

Canadian **WILDERNESS**

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The way
forward
is with
Nature



CPAWS
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

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Our planet is out of balance

LAURA COLELLA

The events of 2020 bring about a necessary shift in our perspective of what our worlds look like. To some extent, it forces us to revisit our relationship with nature. Whether we choose to conserve or consume, explore or exploit, each of these choices causes a ripple which can have an impact down to the smallest organism and across entire continents.

Throughout the current pandemic, we have seen Canadians seek out solace from a world of anxiety and uncertainty by turning to parks and other natural areas. A walk among the trees, listening to waves along the coast, letting nature calm and heal the mind: these are the simple but necessary pleasures nature brings us.

The very force of nature in Canada, coupled with a world where everything seems uncertain, makes the desire of Canadians and residents of our beautiful country to reconnect with nature a priority. But there is a nature emergency and we know that Canada must take action on the opportunity before it as a global leader in conservation. As the second largest country in the world and a 243,042-kilometre coastline, Canada stewards 20% of the Earth's wild forests, 24% of its wetlands, and almost one third of its land-stored carbon. This makes nature-based solutions part of our collective armoury to the protection and restoration of the natural world, both on land and sea.

In June 2020, we were thrilled to hear Canada's government reaffirm its commitment to protecting 25% of Canada's land and ocean by 2025 and 30% by 2030, and to implementing nature-based climate solutions. We are committed, today more than ever, to ensure that these commitments result in concrete action to deal with the current nature emergency. We must work with decision makers, knowledge brokers and traditional guardians of the land to protect the biodiversity of Canada's magnificent natural heritage to heal ourselves and our world.

While this work is underway, CPAWS is also looking at how our entire organization, at all levels and from coast to coast to coast, integrates anti-racism

action to our work. I recognize that our governance does not reflect Canada's diversity and that much work must be done in that regard. Nature is, by its very essence, inclusive of all. We must now work to shed ourselves of the systematic racism, oppression and bias that is in all of us. This work cannot happen without a serious shakeup in the fabric of our institutions. We are committed to doing our part, with persistence and courage. Inaction is not an option.

Laura Colella is CPAWS' National Board of Trustees President.



Hiking in Thaidene Nëne, NWT. Photo: Tyrone Burke

Canadian WILDERNESS

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COVER: The Barn Owl, pictured among spring flowers, is an endangered species in Canada. Photo by Andy Chilton.

ABOVE: The meeting of sea, shore and sky along the B.C. coast. Photo by Rohit Tandon

Conservation at the community level

The vital role of the volunteer

TARA RUSSELL AND TAYLOR MATON

There is no shortage of conservation work to be done in Canada, and in Alberta much of it could not be accomplished without the passionate people outside our small provincial staff. We're talking about our volunteers, members, and ambassadors. Each year they dedicate countless hours to wilderness protection by sitting on our committees, hosting outreach events, and engaging their networks. In these roles, they bring new ideas, labours and talents to conservation that are essential to achieving our mission. Through our two ambassador programs, CPAWS Northern Alberta is providing resources to engage local citizens to make a difference to wilderness protection in their own backyards.

CLIMATE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Last fall we told you about our Climate Ambassador Program, which enables members of northern Alberta regions to directly engage their communities on the challenging topic of climate change. So far, these ambassadors have helped

better inform 3,055 people, and encouraged thousands of actions to reduce carbon emissions. In a province, where polls show only 52% of Albertans surveyed believe that Climate Change is happening, this work is absolutely crucial.

CONSERVATION AMBASSADOR PROGRAM—SENIOR INITIATIVE

This program enabled us to team up with 8 seniors in the Edmonton-area to develop an outreach program that specifically speaks to seniors on how to become actively involved in local environmental issues. Ambassadors have contributed by attending outreach events, collecting hundreds of signed letters in support of headwaters protection, and connecting CPAWS staff with networking opportunities. The program works to create avenues for retirees to take part in conservation work, while tapping into their wealth of knowledge and expertise.



Wild flowers found in Thaidene Nëne.
Photo: Tyrone Burke



Photo: Anthony Metcalfe

TIPS ON HOW TO CHAT ABOUT CLIMATE

Our Climate Ambassador in Fort McMurray shares some helpful tips for how to have those hard conversations. (Responses have been edited for length)

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND THAT WORKED IN COMMUNICATING CLIMATE CHANGE TO OTHERS?

When I first approach someone I talk about what we are doing, and how wilderness protection helps alleviate effects of climate changes, in a non-threatening way. Then I move onto what they can do, from small changes to bigger changes.

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED?

The biggest challenge is that in Alberta, many work directly in oil and gas, so they feel that any carbon footprint reduction would directly impact their jobs and their families.

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU GIVE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO TACKLE THE CLIMATE CHANGE CONVERSATION WITH OTHERS?

Be open and at ease in your body language and the way you speak, so it's clear it's just a conversation not a debate. Listen to people's concerns without judgement, and address them with real world examples of success - show that it is possible! For example, the return of the ozone layer through the world wide banning of Chlorofluorocarbons!

Most importantly be patient, you won't change anyone's mind in a single conversation, but getting the dialogue going is a huge first step!

If you'd like to know how you can get involved and volunteer with CPAWS, visit cpaws.org to find your regional chapter and check out current volunteer opportunities.

Tara Russell is the Program Director and Taylor Maton is the Conservation Outreach Coordinator at CPAWS Northern Alberta.

CPAWS WILDERNESS PROTECTION CLUB (WPC) JOIN MONTHLY GIVING TODAY!

A monthly donation is easy to set up and it's the best way to help us protect more wilderness in Canada year-round.

Did you know that monthly gifts:

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Blue Heron
at Mud Lake in Ottawa.
Photo: Cynthia Eastwood

CONSERVATION IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

Never has the need for ambitious action to restore a balance with nature been more urgently needed

BY ALISON WOODLEY

2020 started with hope.

Many were expecting it to be the “super-year” for nature. International negotiations were underway to develop new global biodiversity targets for the next decade which were to be approved at a major UN Biodiversity conference in China in October. Several countries, including France, Costa Rica and Finland had stepped forward to champion ambitious conservation targets, including protecting at least 30% of land and sea by 2030. Biodiversity was in the spotlight, finally getting traction, and we were seeing glimmers of hope that countries might soon agree to more ambitious action to tackle the interrelated crises of biodiversity loss and climate change in a more coordinated way.

Here in Canada, after a year-long effort by CPAWS and our partner conservation organizations, the Prime Minister had committed late last year to protecting 25% of our country’s land and ocean by 2025, and 30% by 2030—*more than doubling* the current area protected over the next five years! In their mandate letters, federal Ministers were directed to implement nature-based solutions to climate

change to complement fossil fuel emission reductions, and to champion 30% protection by 2030 in international meetings. Meanwhile Canada’s new Nature Fund, part of the federal government’s 2018 investment of \$1.3 billion in nature conservation, was finally rolling out across the country supporting protected area establishment from coast to coast to coast.

CPAWS’ staff were truly hopeful about the progress being made in Canada, and about the momentum building for the next decade.

Then, in a few short weeks, everything changed.

I was in Rome at the end of February, part of the Canadian delegation to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity negotiating session for the new global biodiversity framework. We arrived in Italy the day the first cluster of cases of COVID-19 were reported in the north of the country. Ten short days later, as we hurried home, northern Italy’s health care system was collapsing, and Rome was quickly becoming a ghost city. The Roman Forum was empty. The airport was empty. Two weeks later, most of Canada was going into lockdown as the virus swept through our country too.

Red Fox kit.
Photo: Nathan Anderson



Scenes from a conference: The Roman Forum was empty. The airport was empty. Two weeks later, most of Canada was going into lockdown as the virus swept through our country too. Photo: Steven Woodley

As Canadians tried to cope with the stress of the pandemic and self-isolation, they flocked to parks and green spaces, seeking solace in nature. It's obvious COVID-19 has reinforced that nature is a core Canadian value, that parks and protected areas are an essential service, and that we urgently need more of these natural spaces.

As the virus continues its rampage and the world collectively struggles to find a path forward into an uncertain future, at least one thing is clear: the biodiversity and climate crises are still as dire, and in urgent need of attention, even as the world faces a massive new threat.

Scientists have been quick to point out that pandemics like COVID-19 which emerge when viruses jump from wildlife to human populations, are linked to how we treat the natural world. Wildlife trade and sales are a big part of the problem, as is our on-going destruction of nature. The more we disrupt and destroy healthy ecosystems, the higher the risk of contact between wildlife and humans, and the higher the risk of virus transmission. There is a common thread emerging here – the need to transform our relationship with nature.

ASPIRING TOWARDS BALANCE

This brings us back to the idea of 2020 as a super-year for nature. With luck, the super-year will extend into 2021, and we will enter the year with an even greater sense of purpose. Never has the need for ambitious action to restore a balance with nature been more urgently needed.

The vision of the UN Convention on Biodiversity is to live in harmony with nature by 2050. Can it be done? I believe so.

Over the coming months, as the lockdown eases, governments around the world will collectively mobilize trillions of dollars to reignite the global economy and support people getting back to work. This offers an unprecedented opportunity for the world to work together to invest in a new, more nature and climate-friendly future. Leaders from the European Union, Costa Rica and China have already signaled their intention to embrace this opportunity in their recovery plans. We must encourage Canada's governments to align with global leaders to do the same.

The time for ambitious action has come.

We at CPAWS, along with our colleagues in the conservation community, are working hard to generate ideas for how Canada can stimulate the economy and support jobs through conservation focused investments. We are also providing recommendations for how Canada can protect 30% of land and ocean by 2030 and deploy nature-based climate solutions across the country. We do this with renewed confidence that we are acting in the interests of Canadians. A poll conducted in early March of this year by our colleagues at the International Boreal Conservation Campaign (IBCC) found that 90% of Canadians support the federal government's pledge to protect 30% of our land and sea by 2030.

As the CPAWS team works remotely across Canada, we are still very much connected and engaged to make sure that the momentum built over the past few years continues to grow, and that by 2021 the full potential of the super-year for nature is realized.

This is an excerpt from an essay written by Alison Woodley, CPAWS' Senior Strategic Advisor. To read this piece in its entirety, visit cpaws.org/blog.

LEAVE A GIFT FOR WILDERNESS PROTECTION

Are you looking for a way to leave a natural legacy for future generations?

Legacy giving is a way of contributing to wilderness protection by giving a live legacy to preserve, for time immemorial, the natural landscapes of our great nation, and ensure the long-term survival of the species that live there.

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
donations@cpaws.org



Northover Ridge in Kananaskis, Alberta. Photo: Karl Lee



KEEPING CANADA IN THE BLUE

How marine protected areas support Canada's ocean economy

BY ALEX BARRON

Like many coastal Canadians one of my favourite ways to relax and recharge over the past few weeks has been heading to the beach and watching the waves. Canada is lucky – it has the longest coastline and one of the largest “ocean territories” in the world, making Canada an ocean superpower... but you probably knew that already, didn't you?

What you might not know is that more than 7 million Canadians live on the coast and Canada's ocean economy contributes more than \$35 billion to the national economy and employs more than 350,000 people.¹ And that's only likely to increase, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development the global “blue economy” will grow to over \$4 trillion (CAD) by 2030.² With such a large coastline and ocean territory, Canada is one of the countries that is most likely to see significant growth in our blue economy.

But what does that mean for the oceans? More oil rigs and cargo ships? Fewer fish and whales?

Not necessarily! Activities like fishing and tourism rely on healthy ocean ecosystems that support abundant marine life. According to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in 2016 Canada's marine tourism and recreation sector employed over 50,000 people and contributed over \$3.5 billion dollars to the economy, Commercial fishing directly employs 26,000 people and contributes \$3 billion dollars.³

By supporting healthy, vibrant, and diverse ecosystems, marine protected areas (MPAs) support thriving tourism operations and produce more fish—which eventually spill outside the MPA where they can be caught. A recent analysis commissioned by the European Union found that the economic benefits of MPAs significantly outweigh the costs.⁴ Over the past few years Canada has established a number of new MPAs and last year committed to continue this work and protect 25% of the ocean by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

But the catch is that to be effective and produce maximum benefits, whether you are counting whales or fish, MPAs need to be strongly protected. Scientists have calculated that protecting 30% of the global ocean in strongly protected MPAs—in which all harmful activities are banned—could produce economic benefits between \$490 billion and \$920 billion.⁵

In the wake of COVID-19, the sustainable blue economy will have a strong role to play in Canada's economic recovery. But to grow our blue economy we need to ensure that our oceans are healthy and well-managed. So, if Canada is going to develop a thriving and sustainable blue economy, one thing is clear: we need to set aside at least 30% of our ocean in highly protected MPAs to reap significant benefits for the economy, for communities, and for our marine life.

Time to get to it, don't you think?

Alex Barron is the National Director Ocean Program

¹Cicin-Sain, B., Vanderzwaag, D., and M. C. Balgos. (Eds). 2015. Routledge Handbook of National and Regional Ocean Policies. Routledge: Abingdon & New York

²OECD. 2016. The Ocean Economy in 2030, OECD Publishing. doi: 10.1787/9789264251724-en

³<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/stats/maritime-eng.htm>

⁴European Union. 2018. Study on the economic benefits of Marine Protected Areas: Literature review analysis. Available at <https://ieep.eu/publications/the-economic-benefits-of-marine-protected-areas-in-europe>

⁵Brander et al. 2015. The benefits to people of expanding Marine Protected Areas: Final report. Insitute for Environmental Studies. Available at <https://www.issuelab.org/resources/25951/25951.pdf>



Kelp forest.

Fiscal (and physical) health

Protected areas boost global economy by the billions BY ANNA PIDGORNA

If you're anything like me, you have a deep appreciation for Canada's iconic nature and its parks and protected areas. Our love of wild spaces isn't surprising, especially considering the benefits they bring to our health and happiness. There is one category of benefits, however, that we rarely attribute to protected areas yet is incredibly important. Beyond our health and happiness, Canada's parks and protected areas provide us with significant **economic benefits** as well.

In January of 2020, political and business leaders from around the world met in Switzerland for the 50th World Economic Forum. At this meeting a new report was released by the Forum which found that \$63 trillion—half of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services. The most dependent industries are those that either directly extract resources from nature or rely on healthy ecosystems for fertile soils, clean air and water, pollinators, and a stable climate.

Protected areas are a proven tool for protecting nature and the cornerstone of good land use and conservation planning. Some of the benefits they generate are tangible and easy to measure, such as profits from tourism, jobs, tax revenues, etc. However, some benefits are intangible, making them difficult to measure and communicate. Intangible benefits include those we derive from having clean air and fresh water, improvements to our physical health and mental well-being, ecosystem services such as soil carbon storage, and many others.

Since it's the easiest to measure, tourism is often regarded as the main economic benefit of protected areas. In fact, a 2015 global study reported that protected areas receive around eight billion visits per year, generating \$850 billion in direct in-country expenditures and \$355 billion in consumer surplus annually. *These are not figures to be discounted.* In Canada, protected areas account for the majority of the country's tourism. For instance, between 2008-2009 total

visitor spending in Canada's parks was over \$4.4 billion, which far outweighs the cost of operating these sites. For every dollar spent on the management and operations of Canada's parks, almost \$6 was contributed to GDP!

Parks also help create jobs. In 2009, Canada's parks added \$4.6 billion dollars to Canada's GDP and directly employed 64,000 full-time positions, which accounted for \$2.9 billion of labour income. Beyond direct employment, the economic benefits of protected areas extend outside their boundaries. For example, in the western United States, national monuments have been shown to help expand local economies as far as 25 kilometers away, producing a 10 % average increase in the number of businesses established and an 8.5 % average increase in jobs.

Setting aside for a moment the benefits to the GDP, let's look at the benefits provided to individuals and the economy. Protected areas help improve our physical health, mental well-being, and child development through time spent in nature. Did you know, anxiety and depression cost the Canadian economy *almost \$50 billion a year*—a toll which could be substantially alleviated through time spent exploring Canada's incredible landscapes.

There is no question, global economists and conservationists agree: the dual catastrophes of climate change and biodiversity loss can no longer be ignored. We must act expeditiously to protect and restore nature or our global economy will suffer the consequences.

** All figures cited are calculated in Canadian dollars.*

Anna Pidgorna is the Senior Conservation Coordinator at CPAWS' National Office in Ottawa.



Double rainbow over Bow Lake in Banff National Park, Alberta. Photo: David Brooke Martin

Nature unites us. As Canadians, it is intrinsic to who we are. We take great pride in the natural beauty bestowed on us – we explore it, we breath it in, we seek it out. And so we protect it. Because, let's be honest, there isn't much that we agree on more strongly than our duty to pass on a healthy natural environment to future generations.

In 2018 the federal government invested \$1.3 billion in nature conservation – the largest investment of its kind in Canada's history! According to the government this "Nature Legacy" funding will help double the amount of nature protected in Canada, help protect and recover species at risk, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. CPAWS was instrumental in securing this funding in the federal budget, and continues to work with all levels of government - federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous - to ensure that nature benefits by the greatest measure possible.

In addition, the Nature Legacy funding included a \$175-million "Challenge Fund" devoted to the creation of new protected areas by provinces, territories and Indigenous communities working together across Canada.

The protection of the Seal River watershed in Manitoba, an initiative led by the Sayisi Dene First Nation; the establishment of Canada's newest National Park Reserve and Indigenous Protected Area Thaidene Nënë in the Northwest Territories, stewarded jointly by the Łutsël K'édene First Nation, Parks Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories; and the creation of 27 new protected areas in Nova Scotia - these are just a few of the incredible projects that have been supported through the Challenge Fund.

For an in-depth look at how Canada's 2018 investment is serving nature, read our report *Government investments bring Canada closer to conservation goals*, cpaws.org/protection-in-progress.

But still more is needed.

The positive impacts for nature conservation and communities are already apparent as Challenge Fund projects roll out across the country. Now that 2020 has arrived, governments and other partners like CPAWS must continue to work together to deliver on the goal of protecting at least 17% of our land and freshwater, while also considering where we go next.

One glimmer of hope for the future is the Government of Canada's recent commitment to protect 25% of Canada's land and ocean by 2025, and 30% by 2030. But a further significant federal investment is crucial to achieving these ambitious and much-needed conservation targets and building on the current success of the Challenge Fund.

Alison Ronson is the Director of Operations at CPAWS' National Office in Ottawa.



Riding in the Chilcoltins, Spruce Lake Protected Area, Pavilion, B.C. Photo: Lachlan Cruickshank

● IN MEMORIAM

A legacy of love

Seumas Riley Doherty (June 18, 1986 - July 7, 2019)

Seumas loved to explore British Columbia's coastline and forests; he was filled with a desire to go where few had been. He camped in all sorts of conditions, confident that his woodslore would get him through. He would often embark on solo wilderness adventures, by foot, canoe or bike, where he would dance on the beaches and play his wooden Japanese flute to mingle with the sounds of the sea. More than just being in nature, Seumas became part of it and wanted to share it with everyone. He was especially passionate about preserving B.C.'s old growth forests and coastline to ensure that future generations would be able

to appreciate the trees and islands for all their wonders.

Seumas was taken from us suddenly on July 7, 2019 while doing what he loved - exploring the wilderness near Tofino, B.C. We were so lucky to have had the chance to have him in our lives, though not for long enough. He was a rare bird, and an inspiration to do the things in life that are beautiful.

To honour Seumas' memory and the legacy of his profound love for nature, the Doherty family has made a generous contribution to enable us to protect the B.C. wild that Seumas held so dear.



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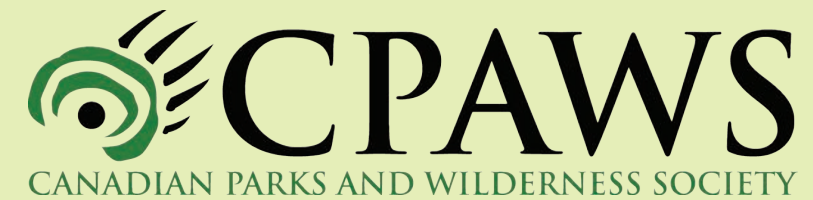
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2020 AGM Notice

The CPAWS Annual General Meeting will be held via conference call at 8:00 PM (ET) on September 28th, 2020. For more information, please contact us at info@cpaws.org or 1-800-333-9453.



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UPF 50



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Photo: Elora Braden



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