

Canadian

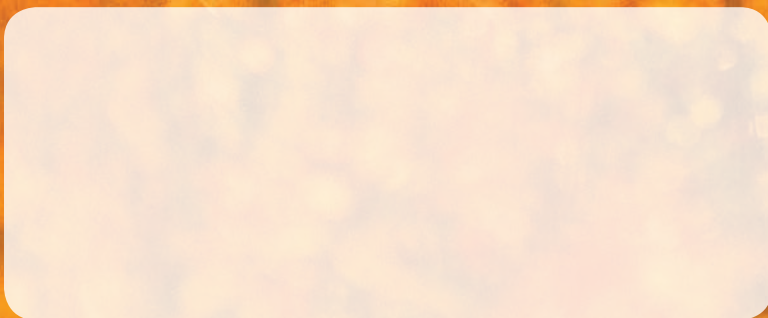
WILDERNESS

A publication of CPAWS • Fall 2016 / Winter 2017



species at risk

Protecting Canada's most vulnerable species



 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Living with Species at Risk

The Orcas of the Salish Sea

MIKE ROBINSON

When you grow up in any of the communities that line the inshore waters of the Salish Sea on the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the Strait of Georgia and Puget Sound, you grow up close to orcas. I'm old enough now to remember my grandfather calling them killer whales and black fish. Now that I live at Skelhp, a remote community by the northernmost Gulf Islands, I live close to "J Pod", a 29-member pod or group of orcas (Centre for Whale Research website, 2015), whose oldest member (Granny) is 104 years old.

Orcas are among the most socially and ecologically complex species on the planet, and they pass on cultural traditions from generation to generation just like humans do. They have a distinct range of calls and vocalizations, and live in clan-based matriarchies, maintaining a close association with their mother for life. Their diet is very specialized, and their food preferences are learned from family members and shared. J Pod are salmon 'specialists,' favouring the largest and fattest Chinook (also known as spring salmon).

Since November 2008, BC's Southern Resident orca population has been a Schedule 1, Endangered population in the Species at Risk Public Registry, under Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). A combination of declining salmon populations, toxic chemicals in the food chain, and vessel interactions (including noise and strikes) all have an impact on the orca's overall survival in the region.

The federal government has developed a Recovery Strategy (2011) and Proposed Action Plan (2016) to support the recovery of the southern resident orcas. At CPAWS, we support these processes wherever possible. Through the promotion of our Nature Needs Half Campaign, we continually raise the need for more Marine Protected Areas, like the Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area that encompasses a large part of the critical habitat of southern resident orcas. We do this to ensure that the orcas of J Pod will continue to follow their mothers' wishes.

Mike Robinson is CPAWS' National Board of Trustees President.

Orcas, the most socially complex species on the planet.

Photo: Stockvault



CPAWS is Canada's voice for wilderness. Since 1963, we've played a lead role in creating over two-thirds of Canada's protected areas.

NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Michael Robinson, President (BC)
Cathy Wilkinson, Vice-President (ON)
Pippa Lawson, Chair,
Governance Committee (YT)
Nik Lopoukhine, Chair,
Conservation Committee (ON)
Amber Nicol, Chair,
Engagement Committee (BC)
Lavinia Mohr, Treasurer (ON)
Alex Abboud (AB)
Bob Halfyard (NL)
Vincent Castellucci (QC)
Laura Colella, Chair,
Litigation Committee (ON)
Andre Vallillee (ON)
Elmer Ghostkeeper (AB)
John Grandy (ON)
Erik Val (YT)
Kwiaahwah Jones (BC)

TRUSTEES EMERITUS
Stephanie Cairns
Phil Dearden
Gordon Nelson
Bob Peart
Sherri Watson

EDITORIAL TEAM
Éric Hébert-Daly:

National Executive Director
Karen Turner: National Director of
Communications and Development
Jennifer Scott: National
Communications Manager
Janice McLean: Design

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Alex Abboud
Rick Boychuk
Laura Colella
Bob Halfyard
Cathy Wilkinson

ISSN 1717-8894. Postmaster:
send Canadian address changes
to CPAWS, 506-250 City Centre Ave,
Ottawa, ON K1R 6K7.

Canadian Wilderness is published
twice per year (Spring, Fall) by
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
(charity #10686 5272 RR0001).

© 2016 Canadian Parks
and Wilderness Society.
No part of this publication
may be reproduced without express
permission in writing from CPAWS.



species at risk

Protecting Canada's most vulnerable species

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

Protecting a Biodiversity Hotspot • 6

Nova Scotia, home to the rare Atlantic coastal plain flora. *by Chris Miller*

Canada's Whales at Risk • 8

The importance of MPAs in protecting our marine species. *by Alexandra Barron*

From Roadkill to Road Ecology • 10

How CPAWS is helping species cross the road. *by Elena Kreuzberg and John McDonnell*

DEPARTMENTS

2 • PRESIDENT'S DESK

Living with Species at Risk

4 • CONSERVATION WATCH

11 • TRACKS ACROSS CANADA

15 • CONTACT US

COVER: Threatened grizzly bear in Alberta meadow. Photo by Duane Rosenkranz

ABOVE: Plymouth gentian is a very rare plant species known in Canada only from a handful of lakeshores in southwestern Nova Scotia. Photo by Nova Scotia Nature Trust



Grizzly bear and cub in Jasper.
Photo: Victor Liu

Alberta's Draft Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan

Grizzly bears were first listed as Threatened in Alberta in 2010, due to concerns over low population numbers, deteriorating habitat caused by fragmentation, and high levels of human-caused mortality. In June, the Government of Alberta released the new draft Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (2016-2021) in an effort to reverse this trend.

With Alberta highways fragmenting grizzly habitat and isolating populations, we applaud the plan for recognizing the important need to connect our grizzly populations across major highways, ensuring bears can move safely throughout the Rockies and foothills. We were also pleased to see a renewed commitment to supporting communities and landowners in bear country through education and conflict-mitigation strategies.

While the plan includes some positives, it fails to address a number of key issues. Much of Alberta's public land is fragmented with roads and motorized trails, which allow people to access core grizzly habitat areas, increasing the risk of conflict and bear deaths. Despite this known issue, the new plan as it is could allow for more roads and trails in core grizzly areas. It's important that motorized vehicle recreation trails be included in measurements of public access into grizzly habitat, with a focus on reducing trails to sustainable levels.

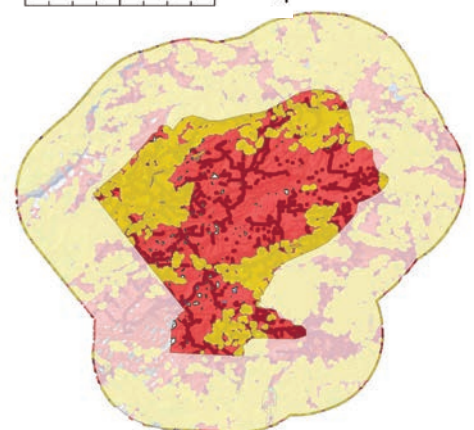
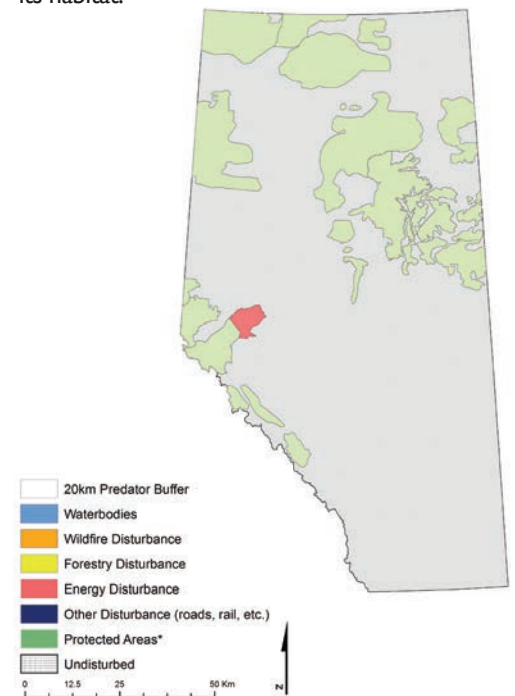
We are also concerned about the removal of the Porcupine Hills from what is designated as Core Habitat for the grizzlies. The Porcupine Hills contain high value habitat for this species and are particularly important for facilitating the bears' movement.

We believe that the new plan will allow higher human-caused mortality in the Castle and Livingstone grizzly populations. Having a higher tolerance for grizzly bear deaths in this region could prevent action on critical issues like intense motorized recreation and logging in grizzly bear habitat. CPAWS Southern Alberta is working with the government and the public to improve the final plan.

A thorough review of the plan is available at: www.cpaws-southernalberta.org

Alberta's Guide to Caribou Range Planning

In 2012, the Federal government requested that Alberta (and all provinces and territories with boreal woodland caribou habitat) provide range plans for their struggling caribou herds, outlining how they were planning on protecting each herd and its habitat.



This map shows the Little Smoky range surrounded by a buffer zone. It illustrates the disturbance from forestry activities (in yellow), and oil and gas activities (in red), and what habitat remains undisturbed (small white areas scattered throughout). There are five forestry companies and 68 petroleum and natural gas companies operating in the Little Smoky.

While the Government of Alberta was creating their draft plan for the Little Smoky/A La Peche Caribou range plan (criticized by CPAWS as being inadequate and ineffectual), CPAWS Northern Alberta worked on its own guide to range planning. *Alberta's Caribou: A Guide to Range Planning* is an easy-to-understand, on-the-ground look at each boreal and southern mountain woodland caribou range in the province, along with a history of management planning, and an overview of the threats facing Alberta's caribou.

The Recovery Strategy for Boreal Woodland Caribou released by the federal government in 2012 identified the need for each caribou herd to have at least 65% of their range undisturbed. We mapped out the enormous amount of disturbance and huge industrial presence for each caribou range. The accompanying map illustrates the impacts on the Little Smoky, the most disturbed boreal woodland range in Canada.

Given the large amount of disturbance in Alberta's caribou ranges, and in particular the Little Smoky, forest restoration will be essential in the recovery of caribou habitat. Part of our range planning guide includes maps of the best places to restore and protect within each range, prioritizing areas considered to have the highest conservation value for caribou and all other boreal species.

Identifying priority zones allows for more efficient use of limited time and financial resources available for restoration. The mapping and conservation analysis provided in the guide has since been incorporated into planning by municipalities, forestry, and oil and gas companies. We will continue to use this guide in an effort to engage both the province and the public on caribou range planning.

For more information, visit <http://cpawsnab.org/campaigns/caribou>

Canada's Sturgeon River Plains Bison

The Sturgeon River Plains Bison, found in the area surrounding the Southwest corner of Prince Albert National Park in Saskatchewan, are Canada's only completely wild and free-ranging herd of Plains bison roaming in their historic range. The herd numbered about 500 animals in 2008, but due to an anthrax outbreak and increased legal hunting by First Nations hunters, they only number about 200, today. With 30 bison harvested and only 20 calves born annually, this leads to a troubling downward trend in the population.

While much focus has been placed on communicating with the local hunters, and reversing the downward population trend via the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards, a local rancher organization, the federal government has yet to officially declare Plains bison as threatened under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), despite the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada's recommendation to do so in 2004 and again in 2013. The delay seems to be due mainly to opposition from commercial bison producers concerned about what the listing could do to commercial markets for bison products.

In Saskatchewan, wild Plains bison are considered Big Game under the

province's *Wildlife Act*, legislatively separating them from commercially raised bison. While we appreciate concerns being expressed by the Canadian Bison Association (CBA), and the role commercial bison production plays in bison conservation, it's difficult to agree that a federal SARA listing would have any significant impact on the marketability of bison products. Meanwhile, local ranchers who support a healthy wild bison population are left to their own devices to find ways to achieve this, and left to watch helplessly as the Sturgeon River population spirals towards extirpation.

While there are important Plains bison populations found in Pink Mountain, BC, or Grasslands and Elk Island National Parks, they either fall out of historic bison range or exist in fenced enclosures and are not subject to historic natural interactions such as predation. This further highlights the significance of the Sturgeon River population, and why they are worthy of additional consideration.

It's time to finally give Canada's wild Plains bison the respect and protection they deserve and to officially declare them a threatened species under SARA.

Sturgeon River Plains Bison home on the range.
Photo: Sturgeon River Ranch



● FEATURE

PROTECTING A BIODIVERSITY



Nova Scotia, home to the rare Atlantic coastal plain flora.

BY CHRIS MILLER

HOTSPOT



Southwestern Nova Scotia is an important biodiversity hotspot, containing a number of species at risk found nowhere else in Canada. Among these rare species is a special group of plants collectively referred to as Atlantic coastal plain flora.

These plants reach their northernmost extent in southwestern Nova Scotia, meaning that they have much more in common with species further south along the eastern seaboard of North America than the rest of Canada.

They include species such as the endangered pink coreopsis and Plymouth gentian, which are only known in Canada from a handful of lakeshores in southwestern Nova Scotia. Other rare coastal plain flora species here include Water pennywort, Golden-crest, and sweet pepperbush, among several others.

Most of the coastal plain flora species occur in very specific wetland habitats, comprised of a narrow band of infertile soils along certain lakeshores where there is high exposure to large waves and ice scour. These plant species have specific adaptations that allow them to occupy habitats where other plants have difficulty surviving.

Southwestern Nova Scotia contains other important species at risk as well, including a disjunct population of endangered Blanding's turtles and eastern ribbon snakes, as well as some of the best-remaining stands of genuine old-growth Acadian forest in the Maritimes.

Researchers have examined Nova Scotia's rare coastal plain flora for several decades now, so the specific locations where most of these plants occur are very well known. While southwestern Nova Scotia contains many lakes and wetlands, only a handful of these lakes and wetlands contain the necessary conditions to support these rare plants.

Habitat protection is absolutely crucial in ensuring Nova Scotia's rare coastal plain flora have a fighting chance at survival. Several important initiatives are underway to protect the habitat of these species at risk.

Over the past two years, the Nova Scotia government has created nearly 100 new protected areas, including sites with known populations of endangered coastal plain flora. I'm pleased to say that CPAWS was directly involved in selecting many of these new protected areas, so we can attest to their ecological significance.

Additional coastal plain flora sites in southwestern Nova Scotia could soon be protected as well. The Nova Scotia government has promised to add 55,000 hectares (about 1% of the provincial landmass) to the protected areas system later this year. Places with rare coastal plain flora, like McGowan Lake, Ponhook Lake, Harpers Lake, and Ten Mile Lake, all have pending nature reserve designations.

The cluster of important natural values in southwestern Nova Scotia makes it a significant biodiversity hotspot. Fortunately, a lot of dedicated folks are working very hard to protect this national treasure.

Plymouth gentian is a very rare plant species known in Canada only from a handful of lakeshores in southwestern Nova Scotia.

Photo: Nova Scotia Nature Trust

CANADA'S WHALES

Industrial whaling once decimated whale populations across Canada and the rest of the world, and many species still have yet to recover. Across Canada, 12 species of whales that fall into 18 distinct populations are listed under the *Species At Risk Act* as threatened, endangered or extinct.

Ship strikes, ocean noise, pollution, habitat loss and climate change all threaten the survival of Canada's whales. Identifying and protecting critical habitat is crucial for their survival. A national network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) would identify and protect the critical habitat of these species, and provide them with the best opportunity to recover.

At about 500 individuals, the North Atlantic right whale population has the sombre distinction of being one of the most endangered species on the planet. These magnificent animals travel along the eastern seaboard of North America between the calving grounds in the southeast, to the rich feeding grounds off New England and the Canadian Maritimes.

Whereas the United States government recently declared ALL of the American side of the Gulf of Maine as legally protected critical habitat, the Canadian government is only proposing to designate two small areas. These include one in the Bay of Fundy and the other in the Roseway Basin. CPAWS has long been pushing for an MPA network plan in the Bay of Fundy that includes all important right whale habitat.

The St. Lawrence belugas are a distinct population that live

in the St. Lawrence estuary at the very southern edge of the natural range for this species, geographically isolated from other populations. Historically, there were around 10,000 St. Lawrence belugas, but by 2012, only 900 remained.

Last year, CPAWS Québec won a legal battle to prevent the development of an oil terminal at Cacouna, right in the heart of their critical habitat. Since then, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has established an order to protect the critical habitat of the species. CPAWS continues to work towards the designation of the St. Lawrence Estuary MPA, which would support the protection of belugas and their critical habitat.

BC's iconic southern resident orcas are listed as endangered with a population of around 80 animals. This distinct sub-population of orcas are fish-eaters, spending their time moving between Washington State and the Southern Strait of Georgia in search of salmon and other fish. Their populations were initially decimated by live-capture for the aquarium industry. With their critical habitat sandwiched between three major port cities (Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle), the remaining population faces noise, vessel traffic, declining fish stocks and pollutants. A large portion of their critical habitat falls inside the proposed Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area, which CPAWS has been working to establish for more than 20 years.

Visit www.daretobedeep.com for more information.



AT RISK

The importance of MPAs in protecting our marine species. BY ALEXANDRA BARRON



Left: Southern resident orcas. Photo: Susanne Davies; below: Beluga in St. Lawrence Estuary. Photo: Ansgar Walk/Wikimedia; facing page: Bay of Fundy, NS and NB North Atlantic right whale. Photo: Andrew Chow.



FROM ROADKILL TO ROAD ECOLOGY

How CPAWS is helping species cross the road

BY ELENA KREUZBERG AND JOHN MCDONNELL

Crossing paths with wildlife: Deer, black bears, turtles and moose are often casualties of car culture.

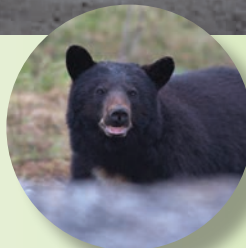
Photos: Elena Kreuzberg

While CPAWS is known for its work on protecting large landscapes such as Nahanni, Thaidene Nene and Gwaii Haanas, it's not the only work we do. In many cases, the connections which exist between parks and protected areas and other natural spaces are often as important as the cores themselves.

Roads and other linear fragments (railways, pipelines, energy corridors, etc.) are major threats to the health of the broader connection. In fact, one of the earliest road ecology initiatives in Canada was born out of the need to twin the Trans Canada Highway across Banff National Park. There was a considerable amount of fear among conservationists that the increased speed and traffic would lead to even more animal mortality than had been observed in the past.

It was proposed that the highway be fenced on both sides, creating a barrier across this important north-south wildlife connection. After much effort, it was agreed that a series of overpasses and underpasses would be constructed to allow wildlife to migrate across the highway safely. These measures have proven successful and are being replicated around the world, including on highway 69 in Ontario and 5 wildlife underpasses on a new segment of highway 50, linking Gatineau to Montreal.

While large mammals are the most visible and cause the most damage, it is often smaller animals like turtles, frogs and snakes that are most vulnerable. Many of them are species at risk, which compounds the problem. In southern Ontario, the



Long Point Causeway, running adjacent to the Big Creek National Wildlife Area, sees up to 10,000 incidences of roadkill during a five-month period each year when reptiles and amphibians are most active. Electronic signs and exclusion fencing have helped, but more work needs to be done to allow the safe migration of these animals across this busy road.



According to statistics (from State Farm insurance company, 2015), it is much less costly to taxpayers to invest in these structures than the average cost of a collision with a deer, which can run between CAD 3,900 – 4,200 for repairs, injuries and loss of productivity.



Our Ottawa Valley Chapter has developed significant capacity in the field of road ecology as a result of its unique setting in a highly developed and fragmented region of Canada. In 2014, the Chapter partnered with the Royal Ontario Museum and the Ontario Road Ecology Group to host the first national road ecology conference in Ottawa.

More recently, the Chapter is actively monitoring a number of major regional roadways with a group of dedicated volunteers to help identify "hot spots" or areas with high wildlife mortality. Once identified, the Chapter intends to work with the agency responsible to ensure that proper mitigation measures are developed and implemented.

What can you do? Talk to local decision-makers and share your concerns. Let CPAWS and other conservation organizations know of high mortality areas near you and, most importantly, adjust your own driving to lower your risk of hitting wildlife.



South Okanagan-Similkameen
Photo: Jason Puddifoot

Protecting the South Okanagan grasslands and BC's most endangered species

After years of sustained pressure from CPAWS and our partners in the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Network, we are now closer than ever to making the vision of a new national park reserve for BC's endangered grasslands a reality.

Late last year, the provincial government announced a new proposed conservation framework for the region, home to more than fifty-six federally-listed species at risk, like the burrowing owl which recently saw a slow return in the area. However, their population is still declining as a direct result of habitat loss. The Okanagan efferia, a small fly with striking orange bristles, was recently listed as endangered under the *Species at Risk Act* due to threats from grassland degradation, invasive plants, and a warmer climate.

The proposal included two areas being considered for national park status, and marked the first time in nearly a decade that the province showed renewed interest in establishing new protected area designations in the region. Backed by science and overwhelming local support for the national park concept, we rallied thousands of people to join the call for increased protection for this vital habitat of some of BC's most endangered species.

- Michelle Sz, CPAWS British Columbia
For more information, visit cpawsbc.org

Learning to solve nature conservation problems

At CPAWS New Brunswick, we are really enthusiastic about our Watch Your Paws education program for schools. We've reached over 7,000 elementary students over the last 10 years with our engaging in-class nature activities that help children connect to New Brunswick wildlife, habitats and parks. Through our *Watch Your Paws Challenge*, students discover how they can

actively help solve our nature conservation problems. Classes that participate in the Challenge choose various ways to spread the messages they learn from us, from habitat fairs and art projects, to making their own presentations to younger grades. Others engage in hands-on actions in their schools and communities, like park or beach clean-ups. We believe it is important to provide young people with hope for their future, by helping them explore their potential to be nature stewards.



CPAWS NB Conservation Educator, Kelsey Trottier, playing Habitat Shrink with students.
Photo: Susan Weaver

- Roberta Clowater, CPAWS New Brunswick
For more information, visit cpawsnb.org

FIRST EVER DUMOINE RIVER BIOBLITZ A SUCCESS!

CPAWS Ottawa Valley has led the efforts to protect the Dumoine, one of Quebec's last wild rivers. The chapter was recently rewarded when it was announced that another 350 km² would be added to the protected area, bringing to total area to almost 1,800 km². This makes the Dumoine one of the largest new protected areas in Southern Canada in decades.

Unfortunately, our collective knowledge of this remarkable watershed is limited. Governments no longer have the capacity to embark on large plant and animal inventories, and any information that does exist is often outdated. Given our vision that the Dumoine watershed become a biodiversity connector from Ontario's Algonquin Park to Quebec's boreal forest, it is important that we establish a baseline of current species in order to track the region's evolution as a result of climate change.

In July and August 2016, CPAWS volunteers camped at various locations in the watershed and worked together to complete inventories of all species encountered, from birds and mushrooms, to trees and toads! We even uncovered species that were not known to be in the region, such as Evening Grosbeak and American ginseng. The result is an interesting snapshot of the Dumoine in the summer of 2016. We look forward to conducting several seasonal monitoring surveys in the future to examine how the region is evolving over time.

- John McDonnell, CPAWS Ottawa Valley
For more information, visit cpaws-ov-vo.org



Greater Sage Grouse.
Photo: Branimir Gjetvaj

The Importance of Community Pastures for the Greater Sage Grouse

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration's (PFRA) community pastures is a program established by the federal government to address soil erosion and lack of water in the prairies during the "Dirty Thirties". Today, the PFRA pastures contain the largest remnants of native prairie in Canada and are an example of world class management of one of our most endangered ecosystems. These grasslands provide important habitat for many of Canada's species at risk, including the greater sage grouse and an economic opportunity for ranchers to graze cattle. Currently, community pastures are in divestment from federal to provincial ownership, which puts them at risk of being sold off to private interests.

Thanks to emergency conservation measures and stewardship roles taken by private land owners, the greater sage grouse numbers have recently increased. However, with over 11% of Saskatchewan's greater sage grouse range located on the PFRA community pastures, the role these pastures play in the conservation of sage grouse is vital. Between 54-80 greater sage grouse remain in Saskatchewan and face a continued threat of habitat degradation.

- Kelly Richardson, CPAWS Saskatchewan
For more information, visit cpaws-sask.org

CPAWS Southern Alberta Recognized for Excellence in Environmental Education

On August 27, CPAWS Southern Alberta was pleased to receive the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EEDCOM) award of excellence for Outstanding Non-Profit Organization for environmental education.

Each year, EEDCOM recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to environmental learning across Canada. Since 1997, CPAWS Southern Alberta has offered school programs for youth, workshops for adults, and interpretive nature hikes for grades 3 to 12.

Our conservation programs focus on trees and forests, water, parks and wilderness, and species at risk like grizzly bears, and combine classroom visits with outdoor learning and environmental stewardship. This has proven to be a successful model, earning us an Alberta Emerald Award in 2008. Since we've begun, we have reached more than 100,000 participants with our environmental education programming.

- Stacy McGuire, CPAWS Southern Alberta

For more information, visit cpaws-southernalberta.org/campaigns/education

Peel Watershed Case Headed to Ottawa

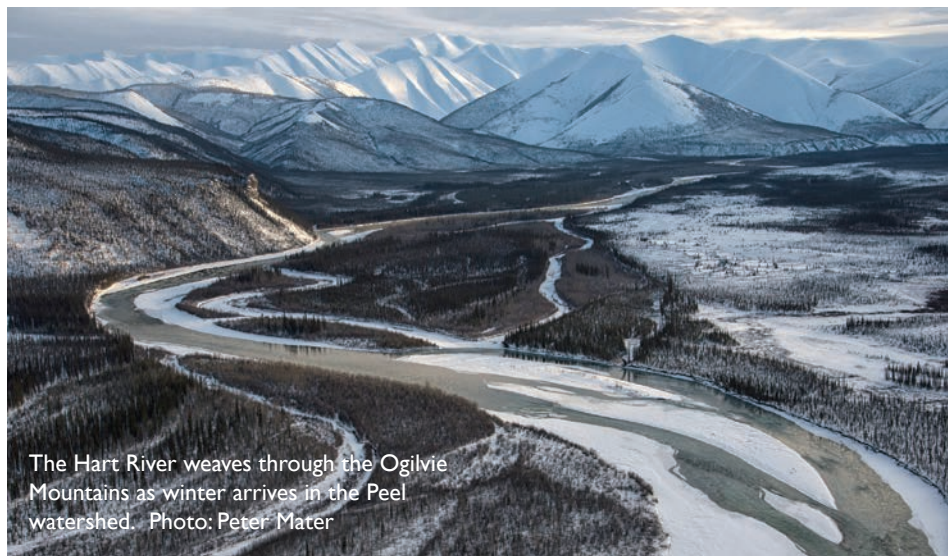
March 22, 2017, marks a momentous day for the people of the Yukon, as the case to protect the majestic Peel Watershed heads before the Supreme Court of Canada.

The campaign to preserve this majestic wilderness in Canada's North – an area roughly the size of Nova Scotia – has brought together environmentalists, First Nations, hunters, tourism operators, and the wider Yukon public. If the Government of Yukon gets its way, 71% of the region will be opened up to mining, oil and gas exploration and roads, fragmenting one of the largest unspoiled ecosystems in North America, and disrupting the largest land mammal migration on earth, that of the Porcupine Caribou Herd.

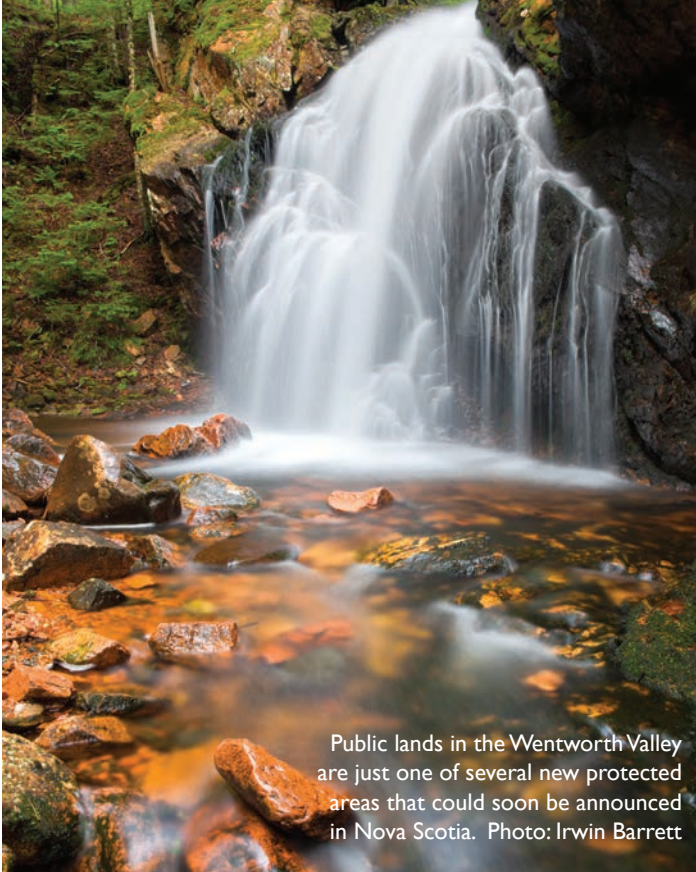
We need the Supreme Court of Canada to issue a ruling that clearly upholds the rights of First Nations and ensures conservation of the majority of the Peel Watershed. We are asking all Canadians to stand with us to protect this national treasure by signing the Peel Pledge at: www.protectpeel.ca

- Jason LaChappelle, CPAWS Yukon

For more information, visit cpawsyukon.org



The Hart River weaves through the Ogilvie Mountains as winter arrives in the Peel watershed. Photo: Peter Mater



Public lands in the Wentworth Valley are just one of several new protected areas that could soon be announced in Nova Scotia. Photo: Irwin Barrett

Progress on protection in Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia government has promised to protect an additional 1% of the provincial landmass this year. This commitment was contained in the Ministerial Mandate Letter prepared by Premier Stephen MacNeil for the Minister of Environment. It means that an additional 55,000 hectares of land from the *Our Parks and Protected Areas Plan* will soon be protected, an area roughly equivalent in size to Kejimikujik National Park. Stay tuned.

In Halifax, the municipal government struck down a development proposal for the Birch Cove Lakes wilderness after a huge public outcry. These near-urban lands have been recommended for a park as far back as the 1970's, but the City has so far struggled to acquire the necessary lands to make the park a reality. With the recent decision by city council to reject the sprawling development proposal, there is a renewed energy for following through on the promise to protect these lands from long ago.

Efforts to establish marine protected areas off the coast of Nova Scotia are also making positive progress. The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the Maritimes Region is developing a marine protected area network plan that should be released early in the new year. This plan will examine conservation opportunities in the Bay of Fundy, along the Atlantic Coast of Nova Scotia, and the offshore.

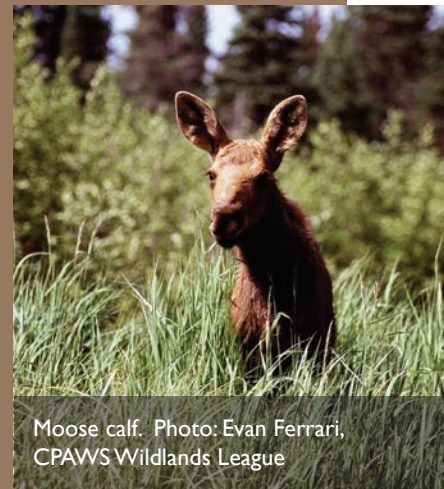
- Chris Miller, CPAWS Nova Scotia
For more information, visit cpawsns.org

Quiet giants face uncertain future

Moose, the shy giants of the northern woods, are facing apparent challenges in parts of Manitoba, Ontario and other regions of Canada. Steep reported population declines in some areas of Manitoba have prompted local communities and the province to install temporary harvest bans to relieve one of a number of mortality factors. The Ontario government has reduced harvest tags and altered seasons in some areas where numbers have dropped.

Current knowledge indicates that pressures on moose are multiple and variable throughout their range. Predation, habitat availability and quality, harvest, parasites and diseases such as winter tick and brainworm (which is spread by white tailed deer), are thought to be some of the more prevalent factors. Although moose have always negotiated these kinds of forces on the landscape, changes brought on by climate change and certain industrial activities can exacerbate their impact.

While moose are not listed as a species at risk and presumably thriving in certain parts of its range, now is the opportunity to come together to ensure the long term stability of this culturally, ecologically and economically important species. New to the conversation, CPAWS' Manitoba and Wildlands League Chapters are seeking insight from rights-holders, stakeholders and all interested parties on regionally relevant solutions to balance mortality factors with population growth capacity.



Moose calf. Photo: Evan Ferrari, CPAWS Wildlands League

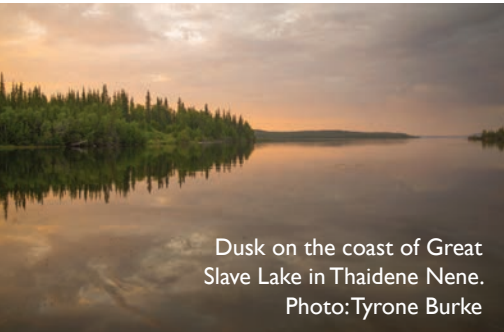
The Wildlands League has recently completed an Ontario survey of people concerned about moose which was presented at the North American Moose Workshop and International Moose Symposium held in Brandon, Manitoba, September 6-10th. CPAWS Manitoba also attended the Workshop and Symposium and began distributing its own survey early in September.

Watch for blog posts, social media and more as we dig into the world of moose.

- Dave Pearce, CPAWS Wildlands League, Joshua Pearlman, CPAWS Manitoba
For more information, visit wildlandsleague.org and cpawsmb.org

Creating a new national park in Canada's magnificent north

For the past 5 years, CPAWS and many partners have assisted the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation (LKDFN) in their efforts to establish Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve around and beyond the East Arm of Great Slave Lake, NWT.



Dusk on the coast of Great Slave Lake in Thaidene Nene.
Photo: Tyrone Burke

Geographically, Thaidene Nene is a pristine northern environment transitioning through the boreal forest, Great Slave Lake and into the tundra. Accessible from Yellowknife, this National Park Reserve will provide many

opportunities to experience back country activities, including kayaking, canoeing, hiking, climbing, and x-country skiing. This is a place that you need to experience!

In September, Parks Canada hosted a Public Consultation tour in Vancouver, Calgary and Ottawa, which was the culmination of its public engagement process. We hope that a formal establishment announcement will occur in 2017 as part of Canada's 150th celebration.

Many Canadians have written or voiced their support for establishing Thaidene Nene and it is very near reality - a surge of support will make sure it gets over the finish line!

- Shannon Moore, CPAWS Northwest Territories
Please visit www.landoftheancestors.ca



Mistaken Point.

Photo: © Mistaken Point Ambassadors Inc., Author Barrett & MacKay Photography. Image provided by UNESCO

BIG NEWS FROM THE EAST COAST

It's been an exciting few months in Newfoundland and Labrador. Mistaken Point is now officially designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. This amazing ecological reserve on the Avalon Peninsula contains some of the oldest fossils of complex life forms anywhere on the planet (575 million to 560 million years old). Congratulations to all who helped make this possible!

Momentum has been building to create a buffer zone around Gros Morne National Park. The release of the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydraulic Fracturing Review Panel report in May recommended a buffer zone be created around Gros Morne to prevent petroleum development from harming the park and the local tourism economy that depends on its natural beauty and World Heritage designation. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee also reiterated its recommendation that Canada establish this buffer zone. We are optimistic that both the federal & provincial government will come together and implement this soon.

- Suzanne Dooley and Tanya Edwards, CPAWS Newfoundland and Labrador
For more information, visit cpawsnl.org

EDMONTONIANS: #LOVEYOURHEADWATERS!

Travelling west on Highway 11 leads one away from the industrial areas of central Alberta into the wild Bighorn Backcountry. In the shadows of the Rocky Mountains, the Bighorn is an expansive area filled with rushing streams and intact forests inhabited by many of Alberta's at-risk species, including native fishes. This land is home to the North Saskatchewan River's headwaters, the source of 88% of Edmonton's drinking water.

Edmonton's headwaters in the Bighorn are under threat. Ongoing logging in the foothills, potential coal mine development, and irresponsible recreation (off-highway vehicles and unregulated camping) can and do damage water quality and biodiversity in the area.

CPAWS Northern Alberta has partnered with the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative on our Love Your Headwaters campaign to secure the Bighorn as a Wildland Provincial Park. A Wildland Provincial Park designation allows Edmontonians to continue doing the outdoor recreational activities they love, such as camping and hiking, but will protect the Bighorn from further industrial activity.

- Tara Russell, CPAWS Northern Alberta
For more information, visit cpawsnab.org



Top, from left to right: Jonathan Saint-Onge, Petrina Beals, Patricia Ho-Yui Wang, Anne-Sara Briand, Alice de Swarte, Fred Fournier, Guillaume Sirois; Bottom: Denis Vollant, Serge Ashini Goupil, David Ishpatao, Valérie Courtois. Photo: Valérie Courtois

INSPIRING TUNDRA SEMINAR

Last September, in partnership with the Mushua-Nipi corporation, CPAWS Québec took two young First Nations members and 3 Quebecers for a learning experience in the tundra.

The Mushuau-Nipi is an Innu traditional site located on the protected Georges River in Quebec's Ungava region. It has archeological proof of occupation as old as 5000 years and is at the heart of the tundra caribou habitat.

During this "in the bush" seminar, the youth got to live the Innu traditional way of life, such as cooking bannick (Innu traditional bread) and kukamess (grey trout), observing caribous and geese, and hearing Innu legends about the land. Conversations about protection of the land and reconciliation also took place between the youth and various Innu leaders.

The youth also had the opportunity to visit the mining city of Schefferville and see the environmental and social impacts of reckless mining development.

The young leaders of the Mushuau-Nipi are heading back to their community with renewed energy, tools and allies to take action for land protection and reconciliation.

- Alice de Swarte, CPAWS Québec
For more information, visit snapqc.org

CPAWS WILDERNESS PROTECTION CLUB

Join monthly giving today!

Please consider joining our **Wilderness Protection Club**. It's an economical and convenient way to protect Canada's wilderness all year round. For more information about monthly giving, contact us at wpc@cpaws.org

LEAVE A GIFT FOR WILDERNESS PROTECTION

If you're creating or updating your will, consider leaving a bequest to CPAWS. No matter how big or small the gift may be, it will have a lasting impact and will help provide a stable future for Canadian wilderness. For more information on leaving a bequest, contact Vicki DiMillo, 1-800-333-9453, ext. 229, or vdimillo@cpaws.org

GIVE AN ECARD THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Help save Canada's wildlife by giving a critter a place to roam. Send a paper-free gift to family, friends or colleagues.

FUNDRAISE FOR CPAWS

Looking to support wilderness conservation through an activity or event? CPAWS is happy to help promote and support you and your initiative if you would like to raise funds in support of protecting Canada's wilderness. For more information, please contact Vicki DiMillo at: vdimillo@cpaws.org

RECYCLE YOUR VEHICLE

Donate a Car Canada accepts vehicle donations for CPAWS and provides free towing in many areas across Canada. After your donation is complete, CPAWS will send you a charitable tax receipt. Learn more at: donatecar.ca

GIVE THE GIFT OF AEROPLAN MILES

You can help ensure CPAWS is at the table when important decisions are being made across Canada by donating your unused Aeroplan miles. Simply search CPAWS at beyondmiles.aeroplan.com.

Photo: Stockvault

CONTACT US

CPAWS National Office
506-250 City Centre Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1R 6K7
613-569-7226
or 1-800-333-WILD
info@cpaws.org
www.cpaws.org

CPAWS British Columbia
604-685-7445
www.cpawsbc.org

CPAWS Southern Alberta
403-232-6686
www.cpaws-southernalberta.org

CPAWS Northern Alberta
780-328-3780
www.cpawsnab.org

CPAWS Saskatchewan
306-469-7876
www.cpaws-sask.org

CPAWS Manitoba
204-949-0782
www.cpawsmb.org

CPAWS Ottawa Valley
819-778-3355
www.cpaws-ov-vo.org

CPAWS Wildlands League
416-971-9453
or 1-866-510-WILD
www.wildlandsleague.org

SNAP (CPAWS) Québec
514-278-7627
www.snapqc.org

CPAWS New Brunswick
506-452-9902
www.cpawsnb.org

CPAWS Nova Scotia
902-446-4155
www.cpawsns.org

CPAWS Newfoundland
709-726-5800
www.cpawsnl.org

CPAWS Yukon
867-393-8080
www.cpawsyukon.org

CPAWS Northwest Territories
867-873-9893
www.cpawsnwt.org



NATURE IS A **HOT GIFT.** GET IT BEFORE IT'S GONE.

As Canada turns 150, ask our governments to protect more wildlife and wilderness areas. And give all Canadians the gift that keeps on living.

Choose your favourites at GiftofNature.ca

