



wildsight

WILD TIMES

A VOICE FOR CONSERVATION IN CANADA'S COLUMBIA AND SOUTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Summer 2013 | FREE

48

REASONS TO CELEBRATE COLUMBIA LAKE

EAST SHORE A CULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL TREASURE

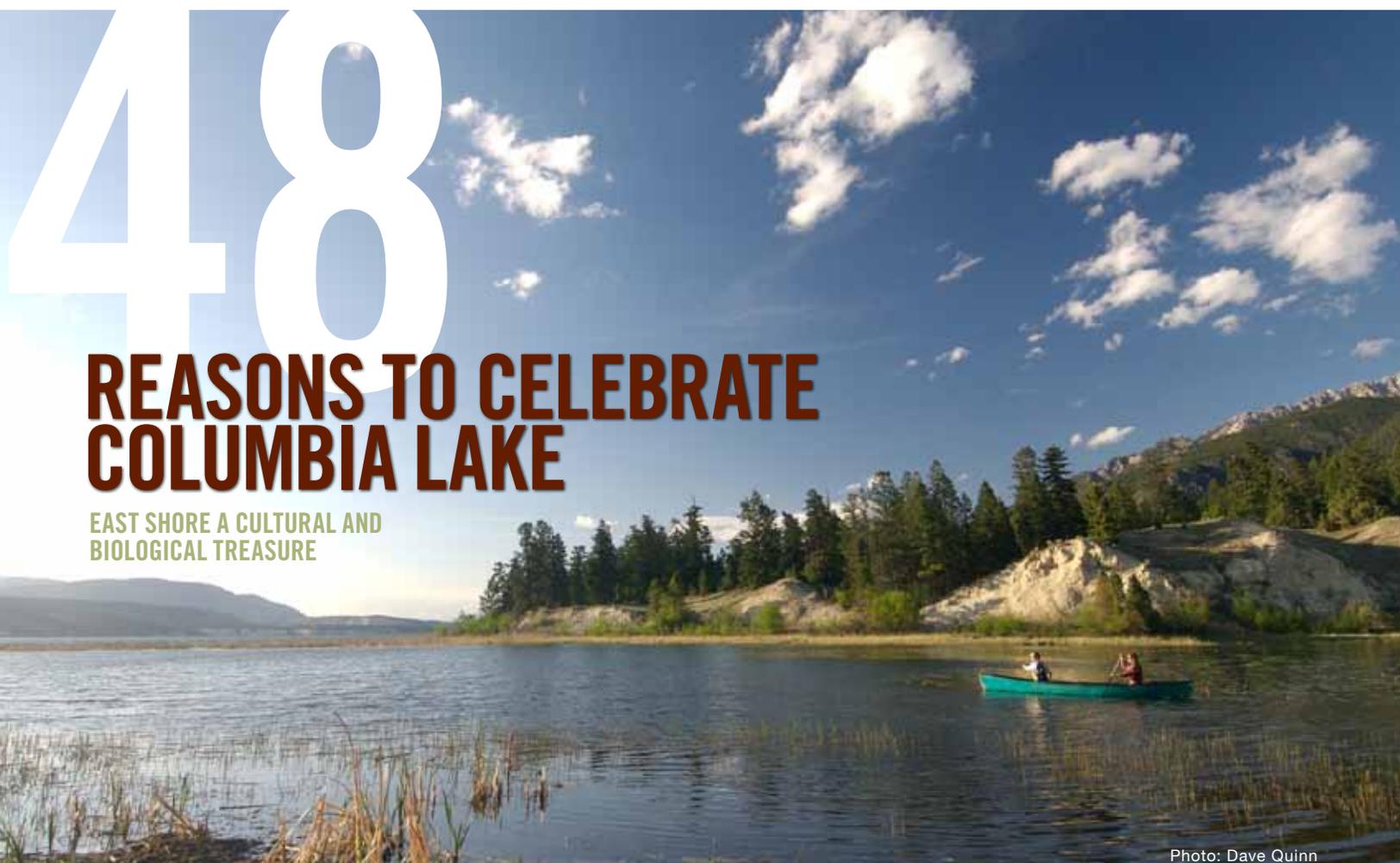


Photo: Dave Quinn

There is a lot going on along the wild shores of Columbia Lake these days. Then again, not much has changed. Both are cause for celebration!

After years of negotiations and hard work between the Province, Fairmont Resorts, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the much-discussed Lot 48 conservation purchase has finally been finalized. Wildsight staff and supporters have worked hard to support this purchase.

Lot 48 adds a keystone lakeshore piece to 7600 hectares of conservation lands on the eastern shores of the lake, one of the

last undeveloped valley-bottom lake shores in the East Kootenays. Prime ungulate winter range, critical bighorn sheep and elk winter range, and priceless historic and cultural values all combine to make it a treasure. Ktunaxa pictograms along the Spirit Trail gaze down as modern travellers create their own Columbia Lake stories. High above the lake, rare, wind-gnarled Limber Pines lean into the drying winds from grassland knolls. Herds of bighorn, mule deer, and elk wander the landscape, as eagle and osprey survey the scene from nests in ancient Douglas Firs.

The most popular means to explore this Kootenay treasure is either on foot or mountain bike along the Spirit trail, which parallels the lake shore between Canal Flats and Fairmont, or from the seat of a canoe or kayak from the lake itself. Hikers, bikers, and paddlers can either leave a vehicle at one end to travel end to end, or simply head out and back. Despite the area's non-motorized designation, illegal ATV damage is beginning to wear ruts into the critical habitats above the lake, but it is hoped that the increased awareness of the critical values of this area will help encourage non-motorized traffic only.

WILDSIGHT.CA

REGIONAL

BOOK LAUNCH: BEARS WITHOUT FEAR

Former Banff National Park Superintendent and author Kevin Van Tighem

Jun 15 • 7pm
Bacchus Books, Golden

Jun 16 • 7.30pm
CPR Lodge, Invermere

Jun 18 • 7.30pm
Manual Training Centre, Cranbrook

Jun 19 • 7.30p
Centennial Hall, Kimberley

KIMBERLEY/CRANBROOK

BAT MIST NETTING NIGHT

Jun 22 • 9pm • Wasa Community Hall

KIM I CRAN EDIBLE GARDEN TOURS

Kimberley Aug 13 • 5 - 9pm
Cranbrook Aug 14 • 5 - 9pm
jessica@wildsight.ca | 250.427.2535

LEARN TO GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

Free workshops Jun - Nov
shannon@wildsight.ca | 250.427.2535

INVERMERE

LAUNCH PARTY: WILD NATURE TOURS

Jun 12 • 7 - 8.30pm
Arrowhead Brewing

WILD NATURE TOURS

Amazing tours of the Columbia Valley all summer long
wildnaturetours.ca

2ND ANNUAL CAMP OUT

Sept 7 • Aurora Ck [near Assiniboine]

GOLDEN

WILD SUMMER INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

Short fun interpretive events
joandolinsky@gmail.com

GOLDEN COMMUNITY WEED PULL

Jul 11 & Aug 3 • 9.30am - noon
Meet at Spirit Square

THE LAND IS WHAT FEEDS US

Local agriculture forum Mid-October
pjnot_deboer@hotmail.com

GOLDEN RIVER DAYS

Aug 21-25 • Volunteers needed!
sanne@wildsight.ca

GOLDEN EDIBLE GARDEN TOURS

Aug 9 • 9am - 1pm
Meet at Golden Chamber of Commerce parking lot to car pool at 9am. Entrance by donation.
ellen@wildsight.ca

ELK VALLEY

FINALE PARTY: 'TREK WEST'

Sept 30 • 7.30pm • Fernie Arts Station
Celebrate year one of John Davis' trek

ECOGARDEN KIDS CAMP

Jul 22 - 26 • Aug 19 - 23
ecogarden.ca

Photo: David Dodge



Photo: Pat Morrow

INVERMERE BRANCH GOES WILD

Join a Wild Nature Tour This Summer

Ever wondered what it would be like to share the trails of the Columbia Valley with Canada's Poet Laureate? A world-famous birder? An Everest summiteer? The author of the local hiking guidebook?

All this and more can be yours with Wildsight Invermere's Wild Nature Tours this summer.

Launching from the success of Wildsight Fernie's Wild Nature Tours, the Invermere branch aims to offer more opportunities for visitors and locals alike to get off the beaten track and re-connect with nature.

Local naturalist and birder extraordinaire Cam Gillies kicks things off on June 15th. On July 21st, Everest mountaineer Pat Morrow will guide a hike in the footsteps of legendary Wilmer mountain guide Conrad Kain to the Lake of the Hanging Glacier. Each tour will be different, from a special literary event with Canada's Poet Laureate Fred Wah, to an interpretive walk along the Old Coach Trail with Canadian Rockies Trail Guide co-author Brian Patton.

Visit wildnaturetours.ca for more details. All proceeds from this enterprising non-profit venture go back into the branch's conservation efforts.



Photo: Wendy Chambers

GOLDEN CELEBRATES WILD RIVERS

Something for Everyone at Golden River Days, August 21-25

Golden is a fluvaphiles dream. Here the mighty Columbia River gathers together the waters of the playful Kicking Horse, the historic Blaeberry, and the wild Bluewater Rivers for the long, joyful run to the sea. Goldenites have a lot of river to celebrate, and celebrate they will with Golden River Days this August 21-25.

This fluvial festival is designed for locals and visitors to join together and celebrate the awe, gratitude, and responsibility imbued by these classic waterways.

Tie up your hiking boots or grab your paddle and join some of the inspiring festival events. Guitars and voices will add their voices to the river's song, accompanied by the snap crackle rhythm of riverside campfires. Immerse yourself in the incredible visual stories of the Reel Paddling Film Festival, a touring celebration of all things river. Sail your home-made river craft down the Columbia River during the Annual Klehowya River Race. Come see the floating lanterns or, better yet, make one yourself!

This is a great opportunity to highlight the uniqueness of the aptly-named Golden, focus on our wild rivers for a few days, and celebrate their importance in our lives and our environment.

JUMBO EAST MEETS WEST HIKE

Lacing up the Boots for a Wild Purcells



Photo: Lucas Imieff

despite the recent, undemocratic appointment of the council of the nonexistent Municipality of Jumbo.

More than twenty years after the proposal first threatened grizzlies, glaciers, and wilderness in the central Purcells, we can still celebrate JumboWild, with another East meets West JumboWild hike to Jumbo Pass! The last JumboWild hike, in August, 2007, was a resounding success. Over 120 East Kootenay and Calgary mountain lovers trekked the 6 km from Jumbo Creek trailhead to the pass, while over 100 West Kootenay hikers had to satisfy themselves with a Get Bare for The Bears photo shoot on the Glacier Creek bridge, due to ongoing challenges with access to the Glacier Creek Jumbo Pass trailhead north of Kootenay Lake.

This year's JumboWild East Meets West Hike is slated for July 27, rain or shine. Bring your camera and your best wilderness-loving grin to soak up the highest density of 11,000 foot peaks in the Purcells, perhaps glimpse a mountain goat, a grizzly, or wolverine, and share gorp with like-minded hikers from across the Purcells divide. Be sure to pack a lunch, because the fast food chains and exclusive restaurants of the proposed Jumbo City are still just a pipedream, and one that is thankfully melting faster than the glaciers it intends to exploit.

Hike on over to KeepItWild.ca for more information.

For over 20 years mountain lovers from the Kootenays and beyond have rallied to keep the upper Jumbo Valley region, known as the Heart of the Purcells, free of permanent real estate and ski resort development. Thousands of letters, countless rallies, and scores of meetings have sent the consistent message to all decision makers: **Keep Jumbo Wild!**

Thankfully, wise investors see through the façade of "four season skiing" on the region's melting glacier. The well-documented dwindling skier demographic and today's economic realities also continue to bolster JumboWild efforts,

HOMEGROWN REMEDIES

Edible Garden Tours get Big Green Thumbs Up

Gardening around Kimberley and Cranbrook can be a frustrating or rewarding test of any gardeners endurance and tenacity. Elevation, frost, winds, hail, and too much or too little rain all combine to hold the area firmly in Plant Hardiness Zone 3 or 4. However, these challenges are balanced by the most sunlight hours in BC, and a few tricks and techniques can help take a garden to the next level.

Growing on the overwhelming success of last summer's Edible Garden Tour, Wildsight's Jess Windle is currently accepting garden submissions for a two-evening garden tour this August 13-14th, with an evening each in Kimberley and Cranbrook.

We will tour a variety of new or well established, residential, and community gardens, explains Windle.

We aim to hit Cranbrook, Kimberley, and all points in between, to share vegetable garden inspiration and networking, Windle continues.

If you have a garden you would like to showcase, want to see what others are growing, or just need some gardening advice, jump on the tour! For more info contact Jessica@wildsight.ca, or call 250-427-2535 ext.223. Admission is by donation (\$5-10 suggested), and everyone except the dog is welcome.



Photo: Wendy Chambers

LOVE YOUR LAKE? TELL US! I Love My Lake! Campaign Comes to the Kootenays

There is little doubt that Canadians have a love affair with water. However there is often disconnect between the values we place on our waterways, and the actions we take to protect them.

Launched during the March 18-24th “Canada Water Week”, the “I Love My Lake” project is a country-wide social outreach and education project aimed at creating a local, mainstream water stewardship ethic and culture that is supported by effective local bylaws and enforcement.

Locally, “I Love My Lake” is aimed at anyone who lives near and loves our Kootenay lakes. The program encourages individuals to show their love of lakes by caring for them and showcasing their desire to safeguard them for future generations. It includes a series of workshops to help lakeside communities understand best shoreline management practices, appreciate the importance of healthy aquatic habitats around their lake, and support public participation in local planning to better protect the ecological values of our lakes.

Do you love your lake, wetland or river? Write about it! Wildsight is partnering with the Living Lakes Network Canada and Nature Canada to highlight our love for lakes with a story contest. Submit the story of your lake, and win great prizes. Winners will also be included in a national story book.

You can also submit a declaration of love for your lake to remind our Federal Ministers of Environment and Fisheries just how important water is to Canadians. Or you can upload a video declaration showcasing your favourite lake or water body and your love for it!

For more information on the “I Love My Lake” project paddle over to ilovemylake.ca.



We care about our home. Not just the homes we live in, but the ecological home that supports all life, all industry and all of us. That's why we work hard for healthy human communities and healthy wild spaces here, in Canada's Columbia and Rocky Mountains ecoregions.

wildsight.ca

Wildsight: 2-495 Wallinger Ave
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Photo: Garth Lenz

FLATHEAD BIOBLITZ IS BACK! This Year's Flathead Valley Bioblitz is For the Birds

While the big, ‘sexy’ species like grizzlies and bighorns get all the attention, the little guys often slip through the cracks. That’s why everyone knows that BC’s Flathead Valley is home to the most carnivores found in North America (18 species!), but little is known about the Flathead’s smaller inhabitants: the insects and arachnids that can only be seen on hands and knees, the wildflowers that only bloom for a brief splash of time (over 685 recorded species of plants and wildflowers), and the lichens that just sit there and blend in.

This was the motivation behind the August 2012 Flathead Bioblitz. Biological Jedis spent a week looking closely and carefully to see and share what most of us miss. The results, including identifying new species and many species of special concern, were so inspiring that the FlatheadWild Team is hosting Bioblitz 2, June 21st to 28th, focusing on birds. In the Flathead - southern Canada’s largest unsettled valley - with its expansive, biologically rich riparian areas, open meadows, and valley bottom to mountain top wildness, the birding potential is off the charts.

With this spring’s revelations linking dangerously high selenium levels in the neighbouring Elk River drainage to the valley’s mining activities, the call to protect the Flathead forever is stronger than ever.

“Due to Parks Canada’s interest in the southeastern 1/3 of the Flathead River Valley as a future National Park, we have a great opportunity to complete the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park,” explains Southern Rockies Program Manager Ryland Nelson. “These Bioblitzes confirm what Parks Canada already knew – the Flathead is worthy of National Park status!”

Anyone curious about the Bioblitz, or interested in learning about the Flathead Valley and the Flathead National Park proposal, contact Ryland@wildsight.ca or visit www.flathead.ca

