

Canadian

WILDERNESS

A publication of CPAWS • Fall 2017 / Winter 2018



Keeping Canada Wild: The path forward



 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

What I did before going on my summer vacation

MIKE ROBINSON

It is now routine in the CPAWS' chapter and national office network to factor indigenous knowledge and community relationships into protected area strategies and park proposals. Working with indigenous stewards of the land makes common sense, and taken together, CPAWS' partnerships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis local government organizations and communities demonstrate a healthy spirit of reconciliation within our environmental non-governmental organization.

Carrying this spirit of reconciliation farther, into our personal lives, has great potential. For example, why not integrate indigenous knowledge into family vacation planning? Ask yourself – who knows the back-country better than indigenous travelers in their homelands?

The answer to me is obvious. So, when it came time to plan this year's family kayak adventure in Nootka Island's *Nuchatlitz* lagoon, off the west coast of Vancouver Island, I called my pal of some 40 years, Ray Williams, properly called *Ghoo-Noon-Nm-Tuk-Pomlth*, Spirit of the Wolf.

Ray is a *Mowachaht*, People of the Deer, First Nation member, who over seven decades of life has developed an extensive knowledge of his Nootka Island and *Yuquot* homeland, the *Mowachaht* village where Captain Cook landed in 1778. Today, he is locally known as the 'Protector of *Yuquot*.'

Ray is quick to point out when to travel across exposed water stretches ("Go early, Michael."), where to find water ("Carry water with you in July."), the best places to observe sea otters ("In the lagoon at nightfall when they raft up."), where to fish for salmon ("Try hand-lining along the reef edge where you see herring."), and what the traditional place names mean. For example, one of the very few *Mowachaht* place names on the Canadian Hydrographic Service chart of Esperanza Inlet is *Owossitsa* Lake. Ray explains, "That means Sockeye Lake in English."

The one-hour conversation I had with Ray made all the difference to our vacation's success. I've just called him with profuse thanks. Now we have another task – getting the *Mowachaht* place names back on the map. Think of it as topographic reconciliation, and simply the right thing to do.

Mike Robinson, President, National Board of Trustees



Exploring BC's Nuchatlitz lagoon.
Photo: Lynn Webster



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

Mike Robinson, President (BC)
Alex Abboud (AB)
Vincent Castellucci (QC)
Laura Colella, Chair,
Litigation Committee (ON)
Elmer Ghostkeeper (AB)
John Grandy (ON)
Bob Halfyard (NL)
Kwiaahwah Jones (BC)
Philippa Lawson, Chair,
Governance Committee (YT)
Nikita Lopoukhine, Chair,
Conservation Committee (ON)
Lavinia Mohr, Treasurer (BC)
Amber Nicol, Chair,
Engagement Committee (NS)
Erik Val (YT)

TRUSTEES EMERITUS

Stephanie Cairns
Al Davidson
Phil Dearden
David Lang
Harvey Locke
Gordon Nelson
Bob Peart
Sherri Watson

EDITORIAL TEAM

Éric Hébert-Daly:
National Executive Director
Karen Turner: National Director of
Communications and Development
Stacy Corneau: 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).

© 2017 Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.
No part of this publication may be reproduced
without express permission in writing
from CPAWS.



IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

Conservation: The Natural Solution to Canada's Challenges • 4

by *Éric Hébert-Daly*

Measures to Protect our Ocean • 6

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and Canada's role

by *Alex Barron and Elizabeth Good*

DEPARTMENTS

2 • PRESIDENT'S DESK

What I did before going on my summer vacation

8 • TRACKS ACROSS CANADA

11 • CPAWS ASKS

12 • CPAWS PEOPLE

- Gordon Nelson and the magnificent Nahanni
- CPAWS donor supports moose advocacy

14 • CONTACT US

COVER: Grizzly bear, Yukon
Photo by Peter Mather
ABOVE: Aspens in snowstorm

JOIN US ONLINE!

View additional online content at
www.cpaws.org/canadian-wilderness

- An in-depth interview with Erinn Drage, our National Conservation Coordinator, about her recent achievement of being named one of Canada's Top 25 environmentalists under 25.
- Video interview with Gordon Nelson, conservationist, activist and author.
- ICYMI: recap of highlights since the last issue.



Banff National Park
Photo: Alben Osaki

CONSERVATION: THE NATURAL SOLUTION TO CANADA'S CHALLENGES

BY ÉRIC HÉBERT-DALY

Some say nature conservation is a 'nice to have,' and parks and protected areas are great if you like to camp and paddle. Many don't see them as a critical piece of both the environmental and economic puzzle. The truth is, conservation is a highly effective contributor to a healthy and prosperous country. Here are some of the challenges conservation can help address:

CLIMATE CHANGE: Climate change is more than just an issue of industrial or tailpipe emissions. The degradation of ecosystems from industrial activities also contributes to global warming. Canada's Boreal forest stores more carbon per hectare than the Amazonian Rainforest. Nahanni National Park in Northwest Territories stores almost as much carbon as is emitted yearly in Canada by industrial

sources. Conserving our forests, peatlands, and wetlands can make a huge contribution to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

SURVIVAL OF SPECIES: Protected areas are vital for ensuring species and their habitats can withstand the impacts of climate change. A network of connected protected areas, on land or in water, enable species to adapt to

a warming climate by moving to intact ecosystems that are more habitable.

CLEAN AIR AND WATER: Nature provides many eco-services for free. Trees clean the air and intact ecosystems purify our water. The most conservative analysts put the actual economic value of nature in the trillions of dollars. Despite this, a tree's worth is regarded as nothing until it's cut down,

and streams have zero economic value until they are redirected or polluted in the interests of ‘valid’ economic activity. Replacing what our ecosystems give us for free is expensive, and not easily done.

NATURAL DISASTER PREVENTION: Flooding across Canada is costing us billions of dollars, and is predicted to increase as an effect of climate change. The removal of the shrubs, trees, and plants lining the banks of our rivers also takes away the natural sponge effect they provide. Without them, rain and melt-water will create surges that make living downstream dangerous.

BIODIVERSITY LOSS: Hundreds of species in Canada are endangered due to the loss of their habitat. Protected areas are key to ensuring their long-term survival. If we protect the habitat of ‘umbrella’ species like boreal woodland caribou that need large, intact forest areas to survive, we’d be protecting the home of many other species as well.

RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES: In the past, land-use planning exercises by indigenous communities have been ignored by other governments in Canada. Areas identified by indigenous communities for conservation are instead staked for mining and harvested for forestry, endangering both ecological and cultural values. True nation-to-nation relationships could be respected and honoured by

upholding the conservation decisions by indigenous communities themselves.

RESPECTING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS: In 2010, Canada became a signatory to the International Convention on Biological Diversity which requires us to protect 17% of our land and 10% of our ocean by 2020. This is an important first step towards the 50% protection science has determined is necessary to maintain life-supporting ecosystem and biodiversity services that are essential to the health of humans and nature. To date, Canada has managed to protect only 10% of its land and only 1% of its ocean.

RESOLVING BOUNDARY DISPUTES: There are a number of places across Canada where struggles for resources and access are points of contention. Whether it’s arctic sovereignty, marine boundary conflicts, or upstream development impacts on watersheds, conservation can be an elegant solution to resolving these issues. International Peace Parks where conservation measures are enforced will help reduce battles over who owns what.

PROTECTING THE RESOURCE ECONOMY: Human pressures on the environment are putting our traditional resource industries at risk. Forestry and fishing are two examples of industries that require conservation measures to ensure

their long-term survival. Marine protected areas allow fish populations to grow and thrive, while protected forests ensure trees can regenerate naturally.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMY: Canada is known for its majestic natural beauty and vast wilderness, and people from all over the world come to experience it firsthand. While cultural and eco-tourism industries are often seen as secondary economic drivers, eco-tourism provides jobs in the parts of the country that are the most vulnerable to economic instability. An extraction economy is not sustainable over the long term and is subject to high peaks and low valleys. As people around the world move to economic development models fostering experiences rather than products, Canada could be at the forefront instead of relying so heavily on extraction.

.....
 Conservation, of which protected areas are the cornerstone, may not be the whole solution to our long-term survival, but it is an integral piece of the puzzle. Conservation saves us money, makes us money, helps preserve our wildlife, enhances healthy relationships with indigenous communities, keeps us safe from harm, and gives us the life-sustaining clean water and air we need to survive. The longer we think of nature as a ‘nice to have’, the less time we have to do the right thing and contribute to solving many of our country’s most vexing problems.

Conservation is a highly effective contributor to a healthy and prosperous country. Photos, from left to right: Duane Fuerter, Irwin Barrett, Martin Berkman.



MEASURES TO PROTECT OUR OCEAN

Canada has one of the largest ocean territories, and the longest coastline in the world, bordering the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific. With such a considerable marine heritage, Canada has a global responsibility to protect and conserve our diverse marine ecosystems.


Canada has made strong, international commitments to protect at least 10% of our ocean by 2020, but has a long way to reach this goal. According to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), at present, 1.5% of Canada's ocean is protected through marine protected areas (MPAs). Like national parks, it can take decades to establish an MPA. The government is looking for additional opportunities to help them meet their marine conservation targets. Identifying 'other effective area-based conservation measures' (OECMs) is one of the strategies.

There is a need to acknowledge areas that provide effective conservation through other means besides protected area status. For example, culturally significant areas that are managed or protected by indigenous peoples. However, there is some question about how OECMs are

defined and some concern that, in the rush to meet the targets, Canada may include sites that do not effectively protect biodiversity. For example, fishing closures that target a single species and/or have the goal of sustainable exploitation, rather than conservation.

In light of these concerns, there has been a call for clear criteria regarding what can be counted as an OECM. CPAWS' National Ocean Program Director, Sabine Jessen, is part of an international IUCN task force, comprised of more than 100 members from 30 countries, that has been charged with developing international guidance on these criteria. In early 2017, CPAWS hosted a meeting of the taskforce in Vancouver, BC. The meeting brought together a range of experts from both terrestrial and marine conservation to hear a series of case studies from Canada, and discuss the challenges and opportunities for potential OECMs in Canada and worldwide.

DFO has also developed its own Operational Guidance for Identifying OECMs, and in early 2018 will host a meeting of the United Nations



Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and Canada's role

BY ALEX BARRON
AND ELIZABETH GOOD

Convention of Biological Diversity focused on this subject. Initial discussions with DFO suggest that they have set a high standard for applying their guidance and only a small fraction of the fishing closures so far assessed have passed the test to be considered OECMs. We're pleased to see such rigorous application of the DFO guidance, but remain concerned that there are no measures in place to prevent future, less conservation-minded governments from counting much less effective areas as OECMs, and undermining the goal of providing meaningful protection of our ocean.



Murchison Lagoon, Gwaii Haanas
Photo: Sabine Jessen

So far, DFO's guidance has only been applied to restrictions on fishing, leaving ecosystems at risk from other threats such as anchor damage, pollution, industrial development, noise pollution, and oil and gas activities. As all these activities can happen within the same area, it's important that we simultaneously handle the management of all these activities in order to conserve biodiversity.

The goal of fishing closures is usually the recovery or maintenance of a specific stock (e.g., the cod moratorium on the East Coast and Rockfish Conservation

Areas in BC), or a specific habitat (e.g., glass sponge reefs). As a result, the management measures in place are usually very specific, with only certain gear types being prohibited. While fishing closures and prohibiting harmful activities are a first step, it does not provide the comprehensive protection needed to conserve the complete biodiversity of a given area.

The connectivity between marine ecosystems and the tendency of multiple, overlapping human uses in a single area presents a unique challenge in identifying and designating

OECMs. It requires managing multiple overlapping activities, which are usually under the jurisdiction of different agencies. While DFO is being selective in its designation of OECMs, its own Operational Guidelines do not ensure effective management or biodiversity conservation.

As we approach 2020, pressure to designate more OECMs will likely increase. Canada needs to follow the soon-to-be-published IUCN guidelines for OECMs to ensure the effective conservation of our marine biodiversity.

BC Parks: underfunded and overburdened

In BC, we have seen our provincially protected areas double since 2000. Over four million hectares of new protected areas is cause for celebration, but the reality on the ground is far from ideal.

While the system has expanded, the operational budget for BC Parks has hovered at around \$31 million, and the number of park rangers has decreased dramatically. Last year, the BC government announced a short bump in funding to deal with this crisis, but we know it's not nearly enough to bring true protection back into these parks.

BC's parks protect some of the largest temperate rainforest left in the world, yet many of the stories shared reveal a darker side. Tales of garbage-filled pathways and broken-down infrastructure are all too common in BC's underfunded and overburdened park system.

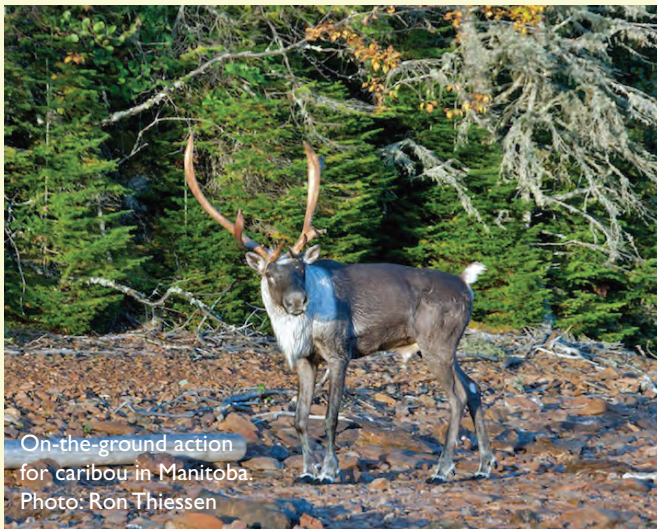


Elk Lakes Provincial Park
Photo: Tori Ball

On paper, BC is doing an exceptional job of protecting its diverse and expansive landscape. In reality, we are spending more money to promote these special places than to protect them. If we are to achieve the short-term goal of protecting

17% of Canada's wilderness, we must simultaneously create a long-term strategy to keep wildlife and wild places truly healthy.

- Tori Ball, CPAWS British Columbia
For more information, visit StandUpForParks.ca



On-the-ground action
for caribou in Manitoba.
Photo: Ron Thiessen

Manitobans refuse to stop pushing for caribou action

It has been over 10 years since the province of Manitoba added boreal woodland caribou to the list of threatened species in this province. There are 15 identified caribou ranges in Manitoba, covering millions of hectares of boreal forest. Although provincial efforts have resulted in a written recovery strategy with some strong guiding principles for conserving the species, the plans for on-the-ground actions have not been completed.

The federal government has requested that provinces and territories complete these by October 2017. The province has stated a timeline of 2018 for the five high-risk caribou areas and 2020 for the remaining four, but Manitobans are pushing for quicker action. Bolstered by another successful summer outreach

program, CPAWS Manitoba has delivered over 21,000 petition signatures to the government, encouraging them to step up their actions on woodland caribou protection. Completing these action plans to protect caribou habitat would also fast-track the province's pace in contributing to Canada's international conservation commitment of protecting 17% by 2020.

- Josh Pearlman, CPAWS Manitoba. For more information, visit www.cpawsmb.org

Youth from the Innu First Nation of Pessamit visit caribou habitat

From August 20 to 25, CPAWS Quebec, in partnership with the Innu Nation of Pessamit, took 12 young members of the community for a unique experience in the Pimpuacan Reservoir area.

During this week of immersion in the Boreal forest, young people participated in the traditional Innu camp life such as setting up tents, collecting fir branches and firewood, cooking bannock, catching fish, trapping beavers, and picking fruits. They also had the opportunity to explore the territory by foot or boat, and to take part in discussion circles and educational workshops on territory protection and the importance of caribou in the Innu culture.

The Pimpuacan Reservoir is a priority area for the recovery of the woodland caribou and an area of importance for safeguarding Innu cultural values. A proposal for a protected area is under consideration – a project that CPAWS Quebec and the Innu Nation of Pessamit intend to bring to fruition!

As a sign of encouragement, a wonderful caribou came to greet the participants just before their departure from Pimpuacan. A beautiful gift from nature.

- *Charlène Daubenfeld, CPAWS Quebec*

For more information, visit www.snapqc.org

You can see photos from the excursion on CPAWS Quebec's Facebook page at [SNAPQuebec](https://www.facebook.com/SNAPQuebec).



Mountain in the mist
Photo: Audrey Parnell

Increased protection for special value areas

Canada's international commitment to protect 17% of its land and freshwater is a stepping stone to sustaining nature, but the target can be problematic if it is viewed as a limit. The imminent logging in the Upper Highwood is a good example of why we need to look at the landscape to understand the whole picture.

The Highwood area is classified under the montane subregion of the Rocky Mountains, which boasts nearly 30% protection, and is surrounded by protected subalpine. On paper, campaigns to increase protection in the area might seem unfounded. However, we need to look beyond the numbers and focus on the landscape to understand the complex story that includes the special ecological value of these areas.

As the headwaters to the Highwood river, the region provides clean water to communities along its eastward path, but is also vulnerable to flooding, and the resulting downstream impacts we saw in 2013. Further degradation of our headwaters' forests could compromise water quality, as well as contribute to future floods or droughts. This area serves as habitat for the threatened westslope cutthroat trout, a corridor for wildlife to move through, and a quiet recreational spot to connect with nature. It is important that targets are used to conserve the full range of biodiversity in the province. In addition to fulfilling our protected areas commitments, we also need to give special attention to landscape features with significant value.

- *Katie Morrison, CPAWS Southern Alberta*

For more information, visit www.cpaws-southernalberta.org

Working collaboratively to protect the Peel Watershed

As you may already know, CPAWS Yukon has been working for many years to protect the Peel Watershed. In March, the Peel Watershed case was heard by the Supreme Court of Canada and,

by the end of this year, the Court will decide if our collaborative efforts to protect this iconic landscape were successful. The Court's decision will require a landmark interpretation of the First Nation Final Agreements. If we are successful, it will result in the integrity of these agreements being upheld and the guaranteed protection of 80% of the watershed.

This is the first Supreme Court case in known history where environmental non-government organizations and First Nations are listed as co-appellants. Our organization devotes a significant amount of time and resources towards our relationship with the four First Nations who have traditional territory in the watershed: the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, and the Tetlit Gwich'in in the neighbouring Northwest Territories. Our relationship is based on collaboration, respect, listening, and learning. Even though our history and way of seeing and being in the world may be incredibly different, we all share a united goal that both the Peel Watershed and treaty rights must be protected.

- *Nadine Sander-Green, CPAWS Yukon*

For more information, visit www.protectpeel.ca and cpawsyukon.org



Na Cho Nyäk Dun citizen Elizabeth Moses at a 2014 rally. Photo: Tyler Kuhn



Restigouche Wilderness Waterway
Photo: Roberta Clowater

Urging the New Brunswick government to get moving on protected areas

Most provinces agreed to contribute to our international commitment to protect at least 17% of our land and freshwater. Yet, the New Brunswick government does not have any plans in place, and remains at the back of the pack on protected areas in Canada. CPAWS New Brunswick is urging the provincial government to take action, offering the following recommendations to help them meet Canada's goals:

- 1)** New Brunswick should commit to a new target to legally protect at least 10% of the province in nature-oriented parks and protected areas;
- 2)** New Brunswick government should work with the federal government to

create coastal protected areas around mud flats that are vital stopovers for hungry migrating shorebirds, ocean waters around island nature reserves, and inter-tidal zones next to coastal parks, such as Fundy National Park; and

- 3)** New Brunswick has an immediate opportunity to protect the Restigouche Wilderness Waterway, and remaining old forests on Crown land.

CPAWS New Brunswick is working in communities this fall and winter to promote these actions. Please join us if you can!

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

Caribou range planning can contribute to 17% target in Alberta

With the deadline looming for caribou range plans, the Government of Alberta (GoA), environmental non-government organizations, and community groups have been busy discussing how best to protect and restore critical caribou habitat in Alberta. CPAWS Northern Alberta sees an important opportunity in this process. By creating new protected areas within caribou ranges, we not only protect the survival of this species and many others along with their habitat, we also help contribute to Canada's commitment to protect 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas by 2020. The GoA has reiterated its commitment to this target and Alberta's Minister of Environment and Parks is co-chair of the National Steering Committee, but there's strong pressure to rely on stop-gap measures that do not protect or restore caribou habitat. CPAWS Northern Alberta has recommended high priority areas for protection in each of the ranges, and continues to push all parties to provide real solutions for caribou that also protect biodiversity.

- Kecia Kerr, CPAWS Northern Alberta
For more information, visit www.cpawsnab.org

CPAWS Ottawa Valley hosts the first Dumoine River Art Camp

CPAWS Ottawa Valley has been working to protect Quebec's Dumoine River watershed for almost a decade. During that time, the chapter has succeeded in expanding the protected area from 1,445 km² to almost 2,200 km² through expansions and by connecting it to another smaller protected area.

In August, CPAWS Ottawa Valley invited artists to spend five days camping along the Dumoine to celebrate our ongoing success, and generate more public interest in our campaign. The camp took place at Robinson Lake, a widening of the river just below the impressive Grande Chute waterfall.

In total, 15 artists of diverse styles, media, and backgrounds took part in the camp. Artists were asked to donate at least one piece of art for auction at a CPAWS event in the fall. The funds raised will help support ongoing efforts to protect the rich natural heritage of western Quebec, including legislation to officially recognize the Dumoine boundaries, and protect the nearby Noire and Coulonge Rivers.

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

100 protected areas stalled in Nova Scotia

First the good news: The Nova Scotia government has a reasonably good plan to establish a network of protected areas in the province.

That plan, entitled *Our Parks and Protected Areas Plan*, seeks to protect some of the best remaining natural areas in Nova Scotia, and includes outstanding sites in the Wentworth Valley, Cape Breton Highlands, and along the St. Mary's River, as well as ecological hotspots in southwestern Nova Scotia.

Now the bad news: That plan has essentially stalled.

At the moment, approximately 100 new protected areas, totaling 83,500 hectares, are stuck in government limbo awaiting legal protection by the provincial government.

They've been waiting for official designation since the final version of the *Our Parks and Protected Areas Plan* was approved in 2013. Four years is more than enough time to officially establish these protected areas.

It's time to finish the job.

- Chris Miller, CPAWS Nova Scotia

For more information, visit www.cpawsns.org



Nova Scotia's new protected natural areas wait for official designation.
Photo: Darin Ruangruchira

In the spring/summer edition of *Canadian Wilderness*, we asked for your thoughts on free admission to national parks across Canada. Here's what some of you had to say:

When I was young, everyone traveling either to or through the park had to pay five dollars and received a park pass for that. As everyone does have to use the highway, whether staying in the park or traveling onward, the fee seemed appropriate. After all, the highway is expensive to maintain!

Perhaps such a scheme could be reinstated? Or a combination of a park pass at a lower annual fee in combination with the highway "toll"?
-Allan M.

I think that it was a nice idea, but totally unpractical due to the fact that it will result in much larger crowds flooding into the parks, which there is not the infrastructure to manage. Wildlife is under enough stress already, why increase it? Sure, the parks are for people too, but we must manage the effect on wildlife: Increased staff at campgrounds to manage unruly people, garbage (discarded food), etc., staff to manage wildlife jams on the highways, traffic wardens (like they have at Lake Louise), and maintenance staff to keep washrooms clean; the list is endless.

Make sure all visitors receive educational info on parks, like not feeding wildlife, etc., but also about understanding nature and the reason we have parks and the importance of protecting them.

Humans tend to appreciate things more if we have to pay for it. And having to pay for it will limit access to only those who really want to enjoy the parks, and not all those who only want to drive around.
-Al C.

In general, I favour efforts to move national park visitors beyond developed areas.

I am a Calgarian with such easy access to the mountain parks. Hardcore will never describe me, but I have wandered in places that, conservatively speaking,

1,000,000 of my fellow city dwellers have never seen.

I was first drawn to the front country and from there moved deeper in on foot and away from the crowds. My love and respect for the empty spaces grew from encountering the busy spaces. My own desire that wild places be protected grew out of being there. The key preservation is connection. Our parks should encourage us to step into the empty and connect. Those connections will deepen affection and care.

Please don't limit access until only the wealthiest and fittest can see the lonely places. My love and care for those places grew in the busy places. Stewardship of our wilderness is a demand placed on society. We should not tax those who love, respect, and protect our national treasure. No access fees help Canadians to explore more deeply. Those who stand awestruck will love and protect these lands.

-David B.

I share Éric Hébert-Daly's concerns about offering free passes to our national parks, though I agree that all Canadians should get out and enjoy these fabulous places.

Something I think should be considered is what many other countries do: entry to national parks is free or minimal for Canadians, while visitors from other countries pay a very significant fee. Canadians already pay, in the form of taxes, for maintaining and servicing our parks (regardless of how good a job is done); visitors should pay their share, and perhaps a little more for the privilege of taking advantage of what we offer.
-John G.

What percentage of Canada's land and ocean do you think should be protected, and why? Send your opinion to info@cpaws.org and we will feature a few responses in the next issue.

GORDON NELSON AND THE MAGNIFICENT NAHANNI

Gordon Nelson is an esteemed conservationist who has been involved with CPAWS since its early days. His legacy of civic activism, professional publications, thematic conferences, and mentoring of students who now practice in the parks and protected areas field across the country has served as a cornerstone of conservation in Canada.

*He recently published *The Magnificent Nahanni: The struggle to protect a wild place, a book which explores the 40+ year struggle to protect the river from pollution, habitat disturbance, and wildlife losses stemming from mining and other development. Nelson first became involved with the river in the 1970s, when the announcement for a national park was first made. Alison Ronson, the National Director of the Parks program, had the privilege of interviewing Nelson about his time with CPAWS, his thoughts on conservation, and his book.**

Alison Ronson (AR): How did you get into conservation and working with CPAWS in the early days?

Gordon Nelson (GN): I went to McMaster University and then grad school in the States where I was first exposed to the idea of a national park: the Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. I then did a postdoc in Susquehanna Valley and that reconnected me with nature. Afterwards, I took a job at Calgary University and that's when I really got involved in conservation and the mountain parks.

I was fortunate to get into the parks at the point where things were switching over from an informal protective kind of arrangement to one of master and management plans. These were all signs of bureaucratic efforts to try and organize and protect them, some of which were good, some were a bit misguided in my view, but it was in the course of that work that I began to see what was happening. It got me concerned and got my students concerned, so that's how we started.

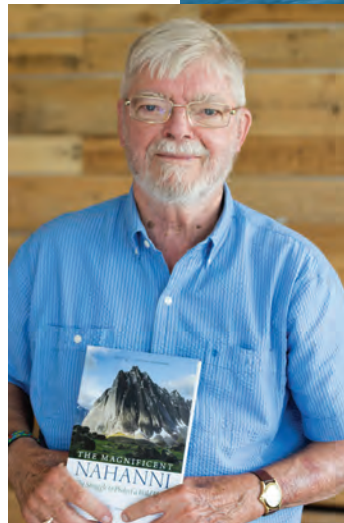
The issue at the time was the Olympics. There was a proposal on the horizon for a big development at Lake Louise. There was a new master plan regime coming in and they were going to have master plans for all the major parks, which meant reviewing their status and deciding on what their level would be in the system.

AR: Would this have been in the early 60s?

GN: I got there in 1960 and everything happened in the next 11 years. It was one of the most exciting 11 years I ever had! Conservation and environment became a big concern. There was a lot of young people getting involved to an extent that's almost unimaginable today with the economy having changed so much.

AR: You mentioned the pressure of an Olympic bid and the expansion at Lake Louise. Were these the catalysts for CPAWS or was there another event that led to the creation of the organization?

GN: I think in a way they all stoked the interest. The Olympics issue was almost subterranean. I don't have anything against the Olympics per se, but it was the idea of holding them in the national park that concerned me. A big proposal for hotels, expanded recreational facilities, and large-scale tourism also excited a lot of other people who didn't like that kind of recreation appearing in the park. So, there was a series of different groups that gradually coalesced around some of these issues. I got involved personally and I think we were in a way a catalyst for the formation of the first CPAWS chapter.

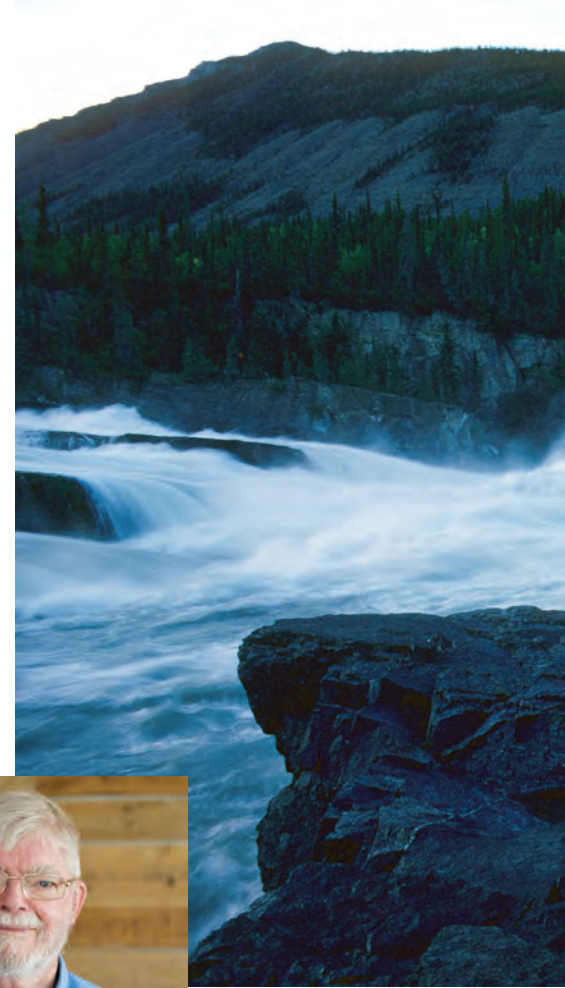


I had some really good graduate students at the time and they got interested because they were working in a park just as I was, and they started having meetings and discussing it

themselves. They asked me to join and we got involved to the point where I began a graduate course on national parks at the University of Calgary. They became so interested, we started making contact with people outside of our work such as community members who were concerned about some of the same things. We began working with some folks, exchanging information and got involved in a number of projects – all which eventually led to the creation of the chapter.

AR: What conservation challenges did you observe during your career?

GN: Challenges are constant. There are ebbs and flows, but this idea of eternal vigilance is exceedingly important. How many times has the Olympics come





Virginia Falls, Nahanni Photo: Mike Beedell

up? There's some move now to raise the Olympics again. There's similar examples across the country that have a continuing stream of people who get into the tourism industry and see it as an opportunity to develop their own enterprise. You have to be constantly vigilant.

The Olympics are a constant and outstanding issue, along with the extent and nature of wilderness and its role in the parks vis-a-vie tourism and other zoning. Transport roads and access are constant, ongoing issues. There's also the still unresolved issue of people. More and more people wanting to do more things in the park, and the commitment of Canada and the wholesale basis to growth. The desire for higher incomes, more prosperity, more enjoyment of life, and more happiness puts pressure on the park. You have these things that are pinpoints for some of these long-standing themes, but I think it's the themes and the identification of the themes that stand out as constant in my mind.

AR: In your view, what drives and sustains the passion for conservation?

GN: I don't know that there's any standard mode. I thought about this quite a bit, wondering if there's some way you can identify a group of people who would be consistently supportive of these issues. The thing that worries me more than anything is the difference I saw for so many years between young people in the 1960s and 1970s and the way they are now.

The young people in my time had lots of energy, and the sense of commitment to environmental issues was enormous, in part because of conferences being held and in part because the 1950s had been such an exploitive era following the war. It's not there to the same degree today. The interest in environment is a bit more mechanical and solution-oriented than it used to be.

For me, the biggest challenge for conservation groups is to attract a growing number of young people to get involved in the issues. I often go to meetings that are conservation-oriented and I'm surprised how few young people there are.

AR: What attracted you to the Nahanni and inspired you to write the book, *The Magnificent Nahanni*?

GN: I've had a sustained interest in the north for a long time and became intentionally involved in the mid-1970s. I was in my office at Western University and I got a call from a lawyer who was with the first group working on the first land claim. He wanted me to come and join the organization as a consultant to advise them on parks and renewable resources, and I agreed. It was certainly one of those remarkable moments in terms of personal experience. I knew literally nothing about First Nations people. I got involved with the Inuit and it blew me away. I saw so many places and I met a lot of people, and so I became very interested in the Nahanni.

AR: You called the book *the struggle to protect a wild place* and you mentioned you wanted to document the decades that led to the creation and expansion of Nahanni. Can you talk a little bit about that desire?

GN: This place attracted me because it was so well known. I went to all kinds of places other than the Nahanni over a 10- or 15-year period and I did a lot of work in Yellowknife, so it was sort of the lure of the place that got me interested. I was also following the work CPAWS was doing on establishing it as a national park. As it came to fruition, I thought to myself, "boy, that's really something that people should think about." I then began to think I should write about it.

I wrote a 20-page paper and sent it to some people for review. Somebody suggested I write a book instead. I began to think it was probably worthwhile. The book is built on the idea of changing how we think about national parks in Canada, the idea of going from an ideal vision of a place where people have never been, which archaeology and history since the 1960s have shown is increasingly rare. It also discusses the changes in the organization of parks, the increasing role of local people, and the enormous changes in ecosystem science in the 1970s.

To see a highlight video of this interview, please visit cpaws.org/canadian-wilderness



CPAWS DONOR SUPPORTS MOOSE ADVOCACY

CPAWS Wildlands League's work is made possible by generous grants and contributions from individuals like Anita North from Dryden, Ontario. Anita is not only a financial supporter but she is also a forest guardian and knowledgeable of issues in northwestern Ontario.

Anita was born and raised in Dryden and her father worked for the local forest products mill and taught her how to fish, camp, and enjoy walking in the woods at a young age. She went on to become a neurosurgeon but never lost her connection to the north.

Now retired, she returned to northwestern Ontario to run the family's Basket Lake Camp, a fishing camp started by her parents 50 years ago. She is greatly concerned about the impact of forestry practices on wildlife and has been working with logging companies and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Her passion is the plight of moose.

In recent years, Anita witnessed dwindling numbers of these once-common animals. The decline of moose has become a focus of her tremendous energy and scientific curiosity. She now digs into the moose research the way she used to devour neurological papers. Anita probably knows more about moose management than many government biologists!

It was Anita's information, advocacy, and support that helped initiate CPAWS Wildlands League's own moose project. She raised the alarm about moose decline not only in her area, but in many parts of its North American range.

The continued hunting of moose calves even while numbers decline, an ever-expanding government-funded forest access road network, and a lack of money for moose stewardship are among the threats that Ontario could readily fix. So far, the government's response has been inadequate.

CPAWS Wildlands League continues to call on Ontario to eliminate calf hunting, create moose refuge areas with limited road access, and to put more resources into research, monitoring, and enforcement as first steps to help moose.

Fulfilling its commitment on achieving 17% protection by 2020 would also help Ontario to provide moose more space to recover.

Thank you, Anita, for being the catalyst for our moose work!

- Dave Pearce, CPAWS Wildlands League. For more information, visit www.wildlandsleague.org

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
306-469-2356; 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) Quebec
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



Partners in CONSERVATION

*Paddle Canada's iconic river with
Canada's iconic canoe company*



Black Feather
the wilderness adventure company

Making Nahanni dreams
happen since 1971 www.blackfeather.com



Nahanni Wild
TRUE WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

KEEP IT WILD!

Wilderness Canoe and Rafting Expeditions
info@nahanniwild.com • 1 888 897 5223 • nahanniwild.com

People protect what they love
Tatshenshini/Alsek - Greater Nahanni Watershed - Peel Watershed

Explore these
and others with us!



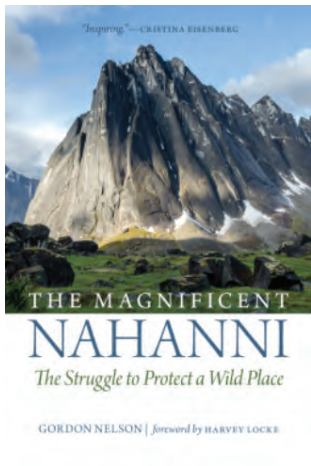
photo: Noel Hendrickson

Canadian River Expeditions

Nahanni River Adventures

www.nahanni.com
email: info@nahanni.com

The Magnificent Nahanni:
The Struggle to Protect a Wild Place



"Inspiring."
— Cristina Eisenberg

*"Fascinating
and impressive."*
— Thomas Gunton

By GORDON NELSON
Foreword by
Harvey Locke

Available through
independent bookstores
and online.

To explore partnership opportunities with CPAWS,
contact Max Brennan at mbrennan@cpaws.org

INTRODUCING

TARGHEE EXP



THE MISSION IS EXPLORATION

Equipped with our signature fit, durability, and performance, the Targhee EXP is the boldest, toughest version yet of our iconic hiking boot. Your next great story is just beyond the horizon.

