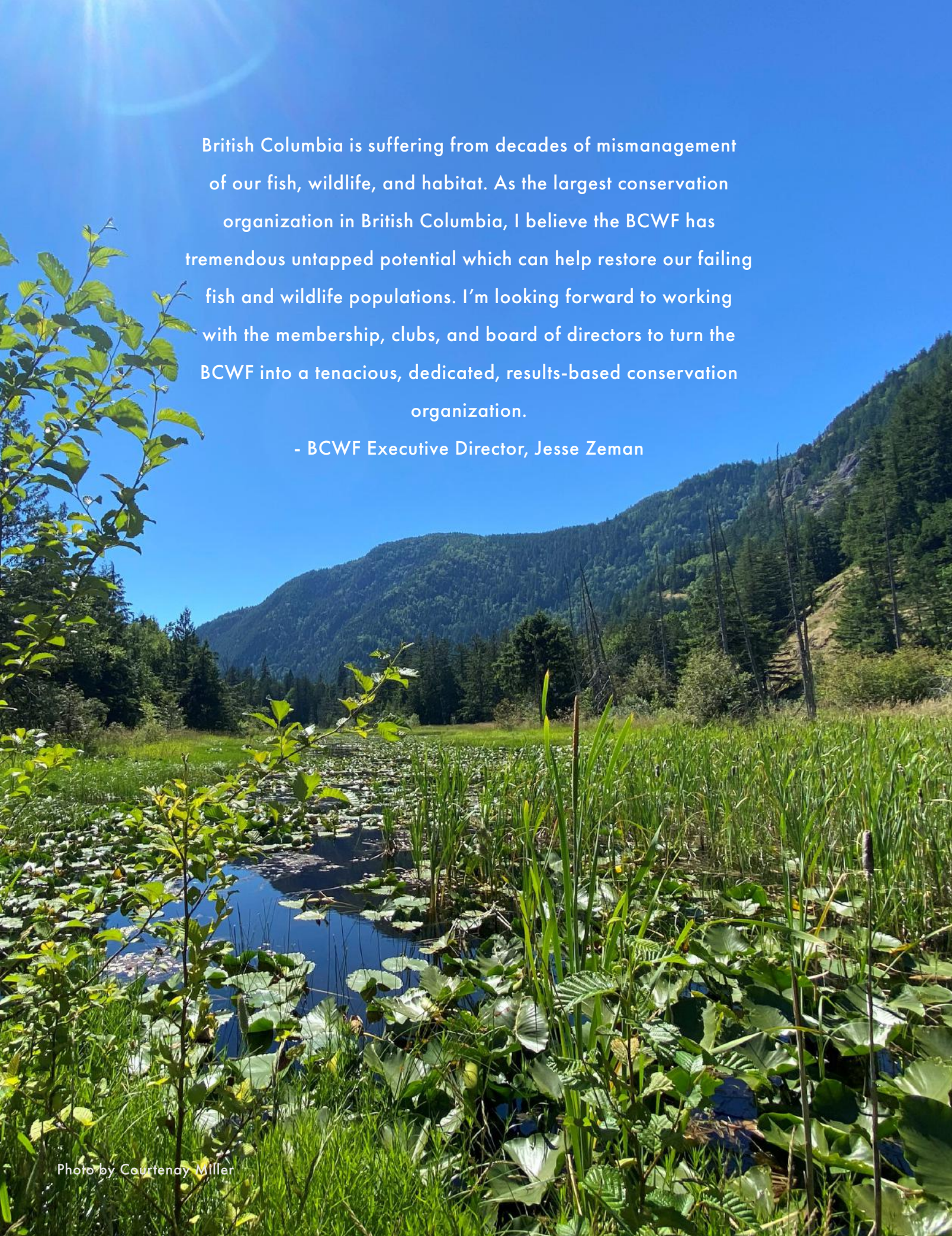
Finally, we have spent countless hours preparing op-eds, conducting interviews, meeting with First Nations, and advocating with the Fish, Wildlife and Habitat coalition for changes to forest management in B.C. This includes everything from logging practices, roads, weeds, the use of herbicide, controlled burns, and setting objectives for land management. We are also working on a large-scale project for controlled burns in the Interior. There is optimism for 2022, as it seems government is listening and there is significant political and social will to start changing the way we manage our landscape.

I began the Executive Director role in December and started up several new committees to propel the BCWF forward and to better represent our members, the public, and fish, wildlife, and habitat. We are shifting the internal culture to be responsive and member-centric. We should have a strategic plan that is operationalized in the second quarter of 2022. I believe that our team in the office, Executive, Board, and Committee Chairs will have raised the bar significantly by the summer of 2022.

Yours in Conservation,

Jesse Zeman, BCWF Executive Director





British Columbia is suffering from decades of mismanagement of our fish, wildlife, and habitat. As the largest conservation organization in British Columbia, I believe the BCWF has tremendous untapped potential which can help restore our failing fish and wildlife populations. I'm looking forward to working with the membership, clubs, and board of directors to turn the BCWF into a tenacious, dedicated, results-based conservation organization.

- BCWF Executive Director, Jesse Zeman



## OUR MISSION

To protect, enhance, and promote the wise  
use of the environment for the benefit of  
present and future generations.



Photo by Jillian Cooper





# THE B.C. WILDLIFE FEDERATION AT A GLANCE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The B.C. Wildlife Federation is governed by a Board of Directors. Our Board is comprised of volunteers elected by the members of the BCWF. The Board sets policy, provides strategic direction, meets with stakeholders and government officials, and monitors the overall financial and operational health of the organization. The Executive is made up of the President, Vice Presidents, the Past President and the Treasurer.

The Board is also comprised of Regional Presidents designated to each region in B.C. who focus their efforts on the concerns specific to those areas.

## EXECUTIVE

Chuck Zuckerman, President  
Dave Carleton, Vice President  
David Lewis, Vice President  
Bill Bosch, Past President  
Alison Carleton, Treasurer

## DIRECTORS

Rob Chipman  
Alan Dabb  
Carl Gitscheff  
Brad Klock  
Mike Langegger  
David Oliver  
John Thornton  
Barb Whittingham

## OPERATIONAL DIRECTORS

Jesse Zeman, Executive Director  
Neil Fletcher, Director of Conservation Stewardship  
Sue Prasloski, Director of Finance and Administration  
Cidalia Martin, Director of Programs and Operations

## REGIONAL PRESIDENTS

Region 1 - Vancouver Island: Doug Kitts  
Region 2 - Lower Mainland: Ed George  
Region 3 - Thompson-Nicola: Bruce Ambler  
Region 4E - Kootenay East: Glenn Flynn  
Region 4W - Kootenay West: Terry Hanick  
Region 5 - Cariboo-Chilcotin: Mike Fowler  
Region 6 - Skeena: David Lewis  
Region 7A - Omineca: vacant  
Region 7B - Peace: Gerry Paille  
Region 8 - Okanagan: Pat Whittingham

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Access: David Oliver  
CORE: John Thornton  
Firearms: Gary Mauser  
Forestry: Doug Janz  
Indigenous Relations: Rob Chipman  
Inland Interior Fisheries: Ed George  
Inland Northern Fisheries: David Lewis  
Recreational Sport Shooting: Doug Bancroft  
Saltwater Fisheries: Ted Brookman  
Tidal Water North Fisheries: Ken Franzen  
Wildlife and Allocations: Gerry Paille  
Wildlife Disease: Doug Janz





Photo by Tamara Caldwell





# PARTNERS & SPONSORS

The programs, projects, outreach, and conservation initiatives we are involved in rely heavily upon the financial support of multiple donors, partners, and sponsors. Because of their contributions we can continue our work to protect and conserve B.C.'s fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP FUNDERS

Bass Pro Shops & Cabelas Outdoor Fund  
BC Conservation Foundation  
Canada Summer Jobs Program  
CapriCMW  
Environment & Climate Change Canada's Eco Action Community Fund  
Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC  
Government of British Columbia  
Government of Canada  
Healthy Watersheds Initiative  
National Archery in the Schools Program  
New Horizons for Seniors Program  
Public Conservation Assistance Fund  
Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia  
Relay Education  
The Hamber Foundation  
Watersheds BC

## WOMEN OUTDOORS PROGRAM PARTNERS

Bass Pro Tsawwassen  
BC Conservation Officer Service RAPP Program  
Silva Canada  
UBC Malcolm Knapp Research Forest

## AFFINITY PROGRAM PARTNERS

Accent Inns  
Bass Pro Shops Tsawwassen  
Boaterexam.com  
Capri Insurance  
Coast Hotels  
Enterprise Rent-A-Car  
Mark's Work Warehouse  
Silvercore Inc.

## ENDORSEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Alouette River Management Society  
BCIT  
BC Parks  
British Columbia Mobility Opportunities Society  
City of Richmond  
City of Trail  
Chawathil First Nation  
Columbia Outdoor School  
Cougar Creek Streamkeepers  
Cumberland Wetlands Working Group  
Deka Lake & District Ratepayers Assoc.  
Denman Conservation Association  
District of Mackenzie  
Doig River First Nation  
Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society  
Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association  
Friends of Cortes Island  
Galiano Conservancy Association  
Habitat Acquisition Trust  
Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver  
Katzie First Nation  
Kwadacha First Nation  
Mackenzie Secondary School  
McLeod Lake Indian Band  
Ministry of Forests Lands & Natural Resource Operations  
Pacific Salmon Foundation  
Recreation Sites and Trails BC  
Squamish River Watershed Society  
Steelhead Society of BC  
UBC Forestry  
Williams Lake Senior Activity Centre



# DONORS

## TOP ORGANIZATIONS & FOUNDATIONS

B.C. Conservation Foundation  
BC Trapper's Association  
BC Parks  
Cabela's Outdoor Fund  
Employment and Social Development Canada  
(Canada Summer Jobs)  
Canadian Wildlife Federation  
(Canadian Conservation Corp)  
Capri Insurance CMW  
Centra Cares Foundation  
Columbia Basin Trust  
Conservation Officer Service - Province of BC  
Eco Canada  
Environment and Climate Change Canada  
Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program  
Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (Go Fish)  
Government of Canada - Habitat Stewardship Program  
Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation  
Hamber Foundation  
MakeWay Charitable Society  
Ministry of Forests Lands & Natural Resource  
Operations  
NASP ® Inc  
Pacific Salmon Foundation  
Province of BC - Gaming Branch  
Province of BC -Community Economic Recovery  
Infrastructure Program  
Province of BC - Healthy Watersheds Initiative  
Real Estate Foundation Of BC  
RelayEducation  
The Victoria Foundation  
Watersheds BC  
Wildlife Habitat Canada  
Hugh and Marguerite Fraser Support Fund  
The Victoria Foundation

## BCWF MEMBER CLUBS

Pemberton Wildlife Association  
West Arm Outdoors Club

## ESTATES

Estate of David Walburga  
Estate of Ethel Janet Siminiuk  
Estate of Marion Joyce Woiblet

## CORPORATIONS

Aliments ACTIV Food Inc. - Happy Yak  
Alpine Pursuit  
Backroad Mapbooks  
BC Ground Water Consulting  
Black Press  
Capital Home Energy  
Coastal Peoples Fine Arts Gallery  
Fairmont Hot Springs  
Manning Park Resort  
Mt.Waddingtons Outdoors  
Pan American Silver Corp  
Prestige Hotels & Resorts  
Provincial Employees Community Services Fund  
Rock Gear Distribution  
Sandman Hotel Group  
SKY Helicopters  
Summerland Waterfront Resort & Spa  
Sunset Charters Ltd  
The Vancouver Giants  
Tiger Arms Ltd  
Trout Waters Fly & Tackle  
Vanmars Drilling Ltd  
Waters Edge Shoreside Suites  
Wildplay Nanaimo  
TELUS Corporation



Photo by Alana Higginson





Photo by Jillian Cooper

## INDIVIDUALS

Alan Dabb  
 Alyssia Simster  
 Andrew and Kerry Block  
 Angus and Heidi Wright  
 Bob Atkins  
 Brett and Heidi Grainger  
 Ching Ho and Gilbert Wong  
 Clare Albrechtsen  
 Colleen Seidel  
 David Dickie  
 Dennis Zoppa  
 Doug Shaw  
 Eddy Lettinga  
 Elizabeth de Bosch Kemper  
 Evan and Kelly Bennett  
 Fred and Carmen Vitali  
 Gary Fodor  
 Gordon D. Grunerud  
 Harvey and Marg Andrusak  
 Hugh Gillespie  
 Jake and Petra Penner  
 James and Colleen Seidel

James and Lorraine Thomas  
 James Cooper  
 Jason Stanley and Kristen Baugh  
 Jean Simpson  
 John and Denise Noakes  
 John Virtanen  
 Jordan Pletz  
 Joy Vikstrom  
 Kenneth Watson  
 Kurt and Jennifer Dehnel  
 Lori Bellmann  
 Margaret Acton  
 Marie De Vita  
 Mark McDonald  
 Mark Townsend  
 Marty Anstey  
 Mervyn Schmidt  
 Mike Fimrite  
 Miss Helen Marshall  
 Mr. Glenn A. McAuliffe  
 Mr. James Sharp  
 Neal and Natalie teBrinke

Norm Johnson  
 Pelter Family Fund  
 Peter and Fiona Steeves  
 Reid Brekkas  
 Rick and Daphne Hammond  
 Robert Bull  
 Sam Demopoulos  
 Scott and Clare Albrechtsen  
 Sean Kay  
 Simon and Kim Tang  
 Steve King  
 Sue-Anne and Mike Fimrite  
 Tomas Cirip  
 Trevor French  
 Tyler Janzen  
 Tyler Popplestone and Kelsey Houston  
 Ulrich and Margarete Schoene  
 Victor Skaarup  
 Wayne Biffert  
 William Jeffery  
 Wolfgang Hauser  
 Yuyao Chen

## THANK YOU TO EACH OF OUR GENEROUS DONORS

The B.C. Wildlife Federation relies on the generosity of our donors and supporters.  
 Your contributions allow us to continue fulfilling our mission to protect, enhance, and promote the wise use  
 of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.



# MEMBERSHIP

## MEMBERSHIP

In 2021 the membership team focused on reviewing existing membership data and processes, and concentrated on retention over recruitment.

The BCWF membership currently boasts 7,335 direct members and 822 life members.

Our direct memberships have increased by 363 members, which in part was due to the two direct member campaigns that were run this year. A CORE new graduate mail campaign and a lapsed member email campaign were run in the latter half of the year and resulted in 26 new CORE grad members and 188 renewed lapsed members, with 157 currently set to auto renew in May.

An alteration was also made to our membership form on the website and now automatically selects the option to auto renew, which members can opt-out of at time of purchase or after. This has resulted in a 40% increase in direct members on auto renewal from 2020, which will assist us in our goal to focus on member retention.

In 2021, 105 Member Clubs signed up with BCWF, representing 36,627 members.

The loss of the Mission & District Rod & Gun Club at the beginning of 2021 was a difficult loss, as their club had over 2,500 members. As a result of this, Membership rose to the challenge of providing better service for all of our club and direct members, refocusing efforts on increasing communication with our members and offering support and better customer service along with quality programs to increase engagement.

BCWF affiliated clubs are provided with Third Party Liability Insurance for their members and additional club insurance for their ranges, clubhouses, and other facilities, through CapriCMW, plus discounts at our affinity partners, access to our Free Wills Program for members age 55+, exclusive Member Updates, and advocacy regarding the issues they care about at all levels of government.

If your club is interested in becoming a BCWF affiliated club, please contact [membership@bcwf.bc.ca](mailto:membership@bcwf.bc.ca)

## REGION 1 - VANCOUVER ISLAND

Alberni Fish & Game Club  
Campbell River Fish & Wildlife Assoc.  
Chemainus Rod & Gun Club  
Courtenay & Dist Fish & Game Protective Assoc.  
Cowichan Fly Fishers Assoc.  
Gold River Rod & Gun Club  
Haig-Brown Fly Fishing Assoc.  
Hidden Valley Conservation Club  
Island Waters Fly Fishers  
Ladysmith Sportsman's Club  
Nanaimo & District Fish & Game Protective Assoc.  
North Saanich Rod & Gun Club  
Pacific Rim Fish & Game Assoc.  
Parksville-Qualicum Fish & Game Assoc.  
Port Alice Fish & Wildlife Assoc.  
Powell River Rod & Gun Club  
Salt Spring Island Rod & Gun  
Sayward Fish & Game Assoc.  
Valley Fish & Game Club  
Victoria Fish & Game Protective Assoc.  
Victoria Golden Rods & Reels  
Westcoast Flyfishers

## REGION 2 - LOWER MAINLAND

Associated Wildlife Preserves  
Bowen Island Archery Club  
Canadian Hellenic Rod & Gun Club  
Delta Ladner Rod & Gun Club  
Finnish Canadian Fish & Game Club  
Frenchie's Island Waterfowl Society  
Hope Rod & Gun Club  
Italian-Canadian Rod & Gun Club  
Kingfishers Rod & Gun Club  
Kirkland Island Waterfowl Society  
Lizzie Creek Conservation Society  
Local Hunter Club  
Nicomekl Enhancement Society  
North Fraser Sportsman Assoc.  
North Shore Fish & Game Club  
Osprey Flyfishers of BC  
Outdoors Club Antlers and Hoofs  
Pemberton Wildlife Assoc.  
Polish Fishing & Hunting Club  
Richmond Rod & Gun Club  
Ridgedale Rod & Gun Club  
Sapperton Fish & Game Club  
Squamish Valley Rod & Gun Club  
Sunshine Coast Rod & Gun Club  
The Loons Flyfishing Assoc.  
Totem Flyfishers





Photo by Chris Babcock

### **REGION 3 - THOMPSON/SHUSWAP**

Chase & District Fish & Game Club  
 Clinton & District Outdoor Sportsmen Assoc.  
 Highland Valley Outdoors Assoc.  
 Kamloops & District Fish & Game Assoc.  
 Kamloops Fly Fishers  
 Monte Lake Outdoor Club  
 North Thompson Fish & Game Club  
 Salmon Arm Fish & Game Club

### **REGION 4E - EAST KOOTENAY**

Canal Flats Wilderness Club  
 Elkford Rod & Gun Club  
 Fernie Rod & Gun Club  
 Golden District Rod & Gun Club  
 Lake Windermere & District Rod & Gun Club  
 Sparwood Fish & Wildlife Assoc.

### **REGION 4W - WEST KOOTENAY**

Castlegar & Dist Wildlife Assoc.  
 Creston Valley Rod & Gun Club  
 Lower Arrows Lakes Conservation Assoc.  
 Nakusp Rod & Gun Club  
 Nelson & District Rod & Gun Club  
 Revelstoke Rod & Gun Club  
 Trail Wildlife Assoc.  
 West Arm Outdoors Club

### **REGION 5 - CARIBOO/CHILCOTIN**

Bella Coola Rod & Gun Club  
 Likely Archery Rod & Gun Club  
 Lone Butte Fish & Wildlife Assoc.

### **REGION 6 - SKEENA**

Atlin Rod & Gun Club  
 Bulkley Valley Rod & Gun Club  
 Fulton River Rod & Gun Club  
 Kitimat Rod & Gun Assoc.  
 Port Clements Rod & Gun Club  
 Prince Rupert Rod & Gun Club  
 Terrace Rod & Gun Club

### **REGION 7A - OMINECA**

Mackenzie Fish & Game Association  
 Polar Coachman Flyfishers  
 Spruce City Wildlife Association  
 Vanderhoof Fish & Game Club

### **REGION 7B - PEACE**

Chetwynd Rod & Gun Club  
 Dawson Creek Sportsman's Club  
 Hudson's Hope Rod & Gun Club  
 North Peace Rod & Gun Club  
 New Totem Archery Club

### **REGION 8 - OKANAGAN**

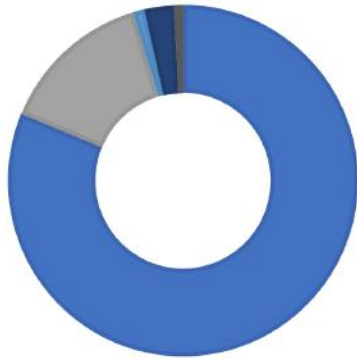
Armstrong & Dist. Fish & Game Assoc.  
 Black Mountain Sportsman Assoc.  
 Cherryville & Dist Com. Shooting Range Assoc.  
 Grand Forks Wildlife Assoc.  
 Kalamalka Fly Fishers  
 Kelowna & Dist Fish & Game Club  
 Keremeos-Cawston Sportsmans Assoc.  
 Kettle Wildlife Assoc.  
 Lumby & Dist Wildlife Assoc.  
 Osoyoos Wildlife Federation  
 Penticton Flyfishers  
 Princeton & Dist Fish & Game Assoc.  
 Southern Okanagan Sportsmens' Assoc.  
 Summerland Sportsman's Assoc.  
 Vernon Fish & Game Club

# FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Revenues	2021	2020
Conservation and education programs	\$6,492,007	\$1,615,227
Membership and dues	1,134,368	1,156,552
General sponsorships and donations	259,263	235,405
Fundraising	214,566	181,011
Investment and other income	65,970	189,011
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$8,166,174</b>	<b>\$3,377,206</b>
Expenditures	2021	2020
Conservation and education	\$6,489,004	\$1,792,526
Membership	402,634	347,505
Fundraising	277,849	246,025
Administration and general	501,707	486,074
Meetings and convention	65,390	60,305
Occupancy costs	29,183	30,720
Amortization	57,752	56,427
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$7,823,517</b>	<b>\$3,019,582</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses before gain on disposal of capital asset</b>	<b>\$342,657</b>	<b>\$357,624</b>
Gain on disposal of capital asset	-9,385	-8,146
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>\$333,272</b>	<b>\$349,478</b>

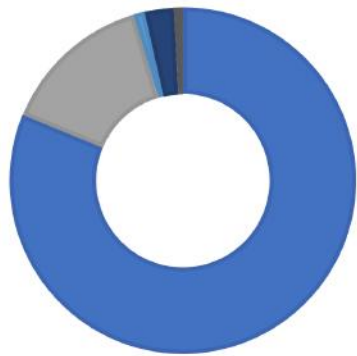




### Revenues

Where funding comes from

Conservation and education programs	\$	6,492,007	81%
Membership and dues		1,134,368	14%
General sponsorships and donations		85,659	1%
Fundraising		214,566	3%
Investment and other income		65,970	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$	<b>7,992,570</b>	



### Expenses

How funds are applied

Conservation and education programs	\$	6,489,004	83%
Membership		402,634	12%
Fundraising		277,849	4%
Administration and general		501,707	6%
Meetings and convention		65,390	1%
Other		96,320	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$	<b>7,832,904</b>	

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	2021	2020
<b>Current</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$3,415,604	\$1,810,920
Other	471,970	679,206
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,887,574</b>	<b>\$2,490,126</b>
<b>Property and Equipment</b>	<b>\$ 961,582</b>	<b>\$933,574</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$4,849,156</b>	<b>\$3,423,700</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$600,991	\$306,206
Deferred revenue	1,677,119	878,812
Deferred capital contributions	13,945	14,853
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,292,055</b>	<b>\$1,199,871</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Unrestricted	\$910,762	\$728,548
Invested in Property and Equipment	947,637	918,721
Internally restricted	698,702	576,560
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,557,101</b>	<b>\$2,223,829</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,849,156</b>	<b>\$3,423,700</b>



Photo by Molly Dube







# YEAR IN REFLECTION



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## FIREARMS COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Gary Mauser*

In the first half of the year, the Firearms Committee worked closely with the Recreational Sport Shooting Committee on Bill C-21 and BC Bill 4, working diligently to advocate against unreasonable bans and regulations. A response to Bill C-21 was published, specifically addressing the hunting firearms that the bill would be targeting, opposing the proposed municipal handgun bans, advocating against the buy-back program and the proposed changes to red/yellow flag laws. BCWF members were directed to contact their MP and given speaking points to help assist them educate their MPs on the impact the new legislation will have on their constituents.

In the spring of 2021, the efforts of the Recreational Sports Shooting Committee (RSSC) and Firearms Committee were focused on responding to B.C. Bill 4, meeting with four MLAs, and members of the Ministry of Public Safety and the Attorney General. The committees raised a specific concern with Part 4 of the Bill, duty to require identification from shooting range user, paragraph 30, which broadly states that the operator must require shooting range users to produce prescribed identification. They underscored that many clubs do not have duty staff, and that complying with this will be an expensive administrative burden at best.

The Firearms Committee contributed to the BCWF response to a request by Ed Fast, MP, concerning a proposed petition to ban lead shotgun ammunition, advising against the lead ban.

The Firearms Committee's advocacy and education efforts included publications in BC Outdoors magazine, justiceforgunowners.ca, and Canadian Access to Firearms, as well as BCWF member updates and communications. Members were encouraged to write to their government representatives in opposition of legislation that would have a detrimental impact on legal firearms owners and gun ranges.

In November, on behalf of the BCWF, an Introduction to Firearms Safety course was delivered to SFU and UBC students at Ridgedale Rod and Gun where 25 attendees were taught by club volunteers to safely shoot handguns, rifles, and shotguns. About half of the participants were female, many of whom had never handled a firearm.

Photo by Courtenay Miller





Photo by Stephanie Racine

## INDIGENOUS RELATIONS COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Rob Chipman*

2021 saw some significant events in the way Canada and British Columbia interact with Indigenous peoples, and BCWF has responded accordingly. Three very important issues emerged.

November 2020 saw the passage of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), and 2021 brought the draft plan for its implementation. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is an aspirational document created by the UN in 2007 and does not have the force of law; DRIPA is the BC provincial legislation that declares that BC will abide by UNDRIP. BCWF President Chuck Zuckerman, along with Executive Director Jesse Zeman and Indigenous Relations Chair Rob Chipman, met with the Honourable Murray Rankin, BC's Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, to discuss how BCWF could support DRIPA while responding to its impacts on conservation, fish, wildlife and habitat, and access to the outdoors.

The summer brought forth the Yahey (Blueberry River First Nation) vs British Columbia decision. Blueberry River First Nation is a signatory to the 1899 Treaty 8; the lawsuit alleged that the B.C. government has failed to abide by the terms of the treaty and that the cumulative effects of industrial resource extraction has unduly affected the ability of the nation to exercise their rights to hunt, trap and maintain their way of life. Blueberry River First Nation won the case. The province declined to appeal, instead negotiating an initial agreement that awards Blueberry River First Nation \$65,000,000 for a wide range of things including healing the land and restoring wildlife and habitat. The judgement is precedent-setting in that it establishes cumulative effects as a basis for claiming that treaty rights have been infringed. The effects will be wide ranging, affecting BCWF members in likely both positive and challenging ways.

Summer also brought into the mainstream spotlight the long known but long ignored story of children buried at residential schools. Tk'emlups te Swecwepemc used ground penetrating radar to locate what are believed to be 215 unmarked graves on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. This discovery broke a dam, releasing a flood of information on other grave sites across the nation. The news of these graves and the events at residential schools has significantly and justifiably impacted how every level of government deals with First Nations and will continue to do so.

Each of these landmark events encompass issues outside BCWF's core mission, but each exerts a great deal of influence on what we do for fish, wildlife, habitat, and access. The Indigenous Relations Committee as well as the BCWF Board of Directors and other committees will be spending lots of time and energy navigating them.

We made some progress in 2021. Articles on Indigenous issues were published in BC Outdoors. Our Indigenous consultant, Solomon Reece, and BCWF staff developed digital training materials to train staff and board members in Indigenous issues. Multiple wetlands projects were undertaken with Indigenous participation. BCWF has participated in the Lower Fraser Collaborative Table with members from resident angler groups, the commercial fishing sector, and multiple Lower Fraser First Nations communities to restore fish populations in the Lower Fraser as well as develop sustainable harvest mechanisms. Our goal of building relationships with Indigenous groups has matured into a doctrine of committing to work with any Indigenous group that shares BCWF's core values on conservation.





# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## RECREATIONAL SPORT SHOOTING COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Doug Bancroft*

The BCWF Recreational Sports Shooting (RSSC) Committee works to ensure that member club ranges continue to operate now and into the future, in compliance with federal and provincial legislation and regulation, and in a manner consistent with BCWF overall goals pertaining to conservation stewardship.

### **BC Bill 4 – 2021: Firearm Violence Prevention Act**

When the Firearm Violence Prevention Act was tabled this spring, the RSSC and Firearms Committee worked jointly and quickly to analyze the potential adverse impacts of ranges, hunting, CORE courses, and the environment. It met with four MLAs, and senior members of the Ministry of Public Safety and Attorney General.

During these meetings, many specific concerns were raised, especially the duty to require identification from shooting range users. The government listened to our concerns and acknowledged that there are problems that are unaddressed by the legislation, but that will be dealt with by Regulation. The Bill was never amended. They did commit to consult with the BCWF on the Regulations.

Consultation on these Regulations has commenced, and provincial staff shared how the draft regulations are shaping up (that will “operationalize” the Firearms Violence Prevention Act). They listened to our concerns and are working to minimize adverse impacts on range operations. This process has been far superior to the near zero consultation with ranges during the development of the Act itself. The next step is for ministry staff to develop, and then share actual draft regulations for comment.

### **Federal Bills C-71 and C-21**

The RSSC continued to work closely with and support the Firearms Committee, in dealing with federal Bill C-71 and Bill C-21, including the drafting of two advocacy communications for BCWF membership.

### **Code of Practice for Lead Recycling and Range Environmental Management Plans**

This project remains ongoing. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has not seen any significant impacts from offsite lead migration; however, they intend to remain fully engaged on this issue. They are seeking a reasonable policy that meets objectives and works for ranges. An intentions paper will be the first document to be tabled. As there are so many competing priority pieces, they may seek a less complex interim implementation. In the meantime, a Code of Practice is still the best option for ranges.

### **Additional RSSC Activities:**

- Answered questions from many ranges that were related to operations under the evolving Public Health Authority COVID-19 directives. Also liaised with Public Health Authority to get certain issues clarified, or in one case, a direction amended.
- Provided advice to ranges seeking information on what to charge to non-member police and other range rentals.
- Provided an update on RSSC activities to various Region Annual General Meetings, as well as to several club Annual General Meetings.
- Provided advice to clubs on range licence renewal, policies, typical full-time staff structures as they are considering a potential new position for admin and finance, and range rentals.
- Reviewed range lead recycling options with one club.



Photo by Feng Yu





# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## WILDLIFE ALLOCATIONS COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Paille*

In 2021, wildlife and habitat management in British Columbia is largely the responsibility of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) with some responsibilities lying with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. The B.C. Wildlife Federation's (BCWF) role includes participation in regional advisory groups and roundtables throughout the province, having representation on the Provincial Hunting and Trapping Advisory Team (PHTAT), having representation on the board of the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) and in meetings with government representatives including Ministers and other elected officials down to regional wildlife managers and biologists. Indigenous peoples can, and do, participate in some regional advisory groups and roundtables and the BCWF meets directly with some First Nations.

Regional advisory groups focus on wildlife and habitat management specific to a region while PHTAT is provincial in scope and also focuses on topics such as hunting methods and the impacts of access. The BCWF has two members on the HCTF board, which among other responsibilities, reviews applications for project funding. HCTF funding is mainly sourced through fishing, hunting and trapping licence surcharges. The BCWF representatives place priority on the best projects that have strong objectives and monitoring components, and centre on on-the-ground actions.

While these avenues of collaboration are ongoing, there is also a suite of other collaborative initiatives across the province in which the BCWF does not directly participate. Some of these have been ongoing for several years now, and are part of the Province's reconciliation process and commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The initiatives include:

- Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council — a part of the Together for Wildlife Strategy
- First Nations - BC Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Forum
- Collaborative Stewardship Frameworks
- Environmental Stewardship Initiative

The BCWF is hopeful about these initiatives as they all have the potential to bring about positive change for fish and wildlife in British Columbia.

The BCWF advocates for increased and dedicated funding for fish, wildlife and habitat that is concentrated on meaningful actions that really make a difference including habitat restoration and enhancement, prescribed fire, and post wildfire management and forestry practices that are more responsive to the needs of fish and wildlife. Moving in this direction requires a much bigger budget, achievable and measurable objectives and new or revised legislation that do not discount the value of fish and wildlife. To that end, the BCWF has been advocating for a Natural Resource Ministry that focuses on fish and wildlife and does not have forestry as a priority.

The B.C. Wildlife Federation also supports wildlife and hunting by frequently meeting with wildlife managers, elected officials, and First Nations organizations, by engaging academics and researchers, by supporting regions and by collecting data and drafting and editing briefs to government. These stories are told by reaching out to members and the public through traditional and social media, hosting webinars and responding to government led engagement processes, including expressing support for the continuation of predator removal in conjunction with other caribou recovery initiatives. The BCWF staff, through its multiple communications channels, did a great job in encouraging members to provide feedback through the hunting regulations engagement process.

BCWF clubs across the province continue to provide financial and untold number of volunteer hours in support of projects like the Southern Interior Mule Deer and Cougar Projects, chronic wasting disease surveillance, and planning and funding prescribed fire plans.



Photo by Lily Markovic

## TIDAL WATER NORTH COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Ken Franzen*

With the exception of halibut and lingcod, 2021 saw the continued erosion of most fishing opportunity on the North Coast. Chinook returns to the Skeena River System continue to be poor even with drastic reductions in angling opportunities. Rockfish daily and possession limits continue to be very low. Lower Skeena coho salmon and chum stocks saw poor returns and coho salmon fishing would have been poor if the Department of Fisheries (DFO) had not canceled the directed Area F troll fishery.

Alaskan fisheries continue to harvest a disproportionate number of Canada-bound salmonoids. According to Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaskan commercial fishery harvested 2.7 million coho salmon in 2021, many of which would have been bound for streams on the west coast of British Columbia. Compare this to the Area F troll fishery who caught a mere 67,000 coho salmon, all as by-catch in Chinook and pink salmon fisheries. The Pacific Salmon Treaty is failing Canadians.

Ottawa introduced a 647-million-dollar Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative (PSSI). While some of the initiative is supportable and some consultation is emerging, one of the pillars of this initiative is Harvest Transformation, with a goal of implementing extensive closures to commercial salmon fisheries. This demonstrates a move away from science-based conservation and an unwillingness to deal with pinnipeds. The Washington Department of Fish and Game lethally removes both California and Steller sea lions on the Columbia River as a part of their salmon management program.

Steelhead returns to the Skeena this year were very poor even in the complete absence of any commercial net fisheries in the approach waters of the Skeena River. With harvestable numbers of babine sockeye expected to return to the Skeena in 2022 it begs the question: How will DFO conduct net fisheries for sockeye salmon and still achieve their conservation objectives for Chinook salmon and steelhead? Of further concern, why would DFO fully load the spawning channels on the Pinkut and Fulton Rivers with sockeye salmon in 2021? We now risk a massive return of enhanced sockeye salmon in 2024/2025, resulting in gillnet and seine fisheries on the approach waters of the Skeena River and significant mortalities of non-target species like steelhead.





# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## NORTHERN INLAND FISHERIES COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by David Lewis*

This committee is advocating for a rebuilding plan for steelhead using an enhancement and abundance-based model that includes sustenance harvest.

The most important issue for inland fisheries in the north in 2021 has been not closing the Skeena at a time of year when it should have been closed based on science for steelhead conservation. When to close watersheds to support species is a complex decision that should be based on science — seasonal variations, species needs and impacts on other watersheds. Initially, the province had made the science-based conservation decision to close the Skeena at a critical time, but guiding groups pressured the government to keep the river open during a critical period for steelhead, an endangered species. In the end, the decision was political (guiding and tourism needs) rather than science based.

Decisions about where and when to close water systems in the north are also complicated because closing one system puts a lot of pressure on another. For example, closing a large water system like the Skeena (covering hundreds of kilometers) puts a lot of pressure on smaller systems like the Kitimat (a 17km stretch). In addition, the Kitimat River is already under pressure because of work camps for LNG project (approximately 3,000 people in the work camps).

The Skeena and Nass watersheds will likely see closures again in 2022. The committee is advocating for the steelhead hatchery in Kitimat to be brought back, so a retention fishery can return.

No closures affected sustenance salmon fishing in 2021.

The committee is also working on getting back the trout char retention fishery. A January 2022 report, commissioned by Watershed Watch Salmon Society and Skeena Wild Conservation Trust, included an analysis of the B.C. salmon species caught in the southeast Alaskan fisheries. The report states that many of B.C.'s largest salmon run through Alaskan waters on their way to spawn in Canadian waterways. In 2021, Alaskan fleets harvested almost 800,000 sockeye (majority Canadian origin) and tens of thousands of Chinook and coho salmon of Canadian origin with large numbers of migrating pink, chum and steelhead, many of which were from endangered populations. The exorbitant number of fish taken, which would normally return to Canadian interior waters to spawn, is of grave concern to this committee. This report is the scientific analysis of a situation widely talked about in the north for years.

## WILDLIFE CONFLICTS COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Doug Janz*

The M. ovi (*Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*) Advisory Group made a formal presentation to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of recommendations for protecting sheep. These recommendations include a voluntary non-regulated action plan, overarching provincial policy tied to the Animal Health Act, and specification of the role of the BC Sheep Separation Program to assist and provide leadership on education and producer engagement. Next operational steps will include letters to the NGOs outlining these recommendations.

Bighorn herds that were "treated" by lethally removing ewes shedding M. ovi still produced positive results on lamb recruitment observed one- and two-years post-treatment during late fall aerial surveys (November 2021). The plan for this winter is to follow Test-And-Removal methods on bighorn sheep herds at the northern extent of the study area and to complete this work on the west side bighorn herds. The researchers are expecting to capture and sample ~80 ewes, releasing them with rot-off VHF collars, and analyze samples with Biomeme PCR at the end of each day. This method reduces helicopter costs, as well as animal stress.



Photo by Harry Collins





# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## ACCESS COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by David Lewis*

Hunters and anglers should read the Hunting & Trapping Regulations Synopsis and check the General Open Season and Motor Vehicle Prohibitions and to check the website for updates for where motor vehicles are prohibited/restricted in the areas that you are hunting.

Hunters and anglers must respect Private Property/No Trespassing signs. To be sure what areas are Crown land and what are private property, get the correct area map with more detail from Conservation Officer Service District Office.

### **Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM)**

The UBCM held its 2021 virtual convention on September 15th & 16th, 2021. These are some of the resolutions that were endorsed over the two days:

- SR2 Forest Management in BC,
- EB17 Abandoned Vehicles on Crown Land,
- EB26 Protection of Waterways from Aquatic Invasive Species,
- EB27 Invasive Asian Clams,
- EB28 Watershed Stewardship in British Columbia,
- EB29 Drinking Water Protection and Private Managed Forest Land,
- EB30 Illegal Dumping,
- EB31 Illegal Dumping in Rural Areas,
- EB32 Illegal Dumping in Electoral Areas,
- EB41 New Provincial Trails Strategy,
- EB42 Protection for Outdoor Recreation Opportunities in BC,
- EB46 Amendments to the Aquaculture Act.

### **The Douglas Lake Cattle Company vs. Nicola Lake Fish & Game Club**

On Wednesday, September 29, 2021, The Nicola Valley Fish and Game Club lost its application for leave to appeal the ruling which handed the cattle company its victory in March 2021.

### **Muchalat Lake; Gold River**

Recreation Sites and Trails BC was going to close the gate to the campground at Muchalat Lake at the end of September since there is no operator for the campground in the winter. The campground has the only boat ramp to the lake, so thanks to the Gold River Rod and Gun Club, they decided to partner with the Strathcona Regional District to supervise the Muchalat Lake campsite for the months that it is closed. This allows people to access the lake year-round.

### **Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORC)**

Some of the items discussed at the ORC Board meetings included reconciliation facilitation proposals, participation in the Canadian Trails Federation, funding for rebuilding recreational trail infrastructure, restricted motorized access in burn areas for the purpose of recreational fishing, the Enloe Dam Removal, Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Coalition updates, a request to have ORCBC administer the BC Trail Fund, a request for an environmental impact assessment for the expansion of Copper Mountain Mine, and consultation on mountain biking trail standards.

### **Provincial Trails Advisory Body (PTAB)**

The RSSC is working with the Provincial Trails Advisory Body on updates on the trails strategy review since the last call and next steps, sub-committee work on sustainable funding, work planning for 2022, and a PTAB mandate in the Trails Strategy.



Photo by Scott Canning

## RESOLUTION COMMITTEE

*Respectfully submitted by Mark McDonald*

This year saw another good batch of resolutions submitted from around the province. It was very nice to see different regions and clubs that are generally very quiet submitting resolutions this year. The committee is pleased to submit a package of 12 resolutions for consideration.

The following is an update on key resolutions presented at the 2021 BCWF AGM.

**Resolution 1 – Senior Family Membership** - As this resolution requires a change to the Bylaws, the Finance Committee has prepared 2 resolutions to be presented at the 2022 AGM for approval of this change to the membership categories and to insert the fees for this change into the bylaws.

**Resolution 6 – Honouring B.C. Wildlife Federation Members** – As time marches on and claims more of our members, the BCWF will do its best to honour those that we have lost at the AGM.

**Resolution 10 – Policy Direction for the terms Recreational or Recreation** – All Executive, Board of Directors and Committee members are endeavouring to use the terms “resident hunter”, “public fishery”, and “resident forager” in any communications with government or media.

**Resolution 11 – Effective Access Reduction** – This resolution has resulted in The Provincial Hunting and Trapping Advisory Team forming an Access Committee that has already met multiple times and has facilitated presentations by experts at the last 2 PHTAT meetings. The last presentation was related to forest practices and road regulations. No formal recommendations have come from the subcommittee at this point other than that regions will have to take the lead on access proposals.

**Resolution 12 – Annual Fixed Stay RV Camping for Non Residents of B.C.** – this resolution has been sent to the Associate Deputy Minister of the FLNRORD Ministry responsible for Rural Opportunities, Tenures, and Engineer Division. There is already a law stating that “Any Person may camp on Crown Land for up to 14 consecutive calendar days”. This exposes an enforcement issue with the current regulation. As well, for the fee portion of the resolution to be enacted upon, a change must be made to B.C.’s Land Use Policy Permission and will need to be submitted to the Ministry of Finance for approval. Work will continue on this resolution.

**Resolution 13 – Non Residents Recreational Vehicle User Fee** – At this time there is a reciprocal trade agreement with the 4 Western provinces. There is little appetite to open up the minor issue of user fees to non B.C. residents at this time within the scope of that trade agreement. Enforcement of licensing regulations should continue for all recreational vehicle users, regardless of residence.

**Resolution 17 – Appointing of a Chief Provincial Firearms Officer** – the provincial government is currently preoccupied with enacting Bill 4 and unfortunately has no appetite to appoint a CPFO at this time. Efforts for no possible gain are wasted efforts. The Firearms Committee and the Recreational Shooting Sports Committee will wait until a more favourable time to put effort into this resolution.





Photo by Frank Fichtmüller



# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Photo by Dennis Stogsdill



Regional presidents are a valuable resource for BCWF members and clubs to better understand the initiatives that are led by the B.C. Wildlife Federation. The regional presidents represent BCWF policies and positions on various standing or special government advisory committees, and they address key issues that directly impact their region.

## REGION 1 – VANCOUVER ISLAND

*Respectfully submitted by Doug Kitts*

**Fishery Concerns:** Reduced quotas from the Department of Fisheries (DFO) resulted in deeply strained relationships between recreational and commercial fishers. The season was also short due to DFO limitations, and fishers in Region 1 are reporting no salmon. A recent report included a detailed analysis of each B.C. salmon species caught in Southeast Alaskan interception fisheries. The report is damning, showing that while there were tight limitations on commercial fishing in B.C. last summer, Alaskan fleets logged over 3,000 boats days and harvested almost 800,000 sockeye salmon (most of which came from Canada) and tens of thousands of Canadian Chinook and coho salmon. More positively, the heavy rains did not do any significant damage to Vancouver Island hatcheries, and they have been able to collect brood stock.

**Deforestation:** Development on Vancouver Island and the consequent deforestation continues to be a significant concern in Region 1. However, there is some positive news. The City of Parksville tried to develop wetlands and greenbelts, which would have replaced a unique stand of Sitka Spruce. Region 1 engaged a forester and local naturalists to do an inventory of the stand. Parksville has now decided to protect the area as a conservation site, thanks to the BCWF and other community groups. Raw log exports continue on Vancouver Island, and the BCWF is concerned about replanting.



# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## REGION 2 – LOWER MAINLAND

*Respectfully submitted by Mark McDonald*

**Skagit Headwaters (Donut Hole):** The B.C. government struck a deal with Imperial Metals that will see them relinquish all mineral/forestry claims to this area. It is hoped that the area will be incorporated into one of the adjacent provincial parks so it can be protected in the future. This is a bright spot in a sea of large infrastructure projects and tenure applications that affect the region from one end to the other.

**Roosevelt Elk Relocation:** The Roosevelt elk that have been transplanted back into many historic drainages in Region 2 have done extremely well. So much so, that there are Limited Entry opportunities in every area they have been reintroduced. Kudos to biologist Darrell Reynolds from the ministry that has spearheaded their recovery and to all of the clubs and individuals that have been involved with these transplants back to historic range.

**Snow Geese:** The Lesser Snow Goose flock that returns to the Fraser Delta/Skagit Delta every fall has experienced another year of record recruitment. Though final figures are not available yet, the word is that the recruitment to the flock this year could approach 40% again. Large numbers of birds have been seen using the Fraser Valley fields as far east as Chilliwack, something that has never happened before. This is particularly noteworthy considering the Fraser Skagit subpopulation was around 16,000 in the 70s and is now around the 200,000 mark.

## REGION 3 – THOMPSON-NICOLA

*Respectfully submitted by Bruce Ambler*

**Big Bar Landslide:** All construction has halted on the Fraser River Big Bar landslide. Salmon species are now passing through on their own. Monitoring of salmon runs will continue to ensure satisfactory returns.

**Prescribed Burns:** An area within the Big Bar/Canoe Creek area of the Fraser River has been the subject of several successful prescriptions over the past seven to eight years. These prescriptions are conducted mid to late October and will hopefully serve as an indicator of a more controlled burning window. Field trips for the viewing of this area are being planned with local First Nations and B.C. wildlife services.

**The BC Livestock Protection Program:** This initiative is proving to be instrumental in addressing predator/prey dynamics and providing some protection of our ungulate populations in many parts of the region. This program is run by the BC Cattlemen's Association and has livestock protection officers who verify all reported attacks on cattle or sheep. Through a verification process, if the livestock is found to be attacked by that of a canid, an attempt is made by the livestock protection officer to remove those animals. All attacks by other predators are dealt with by the Conservation Officer service. Local trappers are taking a more concerted effort as well with their growing knowledge and effectiveness of canid trapping. A big thank you to all for a collaborative approach for game management.



Photo by Courtenay Miller



## REGION 4E – KOOTENAY EAST

*Respectfully submitted by Glenn Flynn*

**Bighorn Sheep:** Drastic declines in Bighorn Sheep populations prompted a proposal that their hunting status be changed to an LEH. Region 4E has been disputing this proposal because there is insufficient scientific evidence to support this status change. To gather more scientific evidence, Region 4E is participating in a multi-year Elk Valley West Bighorn Sheep Population Dynamics Study, have formed a committee, and are collaborating with the Ktunaxa Nation to better understand the factors influencing sheep populations, protect and enhance their habitat, and raise awareness of this issue. Region 4E has also partnered with the Ministry of Transportation to collect data on Bighorn Sheep during construction in the Kicking Horse Canyon.

**Habitat Decline and Development:** Unproductive wildlife and habitat management in our region has led to an alarming downward trend in wildlife populations. The region has many substantial habitat enhancement and research projects underway that will benefit fish and wildlife populations, including our Elk Collaring and Migration Study, our Big Ranch Ecosystem Enhancement Project, and the Kootenay Lake Trout Management Program. Region 4E is proud to have partnered with various stakeholder groups such as constructing turtle basking logs in the Columbia Valley with the Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners, collaborating with Wildsight to interview in a private land logging environmental concern, assisting Nature Trust BC with wildlife camera surveillance, and assisting the Shuswap Indian Band with stream restoration projects.

## REGION 4W – KOOTENAY WEST

*Respectfully submitted by Terry Hanik*

**Ungulate Population Decline:** Over the last few years, this region has seen our ungulate populations further reduced to the point where the Elk season was reduced by an additional two weeks as inventory figures are approaching conservation levels. The region has been running a predator incentive program for club members with the intention of reducing the wolf population with some success.

**Kootenay Lake Angler Incentive Program:** The Kootenay Lake Angler Incentive Program is in its second year of operation. The goal of the program is to balance the predator/prey populations on Kootenay Lake by reducing the predator species (Rainbow & Bull trout) with hopes that the prey species (kokanee) can recover. The kokanee return at the Meadow Creek spawning channel has dropped from 1.2 million fish to less than 20K for the last few years. The local club has lobbied for the Ministry to step up their game with additional predator reduction on the spawning bed while increasing the egg transplant program for kokanee at the spawning channel.

**Back Country Recreation Tenures:** Backcountry recreation tenures continue to be a concern as wildlife habitat and movement corridors are impacted by new applications and approvals. The region is particularly concerned with land use decisions being made without understanding the cumulative effects of these developments.

**Road Deactivation:** Last year Region 4W saw numerous areas where access was restricted or eliminated due to road deactivation. Although the deactivation of some roads may be justified and supported by clubs, there was no public involvement or formal notification of the process. Access in this area is already restricted due to steep terrain limitations, so the removal of one bridge or deactivation of a short road restricts access to large areas which have been used for decades.





## REGION 5 – CARIBOO-CHILCOTIN

*Respectfully submitted by Michael Fowler*

**Freshwater Fishing Conservation:** BCWF Region 5 now holds an official seat on the Cariboo Regional Angling Advisory Committee, which permits us to receive communications and take a more active role in conserving species and shaping freshwater fishing in our region.

**Wildlife Committee:** BCWF Region 5 has continued to be an active participant in the Cariboo Regional Wildlife Advisory Committee, dedicated to monitoring population numbers, commenting on proposals, and submitting our own. Protocols are being developed for moose Limited Entry Hunting and a Sandhill crane season in the Cariboo. The region has commented on caribou recovery, the associated wolf cull extension and Red (Pine) marten recovery

**Back Country Land Use & Access:** In 2021, BCWF Region 5 adopted Back Country Tenure and Wilderness Lakes policies. That has led to Region 5 providing comments on four different commercial back country proposals involving cabins on lakes and hiking, horseback riding and bike trails. Region 5 has participated in the Dry-Belt Douglas Fir land-use inquiry by FLNRORD and has been monitoring the effects of wildfires in our region.

## REGION 6 – SKEENA

*Respectfully submitted by David Lewis*

**Haida Gwaii:** At the start of the pandemic, all hunting on Haida Gwaii was stopped. The black bear population then increased, with lack of hunting, and has become a nuisance and a larger number of bears are being euthanized by conservation officers. BCWF advocated for opening non-resident hunting in Haida Gwaii in part to prevent wasteful culling of black bears. Haida Gwaii was limited to 4 Limited Entry Hunting (LEH) draws for black bears last year. The ability to buy tags online was still curtailed by the province, so Region 6 is in ongoing talks for online tag purchase for the 2022 hunting season to work to ensure bears are not dumped but are used for food. Talks have started to expand the number of LEHs issued for black bears in Haida Gwaii.

**Fisheries:** Region 6 has been working extensively with the fisheries, advocating for protections for steelhead and salmon, additional hatcheries, and appropriate closures of the Skeena to support species.

# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## REGION 7B – PEACE

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Paille*

**Stone's Sheep:** The BC Conservation Officer Service indicated that wildlife seizures and penalties were generally up within the region, with a significant number of hunters "self-reporting." Of great concern is the number of Stone's Sheep seized (18) from both resident hunters and guided hunters. The number of illegal rams was unusually high and there was a higher-than-normal percentage of rams under eight years old harvested. If these trends continue, Stone's Sheep harvest management will have to be revisited.

**Prescribed Burns:** There has been no progress in getting the North Peace Rod and Gun Club's proposal approved for burns in the Tuchodi River Valley — the BCWF and club representatives continue to push for a solution for approval at all levels of government.

**Moose and Caribou Management:** Government also placed a notice that they are working with First Nations on "Harmonized and consistent moose and caribou hunting regulations across Northern B.C." The BCWF responded by expressing concern that this was happening without stakeholder engagement and that any decisions be made based on evidence and include a biological rationale and measurable objectives. The BCWF has since heard that such discussions are well underway and that big changes to both the moose and caribou seasons for licensed hunters in northern B.C. are likely for 2022.



Photo by Scott Canning





# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## REGION 8 – OKANAGAN

*Respectfully submitted by Pat Whittingham*

**Southern Interior Mule Deer Project:** The Southern Interior Mule Deer Project (SIMDeer) was again a central focal point for our region. Volunteers deployed winter cameras to summer sites in the spring, then collected and redeployed them back to winter sites in October and November. As the SIMDeer camera program is winding down through the University of Idaho, the BCWF is in discussions as to how a new, in-house camera program would roll out, and what resources will be needed to continue this important research. The latest collaring data for SIMDeer had 66 collared deer in the West Okanagan, 61 in the Boundary, and 57 in the Cache Creek/Elephant Hill area. The project has also successfully reached the target of at least 20 neonate collarings in each area this spring. Overall, there has been a decrease in mule deer neonate mortality compared to past results. Bears are the most predominant predator, with 18 neonate kills, followed by 2 cougar and one each of lynx and coyote. That contrasts with adult mule deer doe mortality that is primarily from cougar (48 kills), coyote (14), wolf (7), black bear (3), bobcat (1), and grizzly bear (1).

**Southern BC Cougar Project:** The Southern BC Cougar Project has been in full swing with capturing and collaring. The project is tracking three litters of kittens to monitor dispersal patterns. Kills from most to least common are mule deer, white-tailed deer, unknown deer species, elk, moose, sheep, coyote, porcupine, and snowshoe hare. To date, the team has investigated 885 cluster sites and 545 kill sites. A cougar inventory of the West Okanagan this winter is being funded by Together for Wildlife. The Ministry will be looking to local clubs for volunteers to help locate cougar tracks during the inventory sessions from December 2021 to February 2022. More information can be found at [www.BCcougarproject.weebly.com](http://www.BCcougarproject.weebly.com). Donations from local clubs have been critical to the success of this project so far.

**Bighorn Sheep:** Concerns persist with our bighorn sheep populations, with western valley herds infected with Psoroptes mites and eastern valley herds battling M.ovi respiratory infections, and the Grandby herd suffering a blue-tongue die off. Region 8 is concerned about reports of Shorts Creek sheep migrating back and forth to the other herds and possibly infecting the region's only remaining disease-free herd. In Psoroptes herds, drug trials are underway on Bravecto (Fluralaner) and some early success in controlling mites has been observed. Craig Maclean, one of the regional biologists and sheep expert, will be conducting extensive inventory work in March of 2022 to assess population impacts. This region has supported the closure of limited entry hunts in Okanagan Mountain Park as the herd has dropped below the hutable 75 animal minimum target. Region 8 will be investigating the possibility of prescribed burns in the park to help rejuvenate the sheep habitat.

**Fisheries:** As reports came in of fish dying because of low water and high temperatures caused by the extreme drought conditions in the Okanagan and across BC, we supported an emergency order to close all streams and rivers in Region 8, except MU's 8-24 to 8-26, from July 19th to September 30th, to reduce impacts from angling. The fishing regulations for Region 8 for 2021/23 were finalized and published. Several proposals that have come from this region made the final cut. Notably, the Dee Lake Chain of lakes has been switched to regional regulations to allow year round family recreation on these put-and-take fisheries. The regional fisheries staff should be commended for identifying family angling opportunities.

**Timber Supply:** Region 8 completed a detailed response to the Okanagan Timber Supply Review and met with staff from the Chief Forester's Office to discuss the review paper and point out shortcomings in its assessment of fish and wildlife impacts. This was followed up with a researched, written response, citing the scientific basis for Region 8's displeasure with the "status quo" failure to adequately plan for fish and wildlife values.

**Proposed Heli-Cat Skiing Operation:** Al Grant of the Boundary Alliance provided details and history on the proposed heli-cat skiing operation for the Powder Renegade Lodge. Okanagan BCWF submitted a detailed letter of opposition to the proposed ski operation earlier in 2021. Al has continued to press for cancellation of the project, given the expected environmental impacts on this area. It's a grizzly bear recovery area and home to struggling mountain goat population cells. Al's research has also shown that there is rarely enough snowfall to support the proposed operations, and Region 8 is very concerned about the effects this development would have on the area, one which our region has been working to protect for decades.





# THE WETLANDS WORKFORCE

Photo by Alana Higginson

Wetlands Report 13





# THE WETLANDS WORKFORCE

## THE WETLANDS WORKFORCE PROJECT

*Respectfully submitted by Cheyenne Bergenhenegouwen*

The B.C. Wildlife Federation's Wetlands Workforce project was just one of over 60 projects supported by the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, a \$27 million investment in watershed conservation and restoration projects in British Columbia. These projects aimed to improve the health of watersheds while creating economic, skill building opportunities and strengthening relationships with First Nations and Indigenous-led organizations.

The BCWF received over \$5 million of this stimulus funding to support work that would enhance and support wetlands across the province.

## COLLABORATION FOR WETLANDS

As the largest collaborative wetland initiative of its kind in Canada, the Wetlands Workforce project has shown that people are eager to collaborate and work together for the betterment of our wetlands, watersheds, and water. The project helped facilitate maintenance and monitoring work through several work-pods, which were led by NGO's and Indigenous communities. The key partners with work-pods, in addition to the 5 led by the B.C. Wildlife Federation, include:

Ducks Unlimited  
Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition  
Wildcoast Ecological Society  
Langley Environmental Partners Society  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Nature Trust of BC  
Yaqaan Nukiy (Lower Kootenay Band)

"Not only were we able to provide meaningful employment around the province, but we were able to address critical conservation actions that too often are under-resourced. This funding provided a positive opportunity to advance reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and jump-start an economy that fully integrates restoration and conservation into the future." Neil Fletcher, Director of Conservation Stewardship, B.C. Wildlife Federation

## HIGHLIGHTS

In a short amount of time, the Wetlands Workforce managed to accomplish some amazing feats. This includes the training of field technicians; virtual and in-person engagement with members from over 40 First Nation communities; maintenance and monitoring work at over 200 wetland sites; and the advancement of a rapid wetland functional assessment model across three regions of the province.

Extensive training sessions tailored to each project, were provided to all those employed. In addition, a major piece of work that came out of the Wetlands Workforce was the publication of, Wetlands of British Columbia: Field Guide to Indicator Species for Wetland Classification. This comprehensive field guide will continue to benefit experts, enthusiasts, and students when they head out into the field.

- 252 project sites
- Over 100 people employed
- 221 wetlands assessed through WESP
- Garbage and debris removed from 108 sites
- 47 Indigenous communities engaged
- 9,530kg waste removed from Fraser River Estuary
- 7 partners supported work-pods

## FIRST NATION ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with First Nations and Indigenous-led organizations was a key focus from the start of the project. First Nations Liaisons, Glenn Auger and Diana Cote guided staff in fostering meaningful engagement with First Nation communities, while providing the crews with the tools and knowledge they needed to enter new relationships with respect and humility.

Part of this education was the development of custom Indigenous training sessions provided by Glenn and Solomon Reece, First Nations Consultant for the B.C. Wildlife Federation. All team members that were part of the Wetlands Workforce were required to take this training.

"Our strength comes from the Land. Our Wetlands Workforce were honored to work alongside our Indigenous Elders, Youth and Community Members in support of Wetlands across British Columbia. Gaining momentum as we, as Indigenous Peoples, have known for centuries that wetlands hold life in its hands. Our Knowledge Keepers voices were heard, in a good way, to ensure the protection of our Wetlands." Diana Cote, Indigenous Advisor, Wetlands Workforce

With heavy hearts we said good-bye to a key member of the Wetlands Workforce team. On the morning of December 1st, 2021, Glenn Auger, First Nations Liaison for the Wetlands Workforce, passed away. Over the past year, Glenn served as a role model to many working on the Wetlands Workforce project. With honesty and humility, he guided the team on a journey that helped them strive to have meaningful dialogues with Indigenous people and communities.



## WETLAND WORK

At the start of the project, it was anticipated the BCWF and partner work-pods would conduct maintenance and monitoring work at 70 identified wetland sites. As the work commenced and new opportunities arose more wetland sites were able to receive work. In total, the work-pods managed to visit and provide support to over 215 wetland sites around the province.

Invasive species were removed from an area of 1,006,090 m<sup>2</sup>. This measurement is a combined amount incorporating the work of all the partner work-pods across 160 wetland sites.

Native species planted encompassing an area of 575,489 m<sup>2</sup> - This measurement is a combined amount incorporating the work of all the partner work-pods across 52 wetland sites.

Work-pods were deployed with a focus of maintaining and strengthening wetlands and riparian habitats. Some of the maintenance work completed includes:

- Removal of Invasive Species, Pest and/or Weeds
- Planting of Native Species
- Installation and Repairing of Protective Fencing
- Waste and Garbage Removal
- Installation of Signage
- Beaver Dam Removal

*"If everyone by the end of this project has a little greater appreciation for what wetlands do for humanity, I think that could have even bigger effects going forward in even more diverse fields."* Kyla Rushton, Wetland Assessment and Field Coordinator, Wetlands Workforce

## MAINTENANCE HIGHLIGHT THE FRASER RIVER ESTUARY CLEAN-UP

The BCWF Fraser Estuary Clean-up work-pod started work at the end of September. Their aim was to remove garbage and debris from over 60km of shoreline along the Fraser River Estuary. Over the course of 12 weeks the crew managed to remove 9,530 kg of debris from 62.6 km of shoreline. The BCWF's Fish Habitat Restoration and Education Program offered a lot of support in the planning and operation of this clean-up effort. The crew also received logistical support from the Delta - Ladner Rod and Gun Club.

The work-pod focused their efforts at 4 main locations with an additional day spent with Tsawwassen First Nation staff and community members to clean up debris along the community beach. The crew cleaned the shorelines of South Arm Marsh (SAM), Westham Island, Boundary Bay, and West Dyke Trail.

Styrofoam, ranging in size from a few centimetres to over 3 meters tall, was the most numerous item removed. Lighters, plastic bottles and plastic bags were also common. These plastic materials are crucial to remove from the shorelines as they can lead to toxic materials entering the waterways and in turn the fish and wildlife that depend on these habitats.







Protecting the important ecosystems of the Fraser Estuary from these potentially harmful materials was the main aim for implementing this large-scale clean-up.

"I think one of the most amazing things is seeing what a crew of five people can do in such a brief time. I think it is really motivating for members of the public and other individuals that might want to do this. To see how much can get done with just five people." Brianna Iwabuchi, Field Coordinator, BCWF Fraser River Estuary Clean-up work-pod

Over the course of the Wetlands Workforce project, our crews monitored and collected data to assess the effectiveness of restoration techniques, the overall health of wetlands and how techniques can be improved moving forward.

Some of the wetland monitoring activities include:

- Bird Monitoring
- Amphibian Monitoring
- Wildlife Surveys
- Plant Surveys
- Photo Point Monitoring
- Water Quality Monitoring

## MONITORING HIGHLIGHT: WILDLIFE CAMERAS

The BCWF work-pods installed 35 wildlife-monitoring stations at 22 of their wetland sites in the Southwest and Kootenays. These cameras not only captured wildlife that frequented the wetlands, but they also collected data on the wetland's fluctuating water levels over the field season. This data will help determine the length of time water is available at wetland sites to support wildlife species.

Elk, deer, moose, bears, sandhill cranes, great blue herons, hawks, and several other wildlife species were spotted utilizing the wetlands our crews supported this year.

"Doing this monitoring on a whole will allow us to evaluate the success of the restoration process and shed light on how we can create better management guidelines for restoration projects. Additionally, we hope to provide funders and policy makers an idea of what all goes into a restoration project. It's not just the initial construction." Christina Borring-Olsen, Wetlands Research Coordinator, Wetlands Workforce



# THE WETLANDS WORKFORCE

## PREDICTIVE MAPPING

Effective wetland conservation requires knowledge of the location and types of wetlands that occur on the landscape. For decades, wetland practitioners identified the need for more accurate wetland data layers in B.C. The advancement of technology has allowed us to use machine learning in our efforts to produce better wetland maps. A predictive wetland map is a data layer, generated from computer algorithms, that identifies locations, extent and type of wetlands based on probability. The quality of the maps produced relies on good input, such as verified field data. As our work-pods went out to gather information to conduct the Wetlands Ecosystem Services Protocol, they also gathered information to support a predictive map layer for the wetlands they assessed. Some of the data gathered includes drone footage, vegetation plots, and water quality. This information was reviewed by a qualified ecological professional to ensure that our data would have high value for use by geospatial information specialists. Canadian Wildlife Service intends to integrate our field data into future predictive mapping products within B.C.

## WETLANDS ECOSYSTEM SERVICES PROTOCOL

Wetlands provide many ecosystem services for free. Until now, there has been no standardized way in B.C. to measure the relative performance of a wetland's various functions (e.g., flood attenuation, carbon storage, etc.). This type of information has all sorts of value in terms of making better informed conservation decisions. The Wetlands Ecosystem Services Protocol (WESP) is a standardized method for rapidly assessing important natural functions of wetlands. It utilizes over 60 field questions and over 40 office/GIS questions as input to determine 17 functions and attributes of a wetland complex relative to other wetlands in the region.

The creation of the WESP model was focused on 4 Eco-Provinces, where each Wetland Workforce work-pod dedicated a minimum of two weeks assessing randomly selected natural wetlands.

Unique to the WESP work conducted in the northeast of the province, was a partnership between the Wetlands Workforce and Northern Lights College (NLC). This partnership provided field hours for the practicum component of the College's Land and Water Resources Diploma, while also providing additional hands on deck for WESP assessments. Over the course of the field season the work-pod hosted 16 students and 5 First Nation community members in the field.

**To learn more about the Wetlands Workforce, please visit [www.wetlandsworkforce.ca](http://www.wetlandsworkforce.ca) where more in-depth stories, reports and resources can be found.**

**This one-year project was supported by the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, a \$27-million program supported by the province of B.C. to stimulate British Columbia's economic recovery through investments in community-driven watershed conservation and restoration projects.**

"This work would not be possible without the funding and support of so many. In addition to the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, we'd like to thank Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, Columbia Basin Trust, Wildlife Habitat Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada who all contributed to the Wetlands Workforce project." Neil Fletcher, Director of Conservation Stewardship, B.C. Wildlife Federation



Photo by Cheyenne Bergenhenegouwen





Photo by Molly Dube





# WILDLIFE ADVOCACY

## KOOTENAY LAKE ANGLER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

*Respectfully submitted by Philippe Jeanjean*

The Kootenay Lake Angler Incentive Program is in its third year of operation. Run by the West Arm Outdoors Club, and supported by BCWF, the goal of the program is to balance the predator/prey populations on Kootenay Lake. To accomplish this, anglers are incentivised to help reduce the predator species (Rainbow & Bull trout) so that the prey species (kokanee) can recover. During 2021, participants in the program caught over 6,000 predator fish and submitted the fish heads for monthly prize draws.

## CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

CWD is a serious issue facing deer, elk, and moose populations in North America. The disease has reduced cervid populations, has negative social, cultural, and economic impacts and presents a potential risk to public health. CWD has not yet been detected in B.C., but it is very close and continues to spread.

The B.C. CWD Program is delivered collaboratively with a team of stakeholders, First Nations, and other partners that guide prevention and surveillance activities. The BCWF and clubs across the province continue to be integral to these efforts and on-the-ground activities. Prevention is promoted through outreach to increase awareness and regulations to reduce risk. CWD testing continues across B.C. with over 1,000 samples submitted to the program in 2021-22. At this stage, enhanced CWD surveillance, especially in high-risk areas, is critical to ensuring the disease is detected as soon as possible. A rapid, coordinated, and well-planned response will give BC the best chance of limiting negative impacts.

The B.C. CWD Program follows recommendations from experts and is involved in cross border networks that review and evaluate management actions applied elsewhere. Other collaborations are supporting research to better understand cervid population dynamics, movement patterns and potential routes of infection to identify risk and ways to mitigate the threat. This information is critical for decision making and determining the best management actions should CWD be recognized in the province.

The fight against CWD requires a team effort and would not be possible without the continued support and advocacy of hunters, communities, and partners like the BCWF.

## INTERIOR FRASER STEELHEAD

*Respectfully submitted by Jesse Zeman*

Over the past year, the BCWF has exposed the DFO for interfering in the Species At Risk Act listing process for Interior Fraser Steelhead. The BCWF currently has a number of Access to Information in with DFO as due to concerns that there have been other abuses of process which have resulted in science being hidden from the public.

The BCWF has been pushing the provincial and federal governments around recovering these fish and advocating for all types of interventions possible. There has been some small movement on pinniped predation and some Lower Fraser First Nations are moving to more selective methods, but the other recovery tools necessary to bring these fish back from the brink of extinction are still missing.

## CONSERVATION WEBINAR SERIES

In 2021, the B.C. Wildlife Federation offered 12 free BCWF Conservation Webinars on science-based solutions and recommendations for the protection and conservation of B.C.'s fish, wildlife and habitat.

Over the year, there were more than 2,900 webinar registrations and more than 4,000 views on YouTube. This year's series included webinars on the Southern Interior Mule Deer Project, Southern BC Cougar Project, Factors Affecting Moose Populations in Interior B.C., Forest Practices and Fish Habitat, and more.

The BCWF's Conservation Webinar Series not only supports conservation education and scientific collaboration but also promotes science-based advocacy for the BCWF membership and public audience. The series started in Fall 2020 and 2021 was the first full year offering the series.





# WILDLIFE ADVOCACY

## SOUTHERN INTERIOR MULE DEER PROJECT

The BCWF continues to support the Southern Interior Mule Deer (SIM Deer) Project, the largest collaborative mule deer research project in B.C.'s history. The goal of the project is to learn how to restore mule deer populations by studying how landscape change and predator-prey communities are affecting current populations.

The project is a collaboration between the Bonaparte Indian Band, Okanagan Nation Alliance, University of BC-Okanagan, University of Idaho, British Columbia Fish and Wildlife Branch, and the B.C. Wildlife Federation. The project has dozens of funders, including individuals, clubs, and organizations such as the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, and the Forest Enhancement Society of B.C.

In 2021, the capturing and collaring team added 91 new collared deer to the project, including 63 neonates and 27 6-month-old fawns. After the exceptionally dry and fiery summer, the team made it a priority to find funding and time to collar fawns to help measure the impact of the previous summer on overwinter fawn survival.

In total, the project has collared 471 deer since March 2018. Today, there are 171 deer collared throughout the 3 study areas; some of these deer have had their collars fall off as designed or had their collars malfunction.

## THE CAMERA PROJECT

The SIM Deer camera project is focused on gathering evidence to better understand how B.C.'s changing landscapes, and human presence within them, can influence mule deer. The team (led by University of Idaho Ph.D. student Sam Foster) has established 250 camera sites across 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> of mule deer country in B.C.'s southern interior.

This 3-year undertaking is being accomplished through the hard work of over 100 citizen scientists, including dozens of dedicated BCWF members. The collection of photos (over 2.5 million taken since the project began in 2019 through 2021) will help the team determine how factors like wildfires, logging, roads, and people influence the distribution and activity patterns of mule deer, as well as the strength of interactions between mule deer and the many other species that eat or compete with them.

## SOUTHERN B.C. COUGAR PROJECT

The BCWF also supports the Southern B.C. Cougar Project, which aims to address key knowledge gaps on cougar ecology in British Columbia's southern Interior. The team is tracking cougar behaviour and predation of mule deer, white-tailed deer, moose, and elk near wildfires, roads, and clear-cuts.

The cougar project is supported by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF), the British Columbia Conservation Foundation (BCCF), the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Innovation Canada, Okanagan Chapter of the B.C. Wildlife Federation (BCWF), the Okanagan Nation Alliance, and local clubs and volunteers.

The study is led by Ph.D. student Siobhan Darlington, supervisors Dr. Adam Ford and Dr. Karen Hodges, and wildlife biologists TJ Gooliaff and Patrick Stent with The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) in partnership with the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA).

The objectives of the study include analyzing cougar kill rates and diet composition where mule deer and bighorn sheep are in decline; quantifying cougar population response to hunter harvest and analyzing individual cougar response to land-use change from forestry and wildfire.

From December 2019 to December 2021, the team has GPS-collared 33 individual cougars (23 females, 10 males) and confirmed 560 cougar kills to understand the seasonal habitat use and diet of cougars. They are further monitoring female reproductive success and kitten survival by ear-tagging 1-month old kittens and installing cameras at the mother's kills.

More information can be found at [www.bccougarproject.weebly.com](http://www.bccougarproject.weebly.com)



Photo by Thorsten Spoerlein





# FISH HABITAT RESTORATION AND EDUCATION

The Fish Habitat Restoration and Education Program (FHREP) workshops and initiatives aim to raise awareness about the importance of protecting and conserving freshwater fish and riparian habitats across B.C., while building community capacity to care for these valued areas through restoration and community engagement.

## JUVENILE STURGEON CONSERVATION

For the second year in a row, FHREP hosted the Juvenile Sturgeon Conservation Workshops in partnership with the Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association (FVAGA). These workshops were successful in reaching 184 individuals. Webinars were held across multiple days from January to March 2021, with presentations from guest speakers in the field of sturgeon conservation in the lower Fraser River.

The FVAGA donated their time and expertise to take participants for hands-on experiences monitoring the Fraser River juvenile sturgeon population. During this portion, participants assist the guides and learn the process of catching, tagging, and recording juvenile sturgeon in the Fraser River.

## REEL FISHING WORKSHOPS

FHREP partnered with the Alouette River Management Society (ARMS) and the Cougar Creek Streamkeepers to plant over 450 native riparian plants in two lower mainland watersheds. At the first event with ARMS, 29 volunteers, including the Maple Ridge Environmental School, removed invasive vegetation around Morse Creek.

During the second event with ARMS, 13 volunteers planted 180 riparian plants along the Alouette River in Maple Ridge. During the planting event with the Cougar Creek Streamkeepers, 17 volunteers helped plant 208 native plants in the riparian area of Cougar Creek. These workshops have helped to strengthen partnerships with these groups, which will be utilized to create future workshops and volunteer opportunities.

## FAMILY FISHING WEBINAR SERIES

FHREP partnered with the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC) to host a Family Fishing Webinar Series. Through this event, the FHREP team was successful in engaging with 120 participants, ranging from children to seniors, and featuring topics such as "Lure Making" and "Fishing Ethics and Etiquette".

## FISH HABITAT AND RIPARIAN STEWARDSHIP

In partnership with local stewardship groups and First Nations, FHREP hosted Fish Habitat & Riparian Stewardship Workshops in October 2021, reaching a total number of 43 volunteers through 2 workshops. These workshops are aimed at creating community stewards through community-based learning and training opportunities.

In 2021, guest presenters educated workshop volunteers about water quality effects on native fish, habitat enhancements in an urban setting, the importance of a healthy riparian buffer, and more. Workshop volunteers also had the opportunity to participate in water quality monitoring to analyze stream health, led by BWCF staff, and plant native trees and shrubs to enhance the project site for fish and wildlife. Volunteers were successful in planting 800 native plants, resulting in 4,805m<sup>2</sup> of habitat being enhanced.

## SENIOR OUTREACH

A key component of the FHREP's programming focuses on engaging with seniors in our communities and increasing the accessibility of fishing areas for people with limited mobility.

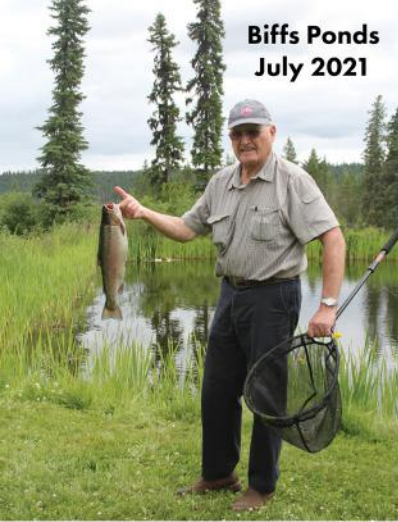
FHREP piloted a fish-themed photo contest for seniors in B.C. and a bingo-style photo contest. Upon registering participants received a Bingo card and an accompanying list of fish-habitat themed items to use as a guide for photos to submit. The Bingo Challenge reached 12 participants who submitted over 125 unique photos.

The Fishing in Later Years Webinar Series was created for seniors and other community members as a substitute for in-person workshops with expert guest speakers. FHREP hosted 8 webinars in 2021 and engaged with 63 community members on topics including "Balancing Tourism, Angling, and Invasive Fish Species" and "Connecting with Nature through Technology".

FHREP donated self-guiding education material and native plants to three senior care homes in Port Coquitlam, Abbotsford, and Chilliwack, and hosted one in-person fishing event to engage with seniors at Biff's Pond in Williams Lake. FHREP also rents GPS units to seniors to help them get outdoors and explore safely.



**Biffs Ponds  
July 2021**



## 2021 IN REVIEW

**1,259** participants engaged in programs and events

**1,798** total volunteer hours

**11,039** m<sup>2</sup> of riparian habitat enhanced/surveyed

**1,050** plants installed

**>5 tonnes** of garbage removed from Fraser River

**809** people reached with the Lakes Access Guide

**Collecting aquatic invertebrate samples at Paul Lake**



## GET INVOLVED

Book a Fishing Forever program

Take part in a Fish Habitat and Riparian Stewardship workshop

Participate in the GPS Rental Service for those 55+

Visit our B.C. Lakes Access Guide

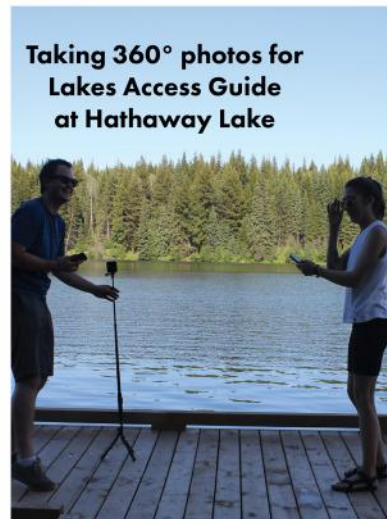
View the Fishing In Later Years Webinar Series

Visit: [www.bcwf.bc.ca/fish-habitat-restoration-education](http://www.bcwf.bc.ca/fish-habitat-restoration-education)

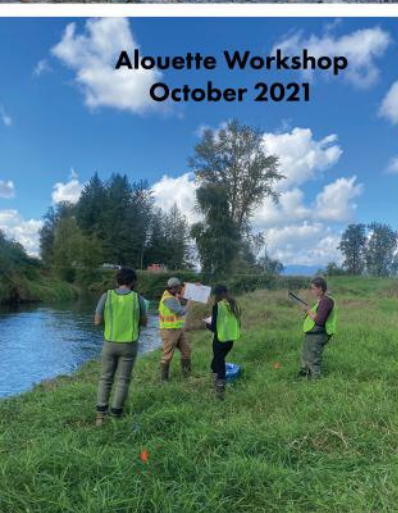


**Cougar Creek Workshop  
October 2021**

**Taking 360° photos for  
Lakes Access Guide  
at Hathaway Lake**



**Alouette Workshop  
October 2021**



**Fraser River  
Clean Up**





# WETLANDS EDUCATION PROGRAM

In 2021, the Wetlands Education Program hosted 27 events, including workshops, training sessions, and outreach events. Due to COVID-19 health restrictions, the events were either held in-person in adherence to Provincial Health orders and requirements for gathering, or virtually. This year, the WEP trained 384 participants and engaged an additional 420 people at classroom events, presentations, and outdoor outreach events.

## MACKENZIE SECONDARY SCHOOL

In partnership with Mackenzie Secondary School, BCWF built a seasonal wetland that students can explore during science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) classes. The wetland has been built using a liner to hold surface water for part of the season and will provide valuable breeding and rearing habitat for amphibians and insects, and support forage plants for other wildlife like deer and birds. Native plants were harvested locally to ensure they were adapted to the region. Three classes ranging from grade 8 to 11 came out to support the wetland build, including smoothing out the wetland basin by removing rocks and other sharp objects, and helping lay down the liner.

**Mackenzie Secondary School Educational Wetland**

- 700 plants installed
- 150m<sup>2</sup> wetlands built
- 64 students engaged

The infographic features a central title and three statistics, each accompanied by a small photograph. The first photo shows a variety of potted plants. The second photo shows a group of students working on a wetland site. The third photo shows a student working with a bucket.

## DILLON CREEK WETLAND RESTORATION

In August of 2021, BCWF partnered with Friends of Cortes Island (FOCI) and Linnaea Farm Society to restore 0.507 hectares of wetland and riparian habitat at Linnaea Farm on Cortes Island. The project was designed to improve water quality in downstream Hague Lake and Gunflint Lake, stabilize runoff from increasing high rain events and mitigate the impact of algal blooms. This project will benefit the entire community by helping to keep their lakes clean and healthy for recreation, drinking water, and climate resiliency.

To highlight this initiative, BCWF's Wetlands Education Program hosted a 2-day Virtual Wetlandkeepers workshop on September 18-19, 2021. This workshop trained 16 participants in wetland classification, values, and monitoring and restoration techniques. Participants explored a 360° virtual tour of the project that showed the site pre- and post-restoration, giving them an overview of the steps taken to help enhance the water quality of the downstream lakes.

Throughout the entire project, monitoring work was completed to collect baseline data pre-restoration, as well as during and after works had occurred. FOCI Monitoring Technician Autumn Barrett-Morgan observed significant flows of sediment into the wetlands, demonstrating their success at filtering water flowing into the lakes only 4 months after restoration. There have also been many wildlife observations at the restored wetland site, such as wolves, Wilson's snipe, juvenile swan, and plenty of waterfowl.

## CAMBRIDGE & VIOLIN RESERVOIR RESTORATION

In August 2021, a 3-month restoration project began to restore wetland and stream habitat in the footprint of Cambridge and Violin Reservoir lakes in Trail, B.C. Until 1994, these lakes were used to supply the city's drinking water but since then, the dams have degraded and become hazardous, becoming a costly burden to the city. Under the guidance of the Provincial Dam Safety Officer and Wetland Restoration Specialist Tom Biebighauser, BCWF and the City of Trail, in partnership with the Rossland Streamkeepers, decommissioned four dams and restored 901 hectares of wetlands, floodplains, and tributaries within the watershed of the Cambridge Creek Reservoir and Violin Lake by rebuilding 15 hectares of wetlands and streams within the reservoir footprints. This large-scale restoration project will help the city improve the health of their watershed and made the site safer for the public.





**2021 IN REVIEW**

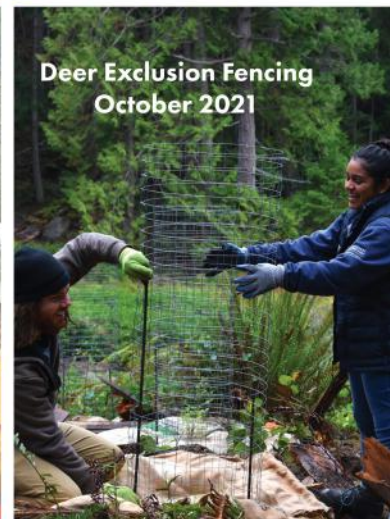
**384** participants in Wetlands Education Program workshops

**22** outreach events hosted

**1,423** people engaged in outreach and school programming

**1,150** plants installed in schoolyard wetlands

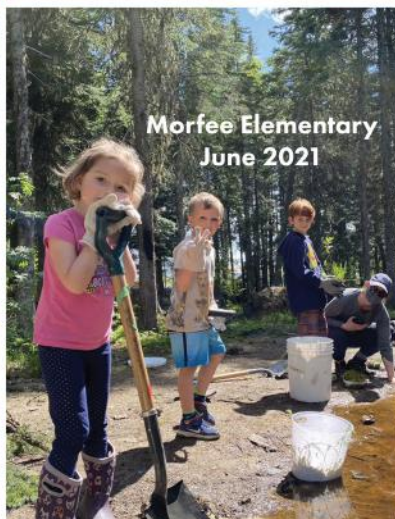
**30.7** hectares of wetland habitat restored



**Deer Exclusion Fencing  
October 2021**



**Chawathil Wetlandkeepers  
June 2021**



**Morfee Elementary  
June 2021**

**GET INVOLVED**

Sign up for a Wetlandkeepers, Map Our Marshes, or Wetlands Institute Workshop

Find out how we can help you conserve, enhance, or restore a wetland on your property

Book a Wetlands Education Program for your school

Read more about wetlands at [bcwfbogblog.com](http://bcwfbogblog.com)



**Doig River  
Map our Marshes Program  
August 2021**



**Wetlands Institute  
Gulf Islands & Comox Valley  
October 2021**



**Wild Kidz  
Summer Camp  
August 2021**



**Campgrounds  
Virtual Summer Camp**

## **2021 IN REVIEW**

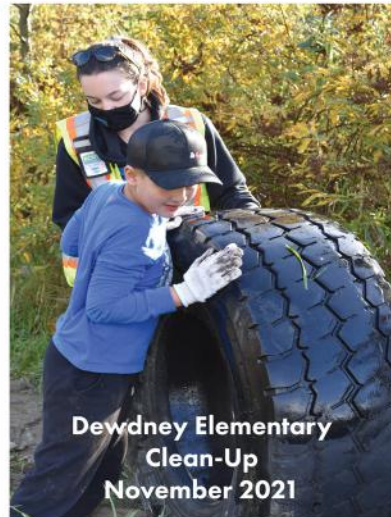
**139** youth attending virtual and in-person camps

**2,814** participants in National Archery in Schools Program (NASP) BC in **35** BC schools

**53** NASP BC instructors trained

**332** virtual classroom education program participants

**\$2,000** in scholarship funds given to Young Conservation Scholarship Program participants



**Dewdney Elementary  
Clean-Up  
November 2021**



**Go Wild!  
Youth for Conservation Camp  
July 2021**



## **GET INVOLVED**

Host a Summer Camp or Archery Tournament at your Club

Join the Young Conservationist Scholarship Program

Book a Virtual Classroom Education Program

Check out our online Family Resources

Get certified as a NASP Instructor

[www.bcwf.bc.ca](http://www.bcwf.bc.ca)



**Summer Camp Staff  
Preparing Campgrounds Kits  
June 2021**







# YOUTH PROGRAMS

BCWF's Youth Programs saw many accomplishments and innovations this past year as programs continued to be adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic while engaging the province's youth in conservation education and initiatives. Overall, 931 youth directly and 2,814 youth indirectly were engaged with our programming:

## **NATIONAL ARCHERY IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

The National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) was extremely successful in 2021, with a total of 2,814 students participating in 35 schools.

A Virtual Provincial Tournament was offered for 80 participants, where archers shot at targets at their home schools and submitted their scores online, allowing students to participate in friendly competition while not being at risk for COVID-19.

Additionally, eight Basic Archery Instructor courses were held across B.C., certifying 58 new Basic Archery Instructors to teach NASP-style archery in their schools.

## **YOUNG CONSERVATION SCHOLARSHIP**

2021 marked the inaugural year for the Young Conservationist Scholarship Program (YCSP), a program for youth in grade 11 and below to conduct a start-to-finish conservation project in their local community for the chance to win a scholarship.

This year, two scholarships were granted to participants. Ella, the 12-year old winner of the 2021-22 YCSP, won a \$1,500 scholarship from her "Green Minute" educational outreach project. Ella created a series of three "Green Minute" videos, which show viewers how to be more eco-friendly, and led workshops for her peers. Although her time as a YCSP participant has wrapped up, Ella is planning to continue creating her "Green Minute" videos, serving on the Environmental Stewardship Committee in her community, and planning a native bug box workshop for kindergarteners to further engage youth in conservation.

The runner up of the YCSP, Mariella, won a \$500 scholarship with her collaborative restoration project, where she worked alongside her Eco-club peers to restore a small pond behind her school, remove invasive species, and plant native species which encourage pollinators.

## **CLASSROOM EDUCATION**

BCWF Youth Programs supported B.C. teachers and students in 2021 by offering both in-person and virtual Classroom Education. This program gave students experiential learning during a time where field trips were limited. BCWF Youth Educators facilitated lessons ranging in topics from shelter-building to pollinators for B.C. classrooms and youth groups. A total of 9 schools and 332 students were reached through Virtual Classroom Education and other classroom outreach initiatives.

## **SUMMER CAMPS**

This year, a hybrid approach was taken to camps camp to ensure that all youth across the province got the chance to experience BCWF outdoor education safely. In total, four in-person camps were hosted in Crescent Beach, Surrey, for 75 campers. Three of the in-person camps were Wild Kidz camps, which gave youth an introduction to topics in conservation and outdoor recreation for youth 7-17. During camps, youth participated in a range of activities such as crabbing, fishing, kayaking, archery, shelter-building, first aid, and conservation lessons and activities.

One Go Wild camp was offered for youth aged 12-17, which provided advanced conservation and leadership training. Participating youth took part in the aforementioned camp activities, plus a range of leadership development programs, such as cultural awareness, budgeting, and project planning. All Go Wild youth were eligible to join the Young Conservationist Scholarship Program, which enables youth to be conservation leaders in their community by conducting their own start-to-finish stewardship or community engagement project.

Six virtual "Campgrounds" camps were run for 64 campers who were unable to join in-person camps. This included one spring camp and five summer camps. Virtual camps were offered with Wildlife, Wetlands, and Outdoor Safety & Survival themes. Campers joined their Camp Leader on Zoom with a box of camp supplies delivered to their doorsteps. Camp Leaders facilitated a range of crafts and activities campers could participate in at the comfort of their home.



# PROGRAMS



## CORE

The CORE department continued to see an upward trend in 2021, issuing 8,531 CORE graduation certificates, an 11% increase over 2020. CORE graduation certificate revenue saw an 11% increase over 2020. The CORE Online Course once again saw an increase in the number of participants in 2021, for a total of 2,098 students, for a 6% increase over 2020. The CORE Online Course 2021 Revenue also increased by 7% over 2020.

In March of 2021 a 2-day CORE Examiner course took place in Nakusp. Four new CORE Examiners were trained and certified in Region 4.

In 2021, a series of CORE education and promotional “Know Before You Go” ads were developed for the BCWF social media channels. From this collaboration, a full series of public service announcement-like ads have run every Monday on the BCWF’s three main social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram).



## BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN

Due to COVID-19, BOW did not run in 2021. The BOW program’s weekend event will return in May 2022.



## WOMEN OUTDOORS SKILLS & EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The BCWF Women Outdoors Skills & Experience Program was launched in September 2021 and held three Outdoor Safety and Introduction to Basic Map & Compass Navigation workshops throughout the fall, attended by 36 women. Participants learned the basics of safe and responsible outdoor recreation, were introduced to new skills, helping increase their awareness and self-confidence and ultimately, fostered a deeper connection and respect for our natural resources.

The Women Outdoors Skills & Experience Program was fortunate to secure sponsors to support the program and provide donations and items for prize giveaways at the events. We would like to thank Bass Pro Tsawwassen, UBC Malcolm Knapp Research Forest, Silva Canada, the BC Conservation Officer Service and their RAPP program, and the Invasive Species Council of BC. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our sponsor relationships and work collaboratively to cross promote organizations that are aligned with the mission, goals and strategic initiatives of the B.C. Wildlife Federation.

Looking forward, 2022 looks action-packed and promising for the Women Outdoors Program. We have a variety of fun and informative workshops planned for the year ahead. In addition to offering Outdoor Safety and Introduction to Basic Map & Compass, plans for upcoming workshops include nature photography, foraging, ocean literacy interpretive walks, introduction to archery, introduction to basic small game prep & butchering, and more.





# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The BCWF Marketing and Communications team has developed a wide range of media and marketing activity that keeps our staff in close contact with our 43,000 members, while expanding the reach of our media coverage to an even wider range of B.C. outdoors enthusiasts.

The team is in constant contact with the media to ensure that the BCWF's conservation message stays front of mind with the public. Jesse Zeman has become a go-to source for science based conservation wildlife and advocacy for several news outlets.

In 2021, the BCWF secured:

- 725 pieces of media coverage
- A total potential reach of 200 million
- High-profile coverage of topical issues including Steelhead, Caribou, and Kokanee Salmon conservation

A rapidly growing social media presence brings the BCWF's message to diverse range of people. Many of members are reached by engaging with the BCWF's many affiliated clubs on Facebook. Instagram reaches a particularly young, fresh audience, and they are very engaged in social and conservation issues.

In 2021, BCWF social media posts generated:

- 3.3 million impressions
- 95,000 engagements
- 17,000 click throughs to BCWF and partner websites

In addition, the bi-weekly email Member Update covers the full spectrum of the BCWF's programs, activities, and campaigns. Jesse Zeman has begun to provide regular video updates to our members, allowing him to describe concepts and campaigns in an accessible format.

The BCWF Marketing and Communications team provides six sixteen-page inserts to BC Outdoors Magazine annually. This communication includes a President's Message, allowing the BCWF President to reach our members directly, as well as opportunities for Programs, Conservation Stewardship, the Board of Directors and collaborators to share their voice with the BCWF member base. Sponsors and partners are also provided with opportunities to advertise. In the last submission of 2021, 31,317 households were sent BC Outdoors Magazines containing the BCWF member insert.



Photo by Courtenay Miller



**Your membership & donations at work:**

By supporting the B.C. Wildlife Federation, you are helping to protect, enhance and promote the wise use of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations. Thank you!

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