



CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
NORTHERN ALBERTA

Annual Report 2015-2016



Message from the Chapter

CPAWS Northern Alberta started as a grassroots campaign to save Alberta's wilderness – and, almost 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.

We aspire to an Alberta that embraces conservation and has a large protected wilderness network. CPAWS Northern Alberta took big strides in 2015-2016 to meet this aspiration. We launched our Conservation Blueprint of Northern Alberta: Prioritizing areas for protected areas planning, a scientifically sound guide to the areas with highest value for conservation in northern Alberta. Received with much excitement, the Conservation Blueprint has already influenced government policy when, in February of 2016, Minister of Environment and Parks Shannon Phillips announced that Alberta would commit to meeting at target of protecting 17% of Alberta's landscapes by 2020.

Led by Ecojustice and in partnership with the Jasper Environmental Association, in October of 2015, CPAWS Northern Alberta went to court to fight against the decision to allow commercial overnight accommodations to be built at Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park. In February of 2016 the judgment was released, which confirmed what we hoped for – that project proposals cannot begin to be implemented if they contradict the existing park management plan.

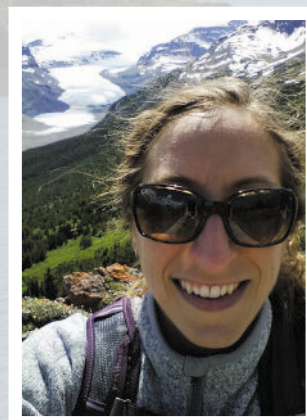
Our work continues as we seek protection of the Bighorn Backcountry: the source of almost 90% of Edmonton's drinking water and the last intact forest in the province, and as we sit at government tables, negotiate with forest companies as part of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, and collaborate with other environmental groups to continue to seek protection for wilderness.

But we couldn't do this work without your assistance – you, our members and volunteers. Your generosity with your time and donations has a lasting impact on Alberta's landscape and ultimately, to the people and wildlife of Alberta. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours in Conservation,



Pat Chan
Chair, Board of Directors



Alison Ronson
Executive Director

NATIONAL PARKS

Stand Up for Jasper

Ecojustice lawyers, along with CPAWS Northern Alberta and Jasper Environmental Association (“JEA”), attended federal court on October 27, 2015, to argue against the proposal of Maligne Tours Ltd. (now owned by Brewster Inc.) to build 10 to 15 tent cabins along the shores of Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park. Because the tent cabin proposal contradicted the park’s existing Management Plan, Ecojustice argued that the approval of the tent cabins was outside the authority of Parks Canada. The judgment on this argument was long, but in the end the Honourable Mr. Justice Russell agreed:

“[P]roject proposals cannot be accepted or implemented unless they comply with a validly enacted and/or amended management plan.”

- The Honourable Mr. Justice Russell

However, Justice Russell also stated that Parks Canada may consider proposals that are contrary to the Management Plan, even if these proposals cannot be approved.



Cover Image: Caribou in Jasper National Park, Kevin Hasson

Background Image: Astotin Lake, Elk Island National Park, Tara Russell

This page: Maligne Lake, Jasper National Park

FIGHT FOR YOUR PARKS

fightforyourparks.ca

Fight For Your Parks

Canada's National Parks continue to be threatened by management policies that prioritize tourism and visitor numbers over nature and wildlife. For example, in 2015 an expansion of the Lake Louise Ski Hill was approved, despite the fact that the expansion would take place in an area well known to be grizzly bear habitat. Because of decisions such as this one being made in our parks, in September, 2015, a group of environmental organizations and concerned citizens, including CPAWS Northern Alberta, came together under the banner of the Fight For Your Parks campaign. This group shone a spotlight on the serious risk to our national parks during the 2015 federal election and called on the government of Canada to return to honouring the National Parks Act's emphasis on putting nature first. The work of the Fight For Your Parks campaign is ongoing.

Put Wood Buffalo National Park on the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger

In December of 2014, the Mikisew Cree First Nation from northern Alberta petitioned UNESCO to place Wood Buffalo National Park on the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. CPAWS supported this petition by writing a letter to UNESCO. In July of 2015, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee released a decision on the petition stating that Canada should undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Park, that no decisions with respect to industrial development should be made that may affect that Park and which cannot be reversed, and that UNESCO should send a mission to the Park to view first-hand the impacts of industrial activity on the Park's ecosystem.

Background: Hoodos in the Bighorn Backcountry, Tara Russell

This page: Bison, Derek Brzoza

Next page:

Top Design: Christy Campos
Bottom Image: Bighorn Backcountry, Cassidy Van Rensen



Photo By
Derek Brzoza



PROVINCIAL PROTECTED AREAS AND LAND USE PLANNING

Using the Conservation Blueprint of Northern Alberta: Prioritizing Protected Areas

In October of 2015 CPAWS Northern Alberta launched its *Conservation Blueprint of Northern Alberta: Prioritizing Areas for Protected Areas Planning*. The launch was attended by over 80 supporters, including a representative of the Minister of Alberta Environment and Parks. Since its launch, the Conservation Blueprint has been instrumental in influencing government policy on protected areas targets, spurred the creation of the Northern Alberta Conservation Area Working Group, a coalition of academics, environmental organizations and government of Alberta representatives, and has informed CPAWS Northern Alberta's work with the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, with oil and gas representatives, with regional land use planning, and with habitat protection plans for Alberta's caribou.

Protect Alberta's Headwaters Campaign

CPAWS Northern Alberta continues to work on our Protect Alberta's Headwaters campaign primarily aimed at securing greater protection for the Bighorn Backcountry near Nordegg, Alberta. The Bighorn Backcountry supplies 86% of the North Saskatchewan Region's water – this includes over 1.5 million people and the City of Edmonton. Home to iconic grizzly bears, mountain goats, bighorn sheep and native fishes, the Bighorn contains Alberta's last intact forest – and could be the next jewel in the province's protected areas crown.



BOREAL FOREST AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Caribou and You: Beginning *Alberta's Caribou: A Guide to Range Planning*

In 2015 our work began on *Alberta's Caribou: A Guide to Range Planning*. The Guide was intended to bring together existing scientific understanding about best practices in designing range plans for the boreal woodland caribou, and then inform provincial range planning efforts. In 2015-16, CPAWS Northern Alberta synthesized the available research, met with government officials, academics, and industry representatives, and began using the Conservation Blueprint to map priority areas for forest restoration within Alberta's caribou ranges.

Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement ("CBFA")

CPAWS Northern Alberta continues to meet with representatives of forestry companies who are signatories to the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. In 2015-2016 we worked with our partners to continue promoting caribou conservation in northeast Alberta, integrate our Conservation Blueprint with the forestry companies' own mapping work, and secure greater conservation practices and protection in the boreal forest in Alberta.





OUTREACH

Making Our Mark

CPAWS Northern Alberta's staff and board members spent much of their time out and about representing the organization and Making Our Mark in 2015-2016. Our Executive Director, Alison Ronson, spoke at the inaugural Environmental Gathering organized by Alberta Ecotrust, while Conservation Planner Danielle Pendlebury and Conservation Assistant Tara Russell presented on Alberta's caribou at the annual Alberta Chapter of The Wildlife Society Conference. CPAWS Northern Alberta hosted a workshop on headwaters protection at the second annual Edmonton Resilience Festival, and Alison Ronson spoke about our Protect Alberta's Headwaters campaign at the Alberta Fish and Game Association's Annual General Meeting.

Collaborating for Conservation

A core philosophy of CPAWS Northern Alberta is collaboration – and in 2015-2016, CPAWS worked with many partners – whether sitting at the CBFA table, working with academics and government representatives on the Northern Alberta Conservation Area Working Group, or attending the Living with Caribou and Boreal Caribou Workshops with oil and gas representatives. CPAWS Northern Alberta was also happy to continue its relationship with MEC Edmonton, and to develop a new relationship with the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance. Finally, we formed a partnership with the Edmonton Marathon – in exchange for staffing a water station at the marathon with CPAWS volunteers, CPAWS receives donations from runners through the Running Room, and the opportunity to speak to thousands during the two-day expo event prior to the run.

Out and About

CPAWS Northern Alberta knows that to be successful in conservation, Albertans must care about our mission. That's why we spend much of our time at community outreach events or organizing our own awareness activities. In April of 2015, in celebration of Earth Day, we hosted Carrie Saxifrage, the author of *The Big Swim*, for a book signing and concert as part of a partnership with Audrey's Books. In 2015-2016 we welcomed our first summer student in the role of Conservation Outreach Assistant. In this role, our student helped organize our volunteer management, get the CPAWS message out at MEC Outreach Days, represent our interests at Parks Day at Jasper National Park, and organize the second MEC Big Wild Challenge. The second MEC Big Wild Challenge saw over 120 people participate in a trail run at Elk Island National Park at the beginning of September. A fundraiser for CPAWS, we are proud to say that our participants raised over \$5,000 for our organization.

Background: Boreal Forest, Danielle Pendlebury

Opposite Page: Caribou, Martin Berkman and Forest Cutblock, Danielle Pendlebury

This page: Pat Chan and Alison Ronson at the Inaugural Ecotrust Environmental Gathering and Runners at 2015 MEC Big Wild Challenge



CPAWS Northern Alberta

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CHAPTER STAFF

Alison Ronson, Executive Director

Danielle Pendlebury, Conservation Planner

Tara Russell, Conservation Assistant

Carlos Bautista, Financial Controller

About CPAWS Northern Alberta

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! A nation-wide, charitable non-profit organization, CPAWS is dedicated to gaining greater protection for Canada's public lands and waters, including the responsible management of our protected areas and responsible land use planning.



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

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2015-2016

CPAWS Northern Alberta is incorporated as a non-profit society in Alberta and governed by one 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 2015-2016 with one quarter the deficit of 2014-15 and a strong projection for 2016-17.

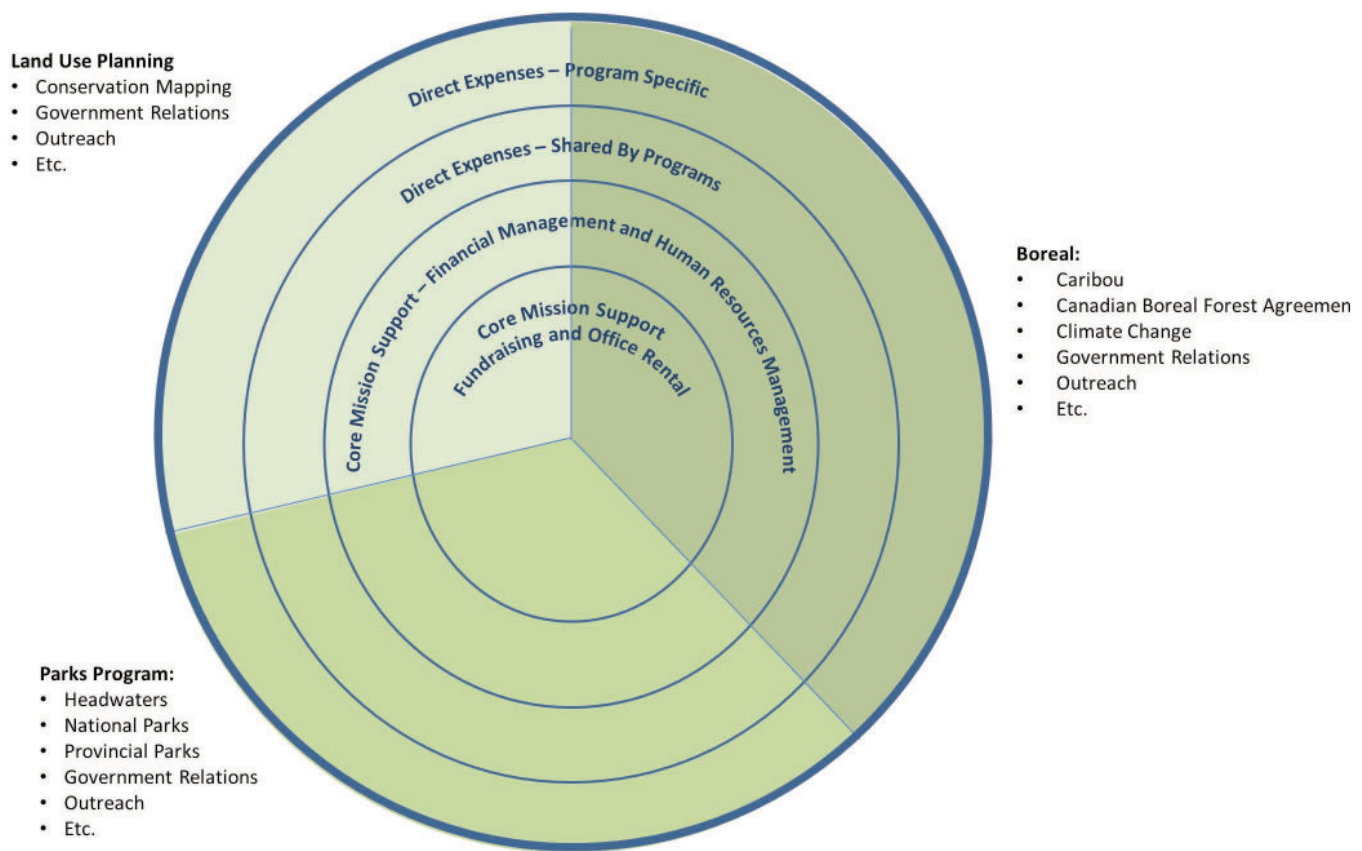
Statement of Operations

		2015 - 2016		2014 - 2015
Revenue				
Grants	\$	89,764	\$	25,840
Gaming		52,438		67,710
Donors and Supporters		42,199		35,678
Fee for Service		29,185		-
Other		4,421		-
Interest		1,150		2,033
Subtotal		219,157		131,261
Expenses				
Conservation Programs		171,058		98,025
Professional Fees		15,856		13,353
Core Mission Support		34,628		27,998
Subtotal		221,541		139,376
Revenue Under Expenses	\$	(2,384)	\$	(8,115)

Background: North Saskatchewan River, Marcus Becker
Opposite page: CPAWS Northern Alberta staff and board members, Strategic Planning 2016
Next page Background: Hikers, Alison Ronson
Back Cover: Bighorn Sheep, Kevin Hasson

What is Core Mission Support?

Core Mission Support is what our conservation programs are built around: the typically “administrative” costs which are actually vital and integral to enabling CPAWS Northern Alberta to continue our good work. Our conservation programs, whether they involve meeting with government officials to promote protection of our headwaters or researching best practices in designing caribou range plans, must be supported by Core Mission Support. This includes financial management activities, human resources management, office rent and equipment, and other necessary expenses. The effectiveness of our conservation programs requires us to have a solid core at the heart of our organization – without core funding for one of our programs, a gap is created that means that all of the programs, and the health of the entire organization, are at risk:



The figure above shows the time spent between each of CPAWS Northern Alberta’s three major programs (Parks, Boreal, Land Use Planning) and how Core Mission Support is vital to all of them.

Thanks to our Funders and Partners!

Alberta Conservation Association · Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission · Alberta Ecotrust
Alberta Parks · Allstate Insurance · Atco Gas · Audrey’s Books · Carthy Foundation
Edmonton Community Foundation · Elements Inc. 1% For the Planet · Government of Canada · MEC
Parks Canada · Patagonia · TD Friends of the Environment Fund · TD Canada Trust · T-Gear
Track ‘N Trail · Yellowhead Brewery · Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

... and all our individual donors and supporters!

What Will Be Your Legacy?

Support the
CPAWS Conservation Trust
at the Edmonton Community
Foundation and let the world
know that you care.

Donate today

at the Edmonton Community Foundation or online at:
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/the-edmonton-community-foundation/cpaws-conservation-trust/>



CPAWS

CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
NORTHERN ALBERTA

Keeping Alberta Wild Since 1968

CPAWS Northern Alberta
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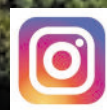
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