



Annual Report 2017-2018

 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Photo Credit: Chris Sargent

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER

CPAWS Northern Alberta started as a grassroots campaign to protect Alberta's wilderness – and 50 years later, we still believe that people can make a difference for our environment. That's why CPAWS Northern Alberta works for wilderness and wildlife – so that current and future generations of Albertans can connect with the land and rest easy knowing that our iconic species, such as caribou and grizzly bear, have the habitat they need to thrive.

In my first year as Executive Director I have been excited to work on a diversity of conservation goals reflecting the depths of challenges that the northern half of our province's environment faces.

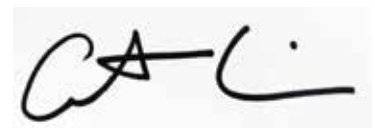
We have continued to push forward on protecting the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan River in the Bighorn Backcountry, partnering with new supporters such as downstream breweries, and strengthening partnerships with our southern Alberta chapter, and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative who are also working to protect this special place.

The chapter has engaged in new collaborative conservation projects in both the northwest, and northeast of the province, aimed at protecting caribou habitat, and identifying gaps in representative ecosystem protection. We continue to push for better protection of Wood Buffalo National Park and World Heritage Site, and are participating in the Teck Frontier Oil Sands Mine application process as intervenors.

We are excited to look forward, building on the successes of this past year, including \$1.3 billion that the federal government has allocated for nature conservation.



Dr. Kecia Kerr
Executive Director



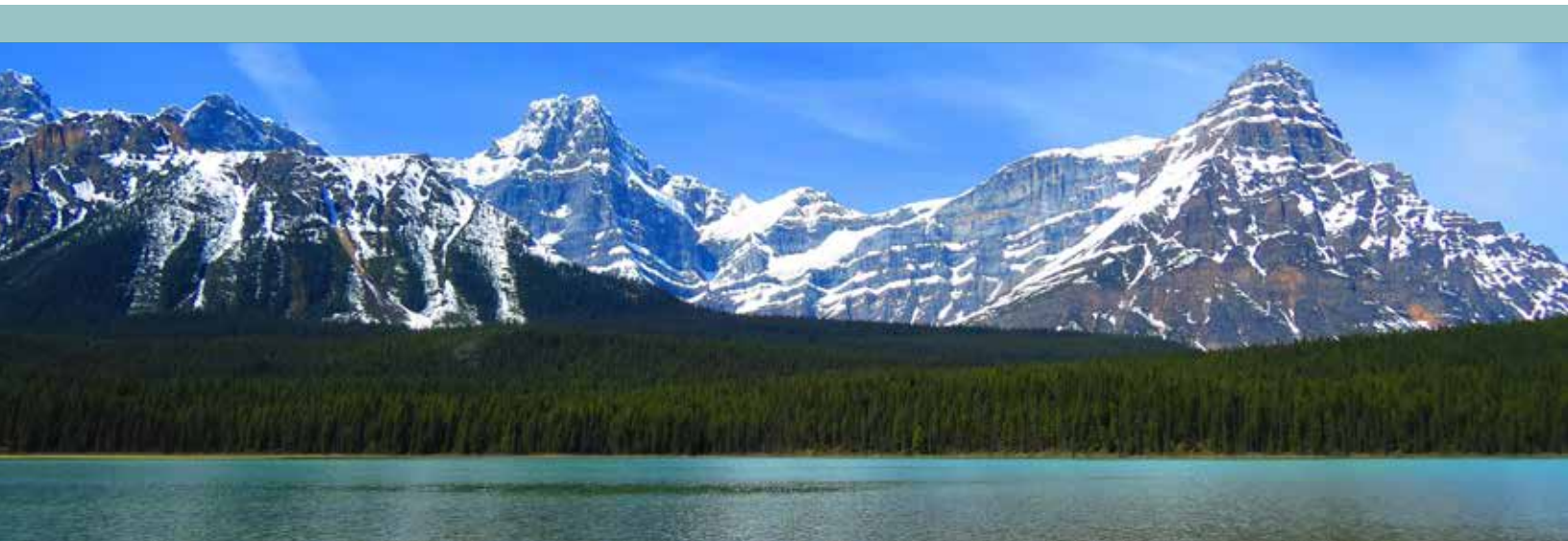
Dr. Cathy Cullingham
Incoming Chair, Board of Directors

ABOUT CPAWS

Overview

CPAWS believes that wilderness belongs to all Canadians – both current and future generations – and we want to see all Canadians given an equal opportunity to enjoy it. That’s why, since 1963, CPAWS has led the way in helping create over two-thirds of Canada’s protected areas – an overall area that is larger than the Yukon Territory! CPAWS is Canada’s only non-profit charitable organization that is dedicated to the conservation of public land in Canada.

CPAWS Northern Alberta champions the protection of wilderness and wildlife in the northern half of our beautiful province. We believe in science based, collaborative approach to protecting our public lands.



VISION

We aspire to an Alberta that embraces conservation and has a large protected wilderness network.

MISSION

We achieve conservation and legislated wilderness protection in Alberta through research, collaboration, and community outreach.

CORE VALUES

- Wilderness, Conservation and Biodiversity
- Collaboration
- Community Engagement
- Evidence-Based Decision Making
- Accountability

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pat Chan, Chair

Chris Sargent, Director

Cathy Cullingham, Director

Erich Anderson, Director

Christian Cormier, Director

Matt Dow, Director

Marcus Becker, Director

THE CHAPTER STAFF

Kecia Kerr, Executive Director

Tara Russell, Program Director

Chris Smith, Parks Coordinator

Ellyn Davidson, Conservation Director

Rayleigh Conely, Conservation Outreach
Coordinator (Summer Student)

Carlos Bautista, Financial Controller

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



CPAWS Northern Alberta has a New Executive Director! Spring of 2017 saw former Executive Director, Alison Ronson, relocate to Ottawa to join the CPAWS National office as the National Director of the Parks Program. Dr. Kecia Kerr joined us as our Executive Director in June 2017.



CPAWS co-hosted a successful Hops and Headwaters event with brewery partners Bent Stick Brewing and AlleyKat Brewing. The event saw over 200 people come out to sample beer and support the protection of their headwaters.



After much effort from CPAWS chapters across the country, the federal government made the biggest investment in nature ever in history, with \$1.3 billion for nature conservation in the 2018 Federal Budget. This funding will go towards increasing Canada's protected areas network - helping us to reach Canada's Target 1 of protecting 17% of our land and inland waters by 2020, and towards improving the plight of Canada's threatened species.



In December, the Government of Alberta released a draft caribou range plan for Alberta's boreal woodland caribou ranges after more than five years. While it contained promising outlines for protected areas within some caribou ranges, the draft plan failed to meet requirements for caribou recovery.

Unfortunately, pushback from some stakeholders has resulted in the Minister of Environment and Parks announcing that the GoA will not move forward on the proposed protected areas for caribou conservation until a socio-economic analysis has been completed. This leaves protection of critical caribou habitat once again in a state of limbo.



In 2016 UNESCO's World Heritage Committee completed a Reactive Monitoring Mission to Wood Buffalo National Park in response to the Mikisew Cree First Nation's request that the Park be listed as a World Heritage Site In Danger.

In July 2017, the Committee asked Canada to develop an Action Plan for Wood Buffalo National Park to implement the 17 recommendations outlined in the Reactive Monitoring Mission. The Action Plan is intended to improve future management and to ensure that the Park's Outstanding Universal Values, for which it was designated a World Heritage Site, are protected.

In November 2017, the park received the worst conservation outlook for a World Heritage Site in Canada, and second worst in North America, over concerns about the impacts from upstream industrial development, hydrological alterations, and inadequate management threaten the Park and the Peace-Athabasca Delta. CPAWS Northern Alberta has been supporting Indigenous Groups and other non-profits throughout these processes.



A potential new threat to the health of Wood Buffalo National Park is the proposed development of the Teck Frontier Oil Sands Mine. This project would be located ~30km from the southern border of Wood Buffalo National Park, within the area that should be a buffer zone for the World Heritage Site.

As such the proposed mine is of great concern to the ecological integrity of the park. In August the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada required Teck to include an assessment specifically outlining the potential impacts this project would have on Wood Buffalo National Park as part of the project's application for approval.

CPAWS Northern Alberta has been granted intervenor status in the process and will participate and provide evidence at the upcoming hearing.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES



Provincial Parks and Love Your Headwaters

CPAWS Northern Alberta has continued to champion the protection of the Bighorn Backcountry as a Wildland Provincial Park. This region is home to the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan and Red Deer rivers, as well as habitat for a number of Alberta species at risk.

In the summertime, CPAWS Northern Alberta staff and volunteers worked tirelessly at over 40 different events around the city to help educate Edmontonians about the importance of our headwaters and encourage them to take action. CPAWS program staff visited elementary and middle schools, and travelled to Grande Prairie, to teach over 200 students about the importance of protecting their headwaters. Elementary students joined in on nature walks in Edmonton's river valley, to meet the river and learn about how intact headwaters protect their water source. CPAWS staff joined in on a trip to the Kootenay Plains with Edmonton middle schoolers so that they could experience the beauty of the Bighorn.

In September 2017, Love Your Headwaters joined forces with local breweries, Alley Kat Brewing, and Bent Stick Brewing, to spread the word that 'Great Beer needs Great Water'. Throughout the fall and winter, Albertans were encouraged to love their headwaters by sending letters to Alberta's Minister of Environment and Parks and showing their support online. Building on the success of "Great Beer needs Great Water" labels for the beers, in January 2018, Love Your Headwaters hosted the Hops and Headwaters event. Over 200 people came to CRAFT Beer Market to sample beers from Alley Kat Brewing and Bent Stick Brewing and to show their support for a Wildland Provincial Park designation for the Bighorn Backcountry.

As of publication over 21,000 people have spoken up for its protection.

Boreal Forest and Wildlife

This year CPAWS was disappointed in the Government of Alberta inaction on the protection of Alberta's 15 woodland caribou herds. In September 2017, the Minister of Environments and Parks contradicted the June 2016 announcement of 1.8 million hectares of new protected areas in Alberta's northwest. In December 2017, the Government of Alberta released draft caribou range plans. These plans were inadequate for caribou recovery and lacked the specifics necessary to move forward with action.

In early 2018, CPAWS Northern Alberta participated in multi-stakeholder meetings in February and March of 2018 to push for habitat restoration and protection, as well as tighter regulations in caribou habitat. In March 2018, the Government of Alberta announced that they will no longer be moving forward with conservation plans for caribou in Alberta. CPAWS was greatly disappointed in this news, but continues to work with other stakeholders to advocate for caribou conservation.



Using CPAWS` conservation blueprints, and the Alberta`s Caribou: A Guide to Range Planning document, northern Alberta staff have been working to create collaborative plans that the Government of Alberta could implement for caribou. In the northwest, Kecia has been participating in the North West Alberta Stewardship Table, working with some of the area`s First Nations, Tolko, and other ENGOs. CPAWS Northern Alberta, CPAWS Saskatchewan, Ducks Unlimited, Mystik Forest Products, and Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. began a group project aimed at identifying gaps in protection in northeast alberta and cross border into Saskatchewan.

In October 2017, CPAWS Northern Alberta participated in the Forest Stewardship Council International boreal field trip hosted by Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. Here Ellyn and Tara, along with delegates from WWF Russia, WWF USA, and Alberta Wilderness Association, learned about challenges and opportunities in sustainable forest management. They also got to hear from First Nations, and boreal research experts on wetlands, fire disturbance and woodland caribou, and have been able to apply many of the learnings to CPAWS work.

Climate Change Education

Recognizing that reducing the impacts of man made climate change and increasing our ecosystem resilience in the face of warming and changing climates is crucial, CPAWS Northern and Southern Alberta chapters have launched an Climate Change Literacy and Education program. CPAWS Northern Alberta has been engaging community and school groups to bring the climate conversation to the forefront, and encouraging Albertans to take individual climate friendly actions and to support broader initiatives that will help create the change we need. This past year CPAWS Northern Alberta has reached over 200 students through elementary and middle school presentation and activities, and over 50 community members. Kecia presented at the IPCC Cities and Climate Change conference in Edmonton this past year.





Government Relations

In November 2017, CPAWS Northern Alberta joined CPAWS staff from across the country in Ottawa. While there we met with Members of Parliament, key staff, Senators and Ministers, asking for commitments to fund nature conservation in advance of the Budget. In February, Prime Minister Trudeau was in Edmonton for an Open House. Tara Russell of CPAWS Northern Alberta asked the Prime Minister about his commitment to the 2020 conservation goals, and whether or not we could expect to see funding for nature in Budget 2018. The work of CPAWS, and the rest of the Green Budget Coalition, paid off - Budget 2018 included a \$1.3 million Nature Fund.

Our chapter continues to meet and develop relationships with key government personnel and staff in order to advance conservation efforts in Alberta. This past year has seen us schedule regular meetings with Deputy Ministers and Assistant Deputy Ministers in Alberta Environment and Parks department. These provide us with a valuable space to have two way dialogue about conservation issues including caribou protection, land use planning, and management. In addition CPAWS Northern Alberta has been engaging with other ministries.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



CPAWS Northern Alberta is incorporated as a non-profit society in Alberta and governed by a board of directors. CPAWS Northern Alberta shares a charitable number with the other chapters of CPAWS across the country (106865272 RR0001). CPAWS Northern Alberta is supported by individual members, by granting foundations, businesses, and the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. Thanks to the generosity of these donors, we finished 2017-18 with a surplus and a strong projection for 2018-19. In December 2017, CPAWS made the Financial Post's list of Charities of the Year, which highlights Canada's most efficient and accountable charities!

Statement of Operations	2017- 2018	2016-2017
Revenue		
Grants	236,095	193,737
Gaming	27,807	39,441
Donors and Supporters	39,035	41,934
Fee for Service	956	13,185
Other	2,732	6,062
Interest	1,386	996
Subtotal	\$308,011	\$295,355
Expenses		
Conservation Programs	211,803	242,131
Professional Fees	38,696	12,985
Core Mission Support	21,081	22,438
Subtotal	271,580	277,554
Revenue Under Expenses	\$36,431	\$17,801

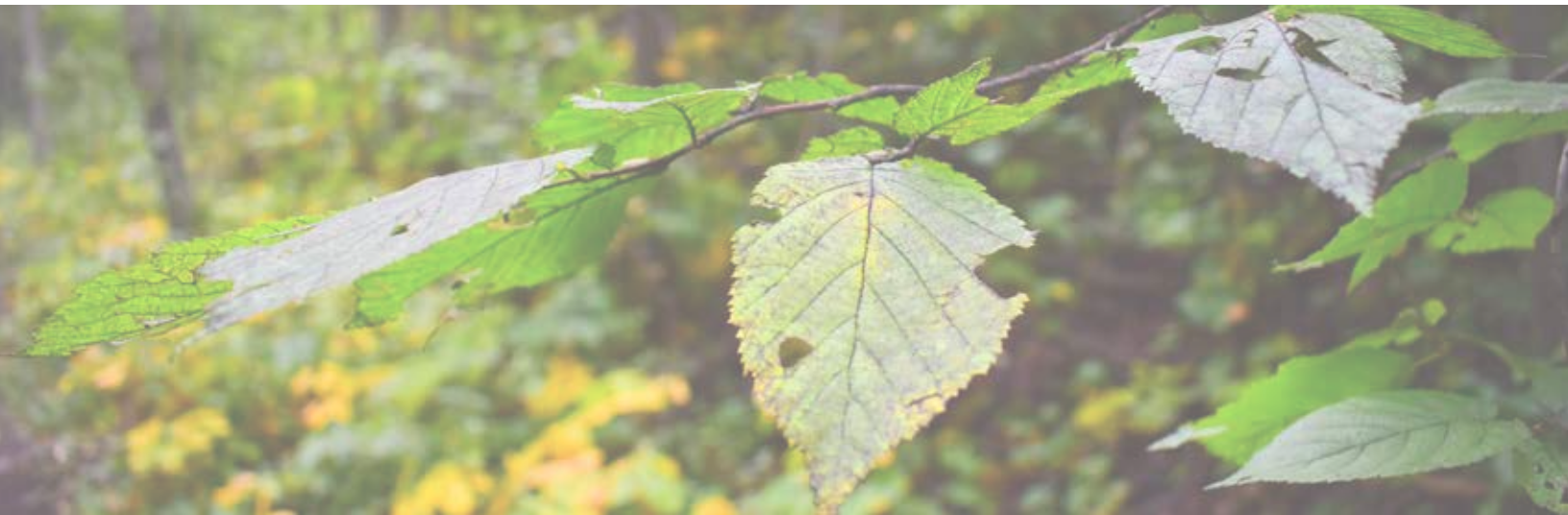


Funding Sources

CPAWS received funding in 2017 - 2018 primarily from supportive individual members, grants from the Edmonton Community Foundation, Alberta EcoTrust, Government of Alberta, MEC, Patagonia, contracts for services, and casino funding through the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission.

Other Financial Information

CPAWS Northern Alberta's administrative costs include professional fees, a percentage of the Executive Director's salary, office rent, equipment, and bank fees. The chapter experienced a surplus for 2017/18 because of increased funding through grants and decreased costs. In the coming year, the chapter will capitalize on increased funding by increasing chapter capacity (staffing) for our conservation programs.



PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION



We receive financial, in Kind, and campaign support from many amazing places. Thank you to those individuals, foundations, businesses, and organizations that supported us in our 2017-18 fiscal year.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Volunteers make up such a key part of our organization, from fundraising, helping us engage Albertans on conservation issues, completing key research, to helping us in our office (including with making our Annual Report look pretty!) - our volunteers are our core. This past year our chapter has benefitted from the dedication of many volunteers. Huge thank you to all our volunteers that sit on our three committees! We could not do our work without you!

Communications and Engagement Committee

Providing assistance on outreach, communications materials, and organizing events.

Fund Development Committee

A small but key group of volunteers that are instrumental in helping with fundraising and grant writing.

Conservation Committee

Provides scientific and research support to chapters conservation initiatives. They also complete and carry out independent conservation tasks as well.

Interested in becoming more involved? Let us know at infonab@cpaws.org!

Casino Volunteers

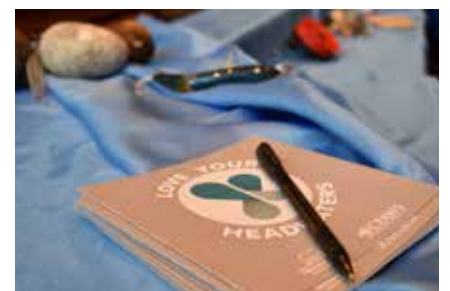
Every 18 months CPAWS Northern Alberta is eligible to run a casino. This opportunity with the AGLC provides us with a significant amount of funding, and would not be possible without the incredible support from our volunteers. Thank you to our members who came out to our Casino in October 2017!

University of Alberta CPAWS Club

In Fall of 2017 Ashley Light approached CPAWS Northern Alberta, asking to start a CPAWS U of A club. The University of Alberta club is a group of students dedicated to the conservation of nature who will advance CPAWS' conservation mission through their own self-directed initiatives within the Campus community. The club will be officially formed Fall 2018 with Ashley Light as their president.

Special Mention

CPAWS Northern Alberta would also like to recognize Esha Panesar for her dedication to the chapter. Esha has given hundreds of hours of her time to help with office administration, data entry, outreach, and most impressively lending her design skills. Esha has helped design everything including our outreach materials, websites, fact sheets, and even this report! Thank you Esha!





What will your legacy be?

Donate to the CPAWS Conservation Trust at the Edmonton Community Foundation or start your own Named Fund.

**Make your legacy a lasting one.
<http://bit.ly/ConservationTrust>**



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