



Annual Report 2012-2013

CPAWS Northern Alberta

 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
NORTHERN ALBERTA

Staff and Board, 2012/2013

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CHAPTER STAFF

Kelly Sloan, Executive Director
Carlos Bautista, Financial Controller
Rebecca Reeves, Forest Relations Coordinator

About CPAWS Northern Alberta

OVERVIEW

CPAWS is a national organization dedicated to the preservation of wilderness and biodiversity across Canada. Since 1963, CPAWS has helped protect over 40 million hectares of Canada's most treasured wild places. CPAWS uses a collaborative approach to negotiate conservation goals with governments, First Nations, local communities, progressive industries and other environmental organizations. With chapters across the country, CPAWS creates effective national campaigns that draw upon and support regional needs.

The Northern Alberta Chapter was the society's first designated regional chapter in 1968. We focus on the northern two-thirds of the province for our conservation program. Given the mounting threats from climate change and land use pressures, CPAWS Northern Alberta has three priorities: increase the percentage of protected land, maintain the integrity of established parks and ensure responsible land use.

MISSION

To advance the protection of wilderness and biodiversity in Alberta.

VISION

Alberta has a large protected wilderness network with representative healthy ecosystems, landscape-scale conservation zones and committed land stewardship. The wilderness legacy that always has inspired Albertans is preserved for future generations.

Spruce Forest Canopy
S.Song, Canadian Wildlife Service



Cover Photo Credit: Mount Athabasca - JNP, Travel Alberta

Message from the Chapter

CPAWS Northern Alberta has spent the past year advocating for conservation and strengthening its organizational structure. Important focus areas were strengthening relationships with key partners, evaluating proposed activities in Jasper National Park, continuing to participate in the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, contributing to caribou range planning, and laying the groundwork for upcoming large-scale provincial land use planning processes. More details are provided on key conservation activities and future plans in this report.

One priority in 2012/2013 was raising the visibility of Northern Alberta conservation issues and increasing the chapter's profile. We implemented a strategic communications plan that included social media, an e-newsletter, pro-active relationship building with traditional media, and building effective working relationships with provincial and federal government representatives. Volunteers also worked at display tables at Mountain Equipment Co-op events throughout the year. A highlight for the chapter in this area was raising the most team funds nationwide for our Big Wild Challenge boreal forest paddle trip to Lakelands Provincial Park.

The chapter continues to look for ways to make it more operationally effective and financially sustainable. In addition to adopting our communications work, key activities in 2012/2013 included identifying areas for closer collaboration with CPAWS Southern Alberta, re-engaging volunteers in our outreach displays and special events planning, and developing tools such as a 'Business Operations Calendar' to guide month-to-month operations. The chapter also continues to implement its 2012 -2015 Strategic Plan and build on the fund development and conservation frameworks and volunteer-based committees implemented last year.

A current priority for the chapter is recruiting volunteers for our upcoming casino on Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1, 2014. Casino events are an important source of funding for the chapter's core conservation programs. If you volunteer once in the next two years, make an impact by working a casino shift.

CPAWS Northern Alberta would not be able to continue its work to protect Alberta's wild spaces without your support. Responding to electronic action alerts and sending emails or letters to politicians and other decision gives a voice to Alberta's wilderness. Individual donations provide the chapter with essential operational flexibility and volunteers provide the passion and energy that sustains us. We want to thank all of our supporters for their time, energy, and support!

Sincerely,

Amber Nicol
Board Chair
CPAWS Northern Alberta

Kelly Sloan
Executive Director
CPAWS Northern Alberta



Amber Nicol, Board Chair



Kelly Sloan, Executive Director





View from Wilcox Pass, JNP
Cathy Cullingham

ParksWatch Program

PROTECTING ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY IN ALBERTA PARKS

Over the past year the chapter remained committed to advocating for ecological integrity in National Parks as mandated by the Canada National Parks Act. These activities occurred in a political environment which continues to reinforce troubling trends in parks management nationwide. Trends include increasing infrastructure and building development in natural areas, greater focus on visitor experience in management plans without accompanying protection for nature, and cuts to Parks Canada's staff and budget. The chapter is working closely with other CPAWS affiliates and Yellowstone-to-Yukon initiative partners to develop a coordinated response for to address these trends in the Rocky Mountain National Park region.

At the Provincial level, the chapter voiced its concern over the lack of involvement of conservation groups in the recently released Alberta Tourism Framework (2013-2020). Despite the Framework's marketing priority's focus on "authentic experiences in breathtaking landscapes", maintaining the ecological function of these landscapes amid increasing visitor numbers was not addressed.

In Focus: Jasper National Park (JNP)

MONITORING PROPOSED CHANGES & ENCOURAGING DIALOGUE

The chapter's work in JNP over the past two years has focused on monitoring and responding to proposed activities and new infrastructure development. In addition to the highlights on the next page, this includes providing several rounds of feedback on new recreational guidelines and monitoring the future expansion plans of Marmot Basin Ski Resort.

An important component of the chapter's work in JNP has been to build and strengthen relationships with government officials, elected and administrative, and other stakeholders, including locally-based conservation organizations. The objectives of these efforts are to increase dialogue on parks management issues and gain support for protecting ecological integrity. Executive Director, Kelly Sloan, also used CPAWS National's third-annual Lobby Day at Parliament Hill to highlight pressures in JNP to Members of Parliament and their teams.





View from Wilcox Pass, JNP
Cathy Cullingham

CAMPAIGNING FOR SUNWAPTA CANYON

CPAWS was disappointed at Parks Canada's decision to approve the infrastructure-intensive Glacier Skywalk at the Sunwapta Canyon lookout in JNP. Concerns included: the unknown long-term impact on wildlife; the risk this decision sets a precedent for greater infrastructure development within the mountain parks; and a lack of evidence demonstrating that Canadians want this type of development in their national parks. Over 2000 CPAWS supporters sent letters to Parks Canada opposing the Glacier Skywalk. The chapter also supported local Jasper residents and the Jasper Environmental Association in holding a rally on this issue at the Colombia Icefields Centre.

PROVIDING INPUT ON MALIGNE LAKE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

CPAWS has been actively participating in meetings and consultations about a proposal by Maligne Tours to build a hotel on the shores of Maligne Lake. Parks Canada recently launched a two-stage consultation process. CPAWS has many concerns about this proposal – watch for ongoing updates and our official response to Parks Canada on our facebook page and through our email alerts.

CELEBRATING A VICTORY FOR CARIBOU

CPAWS supported Parks Canada in their efforts to reduce predator access in winter to caribou in JNP. There are four caribou herds in the park and three are at risk of disappearing completely. CPAWS participated in stakeholder meetings convened by Parks Canada and submitted a written response outlining our support for the Parks Canada proposal to delay human access to some back country ski trails to reduce predator access to caribou. Thanks to the 300+ CPAWS supporters who wrote letters to Parks Canada in support of the delayed access for winter users.

Every year CPAWS releases its 'State of Canada's Parks' report in advance of Canada Parks Day. Review the 2013 report at www.cpawsnab.org





Boreal Forest Portage, LPP
Cathy Cullingham

Boreal Forest Protection

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT CANADA'S BOREAL FOREST

The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA) is a formal agreement (signed May 2010) by forest companies belonging to the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and many environmental groups including CPAWS. The main objectives of the agreement are to protect the habitat of woodland caribou and other ecologically valuable areas, and implement better logging practices.

Almost all of Alberta's larger forest companies are part of this agreement and CPAWS Northern Alberta has been a member of the Alberta/BC Regional Working Group since its inception. The working group is wrapping up its work in northeastern Alberta and CPAWS is optimistic concrete conservation gains will be realized. The chapter is now starting to shift its focus to the west-central Alberta foothills region to prepare for the next round of negotiations.

RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH OUR BIG WILD BOREAL CHALLENGE

The Board of Directors and staff of the CPAWS Northern Alberta chapter spent two days paddling in the Boreal forest in September. A writer and local media personality joined us for the trip to Lakeland Provincial Park (LPP) to help us tell the story of the importance of the boreal forest to the planet. The chapter used a variety of methods to share images and key facts about the forest to connect people with this special place. This trip also celebrated CPAWS' 50th Anniversary.

The chapter registered the trip as a Big Wild Challenge to also raise funds for its boreal forest program. The Big Wild Challenge, a partnership between CPAWS and Mountain Equipment Co-op, is about getting people out into nature and challenging them to try something new. The chapter raised over \$3300 and finished first in Canada in total team donations. Thanks to each of you who donated and to MEC for providing an additional \$3300 in matching funding!

For more information about how you can support or register your own CPAWS Big Wild Challenge next year, visit www.thebigwildchallenge.com.





Land Use Planning & Access Management

Wildhay Intensive Use
K. Stroebel

LEARNING MORE ABOUT GRIZZLY BEARS & ACCESS MANAGEMENT

CPAWS participated in the initial phase of a research project with University of Alberta researcher Andrew Ladle (supervised by Mark Boyce) to learn more about human access management in grizzly bear habitat. The outcomes of this research will inform landscape management and species recovery decisions in the future. With funding from Mountain Equipment Co-op, the main objectives of Andrew's research in Central Western Alberta are:

- to identify thresholds for human-use (of various types) on recreational trails, and;
- to learn recreational users' attitudes to access management in grizzly bear habitat.

CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT & UPCOMING REGIONAL PROCESSES

CPAWS Northern Alberta is also actively preparing for three provincial land use planning processes starting in 2014: the Upper Peace, Lower Peace, and the North Saskatchewan planning regions. Together, these processes represent a large opportunity to achieve significant conservation gains in Northern Alberta. This work will build on the chapter's previous campaign in the Lower Athabasca Region.

In 2013, to prepare for these processes, the chapter started to do preliminary work on a Conservation Blueprint to guide its response and is actively seeking funding to hire dedicated staff to advance the Blueprint's vision. To kick start this work and support CBFA, the chapter recently contracted Rebecca Reeves as our Forest Relations Coordinator. The chapter's volunteer-based Conservation Committee also has played a role in project planning and preliminary strategy sessions. Committee members have helped CPAWS strengthen its network with researchers, community groups, and land use planners, and identify potential resources to draw upon as needed during the Blueprint's development.

CPAWS Northern Alberta is working on a Conservation Blueprint to guide its input in three major regional land use planning processes starting in 2014. The chapter is actively seeking funding to support this work through dedicated staff.





Clearwater River
David Dodge

Awareness and Capacity Building

RAISING THE PROFILE OF CONSERVATION

The Chapter has begun implementing its strategic communications plan to raise the profile of the chapter and of Conservation issues in Alberta. In addition to social media, the Chapter's presence in the media increased significantly this year and for some media, we are now the "go to" source for conservation issues in Edmonton. Some of the media included: interviews in Jasper, Hinton, and Edmonton newspapers, guest on CBC Radio phone in shows, and panel member on CTV's Alberta Prime Time.

Other awareness activities include hosting outreach displays at a number of MEC events and re-launching the chapter's e-newsletter this fall. If you want to hear what our chapter is up to on a regular basis, sign up for the e-newsletter at www.cpawsnab.org ('Subscribe' box on the right hand side of the screen) or e-mail inforab@cpaws.org.



ED Kelly Sloan speaking on Alberta at Noon about fee increases in National Parks

BUSINESS RAISING FUNDS FOR CPAWS

Maple Leaf Adventures and the Grant MacEwan Mountain Club approached CPAWS and offered to make CPAWS the 'Charity of Choice' for the Maple Leaf Adventures slide presentation at the Citadel on the Great Bear Rainforest. The event raised \$700 for CPAWS through donations by attendees. Another Edmonton business, the T.D. Bank – McTaggart Branch held an in-house Coin Counter event for customers and donated \$5000 to CPAWS. The chapter is looking to develop more fundraising opportunities with businesses and service groups in 2014.



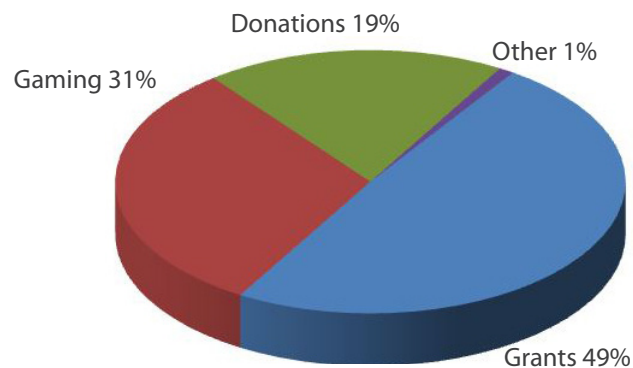
Financial Overview

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2013	2012
REVENUE		
Grants	\$ 60,492	\$ 43,795
Gaming	38,126	41,458
Funds and supporters	23,488	19,830
Interest	1,129	323
Other	50	459
Special Events	-	408
Subtotal	123,285	106,273
EXPENSES		
Salaries and Benefits	82,355	56,922
Professional fees	40,935	53,945
Rent	10,850	12,000
Office	5,571	2,114
Travel	4,770	3,330
Insurance	1,746	825
Advertising and Promotion	1,008	948
Telephone	351	2,648
Amortization	322	306
Interest and bank charges	283	317
Subtotal	148,191	133,355
REVENUE UNDER EXPENSES	\$ (24,906)	\$ (27,082)

FUNDING SOURCES

The chapter relies on a variety of funding sources to do its work. Member donations are a vital component of this funding and provide the chapter with needed flexibility for funding its core programs and staff. Funding was also received from a variety of granting bodies, government sources and foundations.



OTHER FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The chapter's administrative overhead includes office equipment, bank fees and insurance, and a proportion of rent, administrative professional fees, and the Executive Director's salary, travel, and office supplies. Administrative overhead was 24% in 2012-2013. The chapter's asset to liability ratio is 3.7:1. Chapter leadership made a strategic decision to run a deficit in 2012-2013 and cover this deficit with the reserve fund. The chapter is working on implementing its Fund Development plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.





Caribou bull running
Sawchuck

Preserving wilderness & biodiversity in Northern Alberta since 1968

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