

crowsnest

conservation society

*Valuing and
connecting people and
nature for a healthy
future in the
Crowsnest Pass
and beyond.*

A Monthly eNewsletter

Issue No 48 - Dec 2011

Upcoming Events Calendar at a Glance

- Christmas Bird Count - Crowsnest Pass - December 27th
- Oldman Watershed Council - Holding the Reins - February 7th
- May Species Count - May 26 and 27

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SOCIETY

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AGM REPORT: Watershed protection focus at the Crowsnest Conservation Annual General Meeting

Crowsnest Conservation held its 2011 Annual General Meeting on November 23. Special guest speaker, Heather Leschied, Wildsight's Water Stewardship Program Manager, spoke about the Streamkeepers Program.

The program is a citizen-science based initiative that focuses on monitoring watersheds. Beginning in British Columbia, the program started with the monitoring of a small stream near the coast. Through consistent monitoring, local citizens noted a changing pH level and with further investigation, discovered a cement plant was dumping refuse into the waterway. The Streamkeepers Program was significant in protecting that watershed and has spread to a number of other communities across British Columbia.

Currently, Streamkeepers Program leaders are developing the program in other ecosystems across the country. Crowsnest Conservation members expressed a keen interest in starting a watershed group in Crowsnest Pass and following the citizen-science program as a standard.

Later in the year, the board will investigate hosting Leschied to teach the Streamkeepers Program principals to begin a watershed monitoring project on the Crowsnest River. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Crowsnest Conservation office.

Other presentations at the AGM included:

Kim Lutz, Agricultural Fieldman with the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass on the Maintaining and Restoring Crowsnest River Riparian Areas Program, and

Jim Rennie, CCS Board Member, on the Alberta Conservation Association Boreal Toad Monitoring Program.

Look for their reports, along with the President's Report and the Connecting to Nature Report on the following pages.

AGM REPORT: Crowsnest Conservation's President's Report - from the Annual General Meeting

FROM Judy Cooke, Board President

It's difficult to believe that another year has passed by!! For the Crowsnest Conservation Society, 2011 has been a rewarding year as we continued several ongoing programs, completed others and initiated exciting new projects and partnerships. In January, the board endorsed the original Mission and Vision statements and updated the Strategic Plan to guide our activities throughout the year.

Over the past year, CCS has participated in the following activities:

1. Classroom with Outdoors - delivered to all students at Isabelle Sellon School in collaboration with Wildsight with funding support from the casino funds.
2. "Highway 3: Transportation Mitigation for Wildlife and Connectivity" - Report results were presented at a public meeting in collaboration with Miistakis Institute, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) and Dale Payton with funding support from Y2Y. Communication with Alberta Transportation continues in order to implement some of the recommended mitigation measures.
3. BearSmart Committee - Elizabeth Anderson has been contracted to lead this program.
4. Maintaining and Restoring Crowsnest River Riparian Areas - joint project with the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass with funding support from Alberta Conservation Association.
5. Boreal Toad Survey - volunteer project in collaboration with Alberta Conservation Association.
6. Connecting to Nature Events - year-round outings and nature education activities.
7. Watershed Committee - new initiative to respond to interest and concern for water issues. This committee is looking for input and volunteers from the membership.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of our members and board members on behalf of CCS. The board members actively participate in a wide variety of committees including South West Alberta Trails (SWAT), Castle Special Place, Devon and Spray Lake Sawmills Public Advisory Committees, Doors Open as well as monitoring the Subdivision and Development Authority meetings. The Earth Day Cleanup and weed pull events would not be possible without the support of our members.

I would like to express our appreciation to our funders and supporters including: Alberta Ecotrust, Devon Canada, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, Government of Alberta, Alberta Conservation Association, Tides Canada/Small Change Fund and private donors.

I would also like to acknowledge our conservation partners including: Y2Y, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Miistakis Institute, Road Watch in the Pass, Western Transportation Institute, Wildsight, Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Wilderness

Association, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Trout Unlimited, Sierra Club, Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition, Livingstone Landowners Group, Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation and Oldman Watershed Council.

During the past year, Crowsnest Conservation Society has continued to provide strong environmental leadership in our community. Our ongoing challenge is to be realistic and honest with ourselves. As a small volunteer organization, it is important that we focus on the most relevant issues while at the same time remembering to enjoy the spectacular environment that we live in. Please join us - we welcome your participation in all of our activities.

Crowsnest Conservation's Strategic Plan

If you haven't had a chance to review Crowsnest Conservation's Program Goals recently, here is a summary of our Strategic Plan.

Program Goal #1: Conservation of the Natural Environment

Objective 1: To promote integration of wildlife connectivity measures in the operation and future development of the Highway 3 corridor

Objective 2: To support development that is economically and ecologically sustainable in the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

Objective 3: To be a local voice for water conservation and stewardship

Objective 4: To support integration of ecologically sensitive practices in decisions on use of public lands in and adjacent to Crowsnest Pass

Program Goal #2: Promotion of Environmental Values in the Community

Objective 1: To promote awareness and enjoyment of the unique natural heritage of the Crowsnest Pass among residents and visitors

Crowsnest Conservation Board for 2012

Crowsnest Conservation thanks our outgoing board member Denise Coccioni-Amatto for her work on the board and also for her continuing contributions as a member of the birding committee.

We are pleased to introduce the elected officers for the upcoming year:

President:	Judy Cooke
Vice-President:	Merilyn Liddell
Treasurer:	Bill Paton
Secretary:	Merilyn Liddell
Directors:	Jim Rennie Rick Cooke John Kinnear Karen Rendall Gwen Tietz Glen Cumming

AGM REPORT: Maintaining and Restoring Crowsnest River Riparian Areas

FROM Kim Lutz, Agricultural Fieldman with the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass

With funding from Alberta Conservation Association (ACA), Crowsnest Conservation Society (CCS) and the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass worked in partnership in the summer and fall of 2011 to restore riparian areas in our community.

Weed infestations along Crowsnest River have multiple consequences for native riparian habitat and increase riverbank erosion. This riverbank erosion increases sedimentation in the river, which compromises the natural integrity of the river, modifies stream flows and disrupts long-standing trout spawning areas.

This was the first year of what we hope will be a long-term program to identify weed species, remove noxious weeds from riverbanks, transplant native shrubs and seed native grasses. Three Riparian Restoration Technicians Mike Gust, Nicole Stevenson and Samantha Dunbar - were hired to work on this project. Native shrubs and grasses were purchased locally.

Volunteers also played an important role in this project, coming out for weed pull events and a willow staking workshop.

AGM REPORT: Birding Committee Events Overview - Oct 2010 to Oct 2011

FROM Merilyn Liddell, Birding Committee Chair

Summary of special events:

October 23, 2010	Migratory Water Fowl Excursion - Beaver Mines and Beauvais Lakes
December 18	Waterton Christmas Bird Count
December 30	Crowsnest Pass Christmas Bird Count
January 26, 2011	Member Meeting: Christopher Smith presented <i>Marine Birding Mecca (up north): Pelagic St. Paul</i>
February 1	Birding Excursion - Burmis area
February 11	Birding with Peter Sherrington - Beaver Mines
March 19	Workshop with Drew Rendall: "Why birds sing, dogs bark and gorillas beat their chests: Some lessons in animal behaviour and communication."
April 9	Workshop with Amit Saxena of Devon: Bear Education
May 18	Member Meeting: Photography of Raymond Toal
May 28-29	Crowsnest Pass May Species Count

June 28	Birding Excursion - Police Lake
July 30	Birding walk for Doors Open Heritage Festival
July 31	Landscape Photography Excursion for Doors Open Heritage Festival
October 14	Birding Excursion and Hike to Piistaistakis Eagle Observation Site
October 20	Birding Excursion to Chapel Rock Road

Looking forward to more Connecting to Nature Events? Don't forget about the Crowsnest Pass Christmas Bird Count planned for December 27th. Stay tuned for more information about workshops and member meetings in the winter months and a bird count during the last weekend in May 2012.

Naturalist Chris Fisher will be a speaker at an event in early May. We are also planning outings to prime birding locations throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

These events are organized to provide opportunities for enjoyment and education for participants. Bird counts are also activities in citizen science. Records are kept of the number of species and individuals observed in the same location at the same time each year. Our data is shared with the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, who keep records of bird counts throughout the province. The information provides an indication of the health of the bird population and of the local environment.

Funding for many of the events comes from casino funds raised by CCS volunteers. CCS thanks the following volunteers who make a valuable contribution to the success of our special events:

Members of the birding committee: Denise Coccioloni-Amatto, Dawn Hall, Christopher Smith - who also guide many of our birding excursions

Members Dave and Eva Welsh, Pat Lucas, Raymond Toal and Shirley Enzsol

We also thank local businesses that display our posters, and Isabelle Sellon School for allowing us to use one of their classrooms to host some of our educational activities.

AGM REPORT: Boreal Toad Survey

FROM Jim Rennie, Local Project Coordinator

Originally published in the October 2011 eNewsletter

In late July and early August, a few Crowsnest Conservation Society volunteers carried out an amphibian survey in the Crowsnest and Castle areas. This was a pilot study in partnership with the Alberta Conservation Association.

The objective was to find and document breeding sites with populations of amphibian tadpoles. While boreal toads were the target species, we also found breeding areas with Columbia spotted frog tadpoles and salamanders.

Crowsnest Conservation also had a "fun" day with the Crowsnest Pass Boys and Girls Club. Participants were able to see the various stages of boreal toad tadpoles emerging into toads, and a number of other species were observed.

AGM REPORT: BearSmart

FROM Elizabeth Anderson, Contract Program Coordinator

Summary of this past year's BearSmart Program.

BearSmart Program Funding

- Government of Alberta
- Municipality of Crowsnest Pass
- Devon Canada
- In-kind support: Fish and Wildlife, BearSmart Committee, Isabelle Sellon School Grade 5 Students, Community Volunteers

BearSmart Committee Update

- Five new members were recruited to the BearSmart Committee. There are currently thirteen individuals on the Committee.

Program Summary

Apple Roundup - Collection of apples from key locations with historic bear problems.

- 300 lbs of apples picked from four households and distributed to community members or used for livestock feeding.

Apple Tree Swap - Free exchange of apple trees with non-fruit bearing trees.

- Three apple trees swapped this fall, one planned for the spring.

Apple Network - Community apple exchange and volunteer apple picking program.

- 11 households participated in the program. **Bear Briefs** - Weekly submissions to local newspapers during peak bear season.
- 12 articles submitted from August to October.

Being BearSmart in Crowsnest Pass - Information card detailing BearSmart practices and local BearSmart program initiatives.

- 1500 cards stuffed in mailboxes or distributed when door-knocking.

BearSmart 101 - Free bear education night at Frank Slide Interpretive Centre.

- 50 participants enjoyed practical tips on the trail, hands-on bear spray training, and updates on both industrial and local BearSmart efforts.

Hot Spot Bear Monitoring Program - Volunteer bear tracking program monitoring low habituated bears on the edge of the community and assisting Fish and Wildlife's Karelian Bear Dog Aversion Program.

- Two black bears monitored this fall.
- BearSmart Committee Members volunteered 250 hrs and travelled 2,745 km.

UnBearAble Bins - Distribution of UnBearAble BearSmart Garbage Bins to residents that require a secure location to store waste.

- 20 bins currently in use throughout the community.
- Six UnBearAble bins ordered for residents who wished to purchase a bin.



Highway 3/Public Safety/ Wildlife Mortality - a call for action

Following is a copy of a letter written by David McIntyre

Attn: MLAs/Cabinet Ministers Evan Berger, Frank Oberle and Ray Danyluk

Subject: Highway 3/public safety/wildlife mortality—a call for action

Evan, I extend sincere thanks to you, and to everyone involved, for the Government of Alberta's (GoA) recent efforts to address human safety issues resulting from extreme winds on the southern end of Highway 22. The GoA's responsiveness to this public safety need is greatly appreciated.

Amid the government's ongoing attempts to deliver essential transportation requirements and enhanced public safety, I wish to draw your attention to another highway problem—even bloodier—that exists in close proximity to the dangerous, semi-flipping winds on Highway 22.

Highway 22's southern terminus connects it with Highway 3, a transportation corridor that—from the community of Lundbreck to the AB/BC border—has the dubious distinction of being one of this province's most deadly highways for large mammals, perhaps the deadliest. This relatively short segment of road, with no cross-highway corridors in place for wildlife, is a cold-blooded killer. It's also extremely dangerous for the motoring public.

The large mammal mortality on this short segment of road is approximately 200 animals/year. But, regardless of what the formal body count is, the full mortality is, of course, somewhat greater. (Many animals hit on the highway die out of view of the highway and aren't counted.) Also, the impact of this staggering wildlife loss extends beyond dead animals. It includes millions of dollars in vehicular damage, human injury, even death.

The described problem is chronic. It needs to be addressed.

Within the Highway 3 Road Watch Program, the Rock Creek corridor is known to be its most bloodthirsty stretch. Here, a wildlife-rich landscape is traversed by a lethal ribbon of concrete.

The Rock Creek valley extends southeastward from the eastern flanks of the Livingstone Range to the Crowsnest River (in close proximity to Lundbreck Falls). Within this corridor, a stunning assemblage of Rocky Mountain fauna—including mountain goats and bighorn sheep in the uppermost headwaters, and elk, moose and grizzly bears in the lower Rock Creek valley—move seasonally and year-round within the diverse habitat. A significant number of these animals subsequently die on Highway 3. I've observed that the mortality includes such unexpected species as bald and golden eagles, birds that are attracted to road-killed carcasses, predominately deer, elk and moose, but occasionally rare-on-this-same-landscape animals such as the western painted turtle. Here, along the thin thread of land that showcases the breathtaking Crown of the Continent landscape and the striking world-class viewscapes that characterize the Eastern Slopes of the Canadian Rockies, extremely rare species such as the river otter, fisher and wolverine are also threatened by Highway 3's lethal, unbroken ribbon of concrete.

My request is simple: I wish to see the GoA create strategic, state-of-the-art, cross-highway corridors for wildlife, and I suggest that there may be no better place in Alberta to do this than Highway 3, and on Highway 3, within the Rock Creek valley. This valley connects viable, species-rich habitat on the flanks of the Livingstone Range with similarly rich habitat found along the lower Crowsnest River and the nearby Castle River—the two river valleys are *extremely* close at this point, and they're essentially connected via a high quality, aesthetically striking mosaic of wildlife-rich landscape.

Cross-highway wildlife crossings are a cost-effective tool the GoA can use to create safer highways. It's only prudent to make these crossings part of Highway 3's upgrade planning. Further, trans-highway wildlife crossings would give Alberta the opportunity to score a big win in the world's court of public opinion, both socially and ecologically.

I live in the "middle" Rock Creek valley, where cougars, wolves and bears (both species) are seen rather regularly, and where most of these same animals are more typically known by nothing more than their passing tracks.

I don't regularly drive the segment of Highway 3 that passes over Rock Creek near its confluence with the Crowsnest River, but I did drive it one day this spring and, on that day, reported (to Road Watch) seeing a black bear and a cow moose with two calves. Earlier this month, I again drove the same route. On that day, and after passing numerous deer and an elk herd on the North Burmis Rd., I reported the following—you might look at it as both a snapshot-in-time and a statement of need—to Crowsnest Pass Road Watch:

On Monday, Nov. 14th, I drove to Pincher Creek from my home on the North Burmis Rd., traversing Highway 3 from "greater Burmis" to Pincher Creek.

As I, on Highway 3, passed Rock Creek at approximately 7:50AM, a herd of roughly 10 mule deer was feeding on the north side of the highway, and in extremely close proximity to it. I, eastbound, passed three more groups—somewhat smaller—of roadside mule deer between Rock Creek and the bridge over the Crowsnest River, and as I drove up the hill toward Lundbreck I observed a dead white-tailed buck. The latter, an obvious roadkill, was on the south side of the road, and a large dog was feeding on the dead deer.

The dog (or something else, but presumably that dog, or others) had removed much of the hide from the deer and, as a result, the carcass, with the stretched-out hide lying next to it, which I got only a glance at due to traffic, looked big, bizarre and rather otherworldly. I didn't get a chance to see it for what it was until day's end, when I drove back home from a Pincher Creek meeting.

On the drive home (at about 4:30PM), a herd of approximately 10 mule deer was within the easternmost of the little coulees on the north side of the road, and an estimated 500m east of Lundbreck. Two other herds of mule deer were spotted on the north side of Highway 3 within your study area. One was immediately west of the Crowsnest River bridge, the other along the ridge that's immediately east of the point where Rock Creek goes under Highway 3.

The preceding snapshots of Highway 3 noted, I reiterate my request that trans-Highway 3 wildlife corridors be made an integral part of Alberta Transportation's highway upgrade planning.

Sincerely,

David

Get involved to protect wildlife

FROM Rob Schaufele, RW Local Project Coordinator and Loretta Schaufele, RW Volunteer

We are looking for your help to increase human and wildlife safety along Highway #3 in the Crowsnest Pass area. Many of you have expressed your concerns regarding the high number of wildlife vehicle collisions on Highway # 3. Road Watch is asking you to write a letter/e-mail to government representatives reminding them of our community's concern regarding this safety issue:

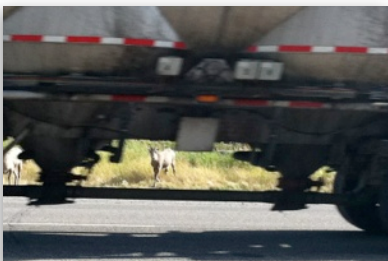
Evan Berger, MLA- Livingston Macleod:
livingstone.macleod@assembly.ab.ca
 Ray Danyluk, Minister of Transportation:
Transportation.Minister@gov.ab.ca

Writing a letter to the Alberta Government could lead to safety measures being implemented, mitigating wildlife vehicle collisions. Let us work together to make our highways safer for travellers and wildlife!

Here are some points you may want to consider:

- ✓ Through the analysis of Road Watch in the Pass data and other datasets, we know where the wildlife vehicle collision hot spots are located along Hwy 3.
- ✓ We also know that transportation mitigation (for example underpasses and fencing) is an effective way to reduce wildlife vehicle collisions and improve wildlife and human safety.
- ✓ We know that at many of the sites in the Crowsnest Pass, it is cost effective to society to mitigate for human and wildlife safety. This is because the costs of the annual collisions are costing us more than it costs to build the mitigation infrastructure.

For more detailed information, see reports page at www.rockies.ca/crossroads



Research shows that some of the critical hot spots are Rock Creek (highest wildlife collision rates), Leitch Collieries, and Crowsnest Lakes (to reduce bighorn sheep collisions). There are other locations of concern as well. Many of you have told us about being involved in collisions with

wildlife or having "close calls" along Hwy # 3. Thus, we need the communities of Pincher Creek and Crowsnest Pass to weigh in on this important issue. Let the Alberta Government know it is time for transportation mitigation to address wildlife connectivity and collisions along Highway # 3.

- ✓ Please cc your letter to Rob Schaufele because we would like to keep track of everyone's efforts. Rob.roadwatch@shaw.ca
- ✓ Follow us, like us, share us on the new Road Watch in the Pass Facebook at:
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Road-Watch-in-the-Pass/280539758652705?ref=tn_tnmn

Thank you so much!

Crowsnest Conservation Society urges members and supporters to keep informed about Highway 3 issues and express your concerns to those responsible for keeping Alberta citizens and wildlife safe.

Update from Road Watch in the Pass

FROM Rob Schaufele, RW Local Coordinator and Loretta Schaufele, RW Volunteer

Road Watch is excited to announce that we have launched a brand new RW Facebook Page. Check us out at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Road-Watch-in-the-Pass/280539758652705#!/pages/Road-Watch-in-the-Pass/280539758652705>

Our overall focus is to encourage people to continue to submit their Hwy # 3 wildlife sightings on the mapping tool and to attract new participants. Volunteer sighting submissions are critical for the project to continue to gather new data. We need new data to stay current and relevant to decisions makers as various highway area developments progress along the highway. In addition, we are striving to create a virtual meeting place for people to learn about highway wildlife interactions, to share their observations, and to discuss their concerns and experiences.

Wildlife mortality along railway tracks (animals crossing and/or feeding on spilled grain),

continues to be a concern along highway # 3. The mapping tool has the ability to capture this information, so please enter your sightings of alive, injured, blood splatters, or dead wildlife on or beside the tracks.



This mule deer was spotted by observing Crows congregating around a section of railway tracks in Frank, about 4 weeks ago. Bear feeding activity increases during the fall; therefore, this sighting was a concern in terms of a possible human / bear conflict. Because animal carcasses are known bear attractants, these carcasses increase the likelihood of human and bear encounters.

For more information on this topic, you can find Crowsnest Pass Bear Smart and Alberta Bear Smart information at:

- <http://www.crowsnestconservation.ca/>
- <http://www.crowsnestconservation.ca/programs.php?prgm=bears>
- <http://www.srd.alberta.ca/RecreationPublicUse/AlbertaBearSmart/Default.aspx>

Due to budget constraints, the Miistakis Institute is no longer financially supporting Road Watch so we have had to adjust our operations, such as disconnecting the Road Watch call in Hot Line. However, you can still contact Rob Schaufele, the RW Local Coordinator at: Rob.roadwatch@shaw.ca and Miistakis will provide in-kind support where needed, such as making cool maps or contributing to face book.

Road Watch looks forward to connecting with you on our new Facebook page!

Land Use Framework

The Government of Alberta is looking for your feedback and Crowsnest Conservation is asking members to get involved in land use planning.

The South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council has provided their advice on the South Saskatchewan Land Use Framework Plan. Now is the time to review their advice and fill out the Workbook to share your views on the Regional Advisory Council's advice.



Deadline for online submission is April 30th, 2012.

To review the plan and express your voice on the direction of Land Use Planning for our region, visit <https://landuse.alberta.ca/RegionalPlans/SouthSaskatchewanRegion/PlanningProcess/Phase2Consultation/Pages/default.aspx>.

Stay tuned for more information on future public sessions.

Oldman Watershed Council 2012 Photo Calendar

The Oldman Watershed Council has recently launched their 2012 calendar. The calendar highlights stunning images of local sites provided by people across our watershed. (Recognize the front image?)



To order a copy, contact info@oldmanbasin.org with the following information:

- Name, address, postal code, phone number
- Number of calendars you wish to purchase
- Indicate whether you want to pick up the calendars at the OWC office or have them mailed to you. (additional shipping costs)

Cost: \$15 for one calendar, \$10 each for two or more

To preview the calendar, visit the OWC website at www.oldmanbasin.org

Our Water is Not For Sale

At a recent across Alberta conference tour with Jeremy Schmidt from the University of Western Alberta, Dr Schmidt discussed Alternative Water Futures: The Need for Non-Market Solutions to Alberta's water crisis. To read his report, visit http://parklandinstitute.ca/media/comments/new_report_says_markets_are_a_poor_solution_to_albertas_water_woes/.

Keep checking the Our Water Is Not For Sale site at <http://ourwaterisnotforsale.com/> to listen to the presentation.

Golden Eagle Research Fall Migration Count Results Are In

FINAL MOUNT LORETTE COUNT, FALL 2011 (September 20 to November 15)

The percentage variance from the average of 12 counts between 1993 and 2010 is given in parentheses. Excluded are the count at Plateau Mountain in 1997, an incomplete count in 2002, and the anomalously low (and also shorter) comparison counts conducted between 2006 and 2009.

DAYS 55 (-0.75)

HOURS 590.77 (+4.93)

- TURKEY VULTURE (TUVU) 0 (-100)
- OSPREY (OSPR) 3 (+16.13)
- BALD EAGLE (BAEA) 137 (-53.4)
- NORTHERN HARRIER (NOHA) 2 (-82.9)
- SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (SSHA) 113 (-24.7)
- COOPER'S HAWK (COHA) 33 (+32.89)
- NORTHERN GOSHAWK (NOGO) 42 (-17.5)
- Unidentified Accipiter (UA) 3
- BROAD-WINGED HAWK (BWHA) 0 (-100)
- SWAINSON'S HAWK (SWHA) 0 (-100)
- RED-TAILED HAWK (RTHA) 28 (-22.8)
- FERRUGINOUS HAWK (FEHA) 0 (-100)
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK (RLHA) 41 (-29.8)
- Unidentified Buteo (UB) 2
- GOLDEN EAGLE (GOEA) 3466 (-7.32)
- Unidentified eagle (UE) 2
- AMERICAN KESTREL (AMKE) 2 (-33.3)
- MERLIN (MERL) 6 (-20)
- GYRFALCON (GYRF) 2 (-41.5)
- PEREGRINE FALCON (PEFA) 10 (+110.5)
- PRAIRIE FALCON (PRFA) 2 (0)
- Unidentified Falco (UF) 3
- Unidentified raptor (UU) 2

TOTAL 3899 (-11.69)

To learn more about the golden eagle migration and the work of the Rocky Mountain Eagle Research Foundation, visit www.eaglewatch.ca.

Define: Riparian Lands

The Management Project team has developed a draft definition of the term "Riparian Lands" - see http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1103565212340-298/Riparian+Definition+%28Draft%29_V31.pdf. The purpose of this exercise is to have a common definition that can be used across the sectors to clearly identify and gain agreement on what comprises riparian lands. The project team is seeking your feedback.



Please provide your feedback focusing on clarity, readability, and applicability of the proposed definition within your sector. Please send your feedback to Judy Stewart at stewart.jmm@gmail.com.

VIDEO TO SHARE

A World to Conserve: The IPP Issue

A ski/snowboard descent of Mt. Foreves, canoe powered ski touring in the Monashees and some couloir bootpacking in the Selkirks. All in the name of raising awareness of privatization of British Columbia's creeks and rivers. Get out and enjoy the wilderness, maybe you too will feel inspired to say no to IPPs.



View the film at <http://biglines.com/video/world-protect-ipp-issue>.

Government of Canada Release

National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy has released a report titled "Charting a Course: Sustainable Water Use by Canada's Natural Resource Sectors".

The report highlights the need for a stable provincial funding for collaborative water governance initiatives and involvement of a broad range of stakeholders. To read the full report, please go to <http://nrtee-trnee.ca/charting-a-course-sustainable-water-use-by-canadas-natural-resource-sectors>.

Canada's Bird Contest



The Canadian Raptor Conservancy became aware that Canada does not have a national bird and is asking all Canadians to have their say in requesting the government to name a national bird representative.

Visit <http://www.canadianraptorconservancy.com/index.php?page=official-bird-of-canada> to vote!

National Invasive Species Forum

A multi-party planning group has been formed to organize a National Invasive Species Forum in Ottawa on February 28, 29, and March 1, 2012. The forum will run for two days with an optional post-forum workshop.

The purpose of the forum is to share knowledge and information of invasive species management in Canada across invasive species managers from all levels of government, organizations and others with a three-part focus on prevention, early response and collaboration. The aim is also to increase awareness of national initiatives, spotlight provincial or regional successes and identify actions to improve collaboration on key issues.

The target audience includes federal government, provincial/territorial governments, Aboriginals, non-government organizations, and others interested in invasive species management in Canada. This forum is open to you and your contacts.

For more information contact Jodi Romyn at jromyn@invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca.

Open Pipe Post Tragedies

Millions of birds and other wildlife are killed in innocent-looking death traps worldwide. This problem has been recently highlighted by discoveries of dead birds and other wildlife in PVC mining claim markers across the western United States. At least 45 species of birds have been identified along with several other vertebrate species.

Birds get trapped in all seasons investigating pipes for curiosity, food and/or nesting. This problem is nearly invisible. Solving this problem is as easy as capping the post.



Some stats:

- Mortality study by Nevada Dept. of Wildlife 1986-2007 reported by Lahontan Audubon Society, found 1500 dead birds in 8700 pipes.
- Santa Monica Bay Audubon member – Keith Axelson 2007-2008 found 38 bird carcasses entombed in 18 pipes in Kern County, California.
- Nevada State Department of Wildlife biologist, Christy Klinger, removed 195 markers containing 740 dead birds, including 31 in one pipe.
- Audubon Kern River Preserve staff removed a single agricultural vent pipe on neighboring land containing 231 bird skulls.

To learn more visit http://kern.audubon.org/Audubon_Kern_River_Preserve_death_pipes.pdf

Endangered Woodland Caribou Win Critical Habitat

FROM Defenders of Wildlife

USFWS protects more than 375,000 acres in Idaho and Washington for at-risk species

PRIEST LAKE, Idaho (November 29, 2011) – Endangered woodland caribou will be protected across 375,562 acres in the Selkirk Mountains of northern Idaho and northeastern Washington, thanks to a critical habitat designation handed down today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The long-awaited decision is the result of action taken by Defenders of Wildlife, Lands Council, Selkirk Conservation Alliance and Center for Biological Diversity.

"Christmas has come early for America's only reindeer relative," said Mike Leahy, Rocky Mountain director for Defenders of Wildlife. "Critical habitat is an essential tool for recovering endangered species like the woodland caribou, and they deserve our best efforts.

To protect endangered animals, we must protect the places they live."

The woodland caribou is perhaps the most endangered species in the continental United States. The southern Selkirk herd of the caribou, which is the only one to occur in the lower 48 states, consists of about 45 animals. The southern Selkirk herd belongs to a unique mountain dwelling form of caribou known as the "mountain ecotype" that, unlike other woodland caribou, do not form large herds or make large migrations. Instead, these caribou migrate between low and high elevation forests.

"The woodland caribou of the Selkirk Mountains are highly endangered and need this habitat protection to survive," said Tim Laysen, a wildlife biologist with the Selkirk Conservation Alliance. "Protecting the caribou means protecting the old-growth forests and wild places of the Selkirks, which are cherished by many."

Thousands of woodland caribou once roamed the northern United States but were eliminated from all of their habitats except the Selkirk Mountains by a combination of logging of their old-growth forest habitats, hunting and poaching, and roads. They continue to be threatened in their last habitat in the U.S. by disturbance from snow mobiles and other winter recreation.

"With today's designation of critical habitat, the woodland caribou has a shot at survival," said Noah Greenwald, endangered species director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "Woodland caribou are one of the many hidden treasures of the Idaho Panhandle and are definitely worth saving."



Background:

The conservation groups petitioned for critical habitat in 2002 and sued for the designation in 2009. In 2005, the conservation groups challenged grooming of snow mobile trails into caribou habitat on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest and obtained an injunction on

snow mobile travel and trail grooming in a small portion of the forest that is essential for the caribou. Much of that habitat has now been designated as critical habitat, ensuring these protections will be maintained.

Read more about the lawsuit that triggered the critical habitat designation. <http://www.defenders.org/programs_and_policy/in_the_courts/legal_docket/woodland_caribou_critical_habitat.php>

Read the USFWS' proposed critical habitat designation. <http://www.defenders.org/resources/publications/programs_and_policy/in_the_courts/proposed_critical_habitat_designation.pdf>

Contacts:

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Upcoming Events

Your guide to conservation events and opportunities in and around Crowsnest Pass.

2011 Crowsnest Pass Christmas Bird Count December 27



Join Crowsnest Conservation for the 2011 Christmas Bird Count. Everyone is welcome!

Potluck to follow.

Date: December 25th, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Meet: At Crowsnest Conservation Office at 12707-20th Avenue at 7:45 a.m.

Bring: We recommend bringing ice grips for boots, a walking stick, a hat with a brim, snacks, thermos with a hot drink, binoculars, and a camera.

Contact: For more information contact birds@crownsnestconservation.ca or 403-563-7545.

Oldman Watershed Council - Holding the Reins in Fort Macleod - 6th Annual Event February 7



At this annual event, watershed stewardship groups and land use groups give updates and their projects and landowners also share their expertise, experiences and stories.

Mark it on your calendar.

Registration will open in January. Stay tuned for more details.

Date: Tuesday, February 7

Location: Fort Macleod Community Hall

Information: Visit www.oldmanbasin.org.

Crowsnest Pass May Species Bird Count May 26 and 27



Join Crowsnest Conservation for our annual spring bird count. Join volunteers as we explore many incredible spots around Crowsnest Pass and note the wide array of birds that migrate through and reside here.

More details to follow as the event nears.

Date: May 26 and 27

Information: Visit www.crownsnestconservation.ca.

Conservation News

Stay up-to-date with conservation news from across the world.

AltaLink

AUC rejects AltaLink proposal

Lethbridge Herald - Members of the Livingstone Landowners Group are celebrating after the Alberta Utilities Commission turned down a proposal by AltaLink and the Alberta Electric System Operator to build a transmission line in their backyard. To read more, visit <http://www.lethbridgeherald.com/front-page-news/auc-rejects-altalink-proposal-12311.html>.

Bears

Yellowstone grizzlies need federal protection, appeals court says

Missoulian - A three-judge appeals court panel has ruled that grizzly bears need Endangered Species Act protection until the federal government explains how the bears in the Yellowstone region will survive the loss of whitebark pine seeds from their food supply. To read more, visit http://missoulian.com/news/state-and-regional/yellowstone-grizzlies-need-federal-protection-appeals-court-says/article_fb62b03a-1546-11e1-8089-001cc4c002e0.html.

People in bear country adapt to growing numbers

trib.com - Green eyes bobbed in the night, reflected by beams from a headlamp. Cody hunter Dan White stared across a creek to years ago and knew a grizzly bear waited in the woods. Wet tracks led from the stream to his camp before they turned away. To read more, visit http://trib.com/lifestyles/home-and-garden/people-in-bear-country-adapt-to-growing-numbers/article_f1ad9cb6-532d-576f-a700-f7492bf3dce9.html.

Relocated grizzlies raise concerns for residents

Flathead Beacon - A rash of grizzly bear incidents in Northwest Montana has led to one of the busiest years involving captures and relocations, according to Fish, Wildlife and Parks. To read more, visit http://www.flatheadbeacon.com/articles/article/relocated_grizzlies_raise_concerns_for_residents/25498/.

Water

Watershed plan aims to balance use, protection

The Western Producer - Those wearing farmer hats want access to irrigation water. Those wearing environmental hats want protection of wildlife and limits to logging. Those in recreational hats want access for off-road vehicles. Those in rural council hats want abundance, clean water for homes. And sometimes people wear man hats. To read more, visit <http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1103565212340-303/Western+Producer+Dec.+8,+2011.pdf>.

Water scarcity a worry

Lethbridge Herald - In some parts of the U.S., says Jeremy Schmidt, citizens can sue their government if it's not safeguarding their water supply for the public good. To read more, visit <http://www.lethbridgeherald.com/front-page-news/water-scarcity-a-worry-12611.html#.Tt5PONks4x4.facebook>.

Flathead Basin

British Columbia OKs law protecting Flathead Basin

Missoulian - Canadian legislation to protect the Flathead River Basin from mining and energy development has formally passed the British Columbia Parliament. To read more, visit http://missoulian.com/news/local/british-columbia-oks-law-protecting-flathead-basin/article_9849453e-1098-11e1-8a04-001cc4c03286.html.

Parks Canada and Land Use Planning

Conservationists question Norquay summer use

Rocky Mountain Outlook - Conservationists are baffled as to why Parks Canada would consider summer use at Banff's Mount Norquay given previous court cases handed the federal government the mandate to say no. To read more, visit <http://www.rmoutlook.com/article/20111117/RMO0801/311179976/-1/rmo08/conservationists-question-norquay-summer-use>.

Controversial design wins architectural award

The fitzhugh - The proposed Glacier Discovery Walk, although unpopular with many Jasperites, won an international architecture award last week. To read more, visit <http://www.fitzhugh.ca/newsflash/5489-controversial-design-wins-architectural-award>.

Forestry

A sustainable future for Alberta's forests

The Nanton News - Over the past few years, groups in communities as far apart as the Ghost, Bragg Creek, Crowsnest Pass and Beaver Mines have made the news with their opposition to plans for industrial clearcut logging in their local forests. But increasingly there has been recognition that what is needed is not a halt to forestry operations in our southwest forests; instead we need a new vision of what forest management should look like in the 21st century. To read more, visit <http://www.nantonnews.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3384759>.

Wolverines

Have you seen Canada's most elusive creature?

Globe and Mail - Last week, Nikki Heim trudged through early-season snow in Banff National Park, collecting memory cards from cameras monitoring the 41 experimental underpasses and overpasses traversing the Trans-Canada Highway - the largest complex of wildlife-crossing structures in the world. To read more, visit <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/travel/news-and-trends/bruce-kirkby/have-you-seen-canadas-most-elusive-creature/article2266069/singlepage/>.

Become a Lifetime Member



Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Community: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership (select one)

Individual (\$20)

Family/Joint (\$25)

Group/Business (\$50)

I also enclose a charitable donation of \$_____. (Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more)

What conservation issues are you concerned about in the Crowsnest Pass?

If you have extra time, how would you like to become involved in the work of Crowsnest Conservation Society?

- Volunteer for events and community projects
- Volunteer in the office
- Work on project development
- Become a member of the Birding or BearSmart Committee
- Become a member of the Board of Directors
- Other: _____

Date: _____ **Signature:** _____

Return this form with your cheque, payable to Crowsnest Conservation Society, to:

Crowsnest Conservation Society P.O. Box 242 Crowsnest Pass, AB T0K 0E0

Why is it important that we receive your continued support?

- We need your help to achieve our conservation and education goals.
- We rely on you for ideas, focus and energy to keep us moving forward.
- You become part of a community that shares your environmental values.
- A strong dynamic support base allows us to speak to decision-makers with credibility.

**Our annual goal is to raise \$10,000 from donations,
which can be used as matching funds when applying for grants.**