

wildsight

2013 ANNUAL
REPORT





wildsight

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

A MESSAGE FROM JURI PEEPRE

Dear Wildsight community,

Water. Each of us carries 50-60% of our body weight in water; here in the Columbia Basin, we are the watershed. So when the Columbia Basin Watershed Network and Living Lakes Canada organized the “Think Like a Watershed” Symposium, it was more than an apt metaphor.

Water is elemental to Wildsight’s conservation work, and at the crux of ecosystem and community health—yet, our nation too often turns its back on watershed protection. The federal government has assaulted the Navigable Waters Act and Fisheries Act, and across the country we see a reckless rush to exploit gas fields by hydro-fracking, while glossing over the risks of surface and ground water contamination.

Nevertheless, there is reason for some guarded optimism. Ryan van der Marel, Program Coordinator for Living Lakes Canada said, “Here in the Columbia Basin, we’re fortunate to enjoy some of the cleanest, healthiest water in the world. It’s a privilege, and a responsibility.” Responding to the proposed Water Sustainability Act, he said that “Wildsight applauds the BC government’s commitment to reforming the antiquated Water Act, but cautions that the protection of water must guarantee environmental flows for fish, wildlife and sustainable communities.”

This year we saw initial steps toward updating the Columbia River Treaty, an agreement that Save Our Wild Salmon reminds us was a “destruction of what used to be the largest and most productive salmon watershed in the world.” The Globe and Mail’s Mark Hume described the once-in-a-generation opportunity— “Fifty years ago, the linked waterways...were viewed as forces to be controlled, commodities to be developed. This time around, interested parties are talking about navigation, recreation, agriculture, fisheries, First Nations rights and climate change.”

These two milestones were at the heart of the Watershed Symposium—a cross-cultural dialogue with First Nations leadership on potential ways to govern the Columbia Basin watershed, as well as climate change, and watershed and ecosystem processes. The gathering was part of a province-wide initiative to build a stewardship culture for fresh water, in which local people have a genuine say in protecting rivers and lakes.

Canada is a freshwater nation, rich in lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Water plays an important role in our heritage, in our economy and in maintaining our healthy communities—these are the words of Living Lakes Canada, based right here in the Kootenays, helping to transform the way Canadians think about and govern use of our waters.



JURI PEEPRE

Wildsight Chair

Juri Peepre has a love for wilderness, mountains and wild rivers. After 20 years in the Yukon, he now lives in Windermere and continues to work on protected areas in B.C. and the North. Juri was executive director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Yukon Chapter, and served as national president of CPAWS. He was a member of the Y2Y Coordinating Committee and was Yukon leader for World Wildlife Fund’s Endangered Spaces campaign. He is a director of TREC (Training Resources for the Environmental Community). Juri enjoys hiking and biking, paddling, skiing of all kinds, mountaineering, birding and orienteering.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A MESSAGE FROM JOHN BERGENSKE

Goethe once said: “The highest goal a person can achieve is amazement”. Thank you for another year of amazement.

The ripped out corner of newspaper on my fridge door shows a pack of comic wolves howling at the moon, one looking at a companion asking, “Do you think we’re making a difference?” Beside it on a tattered color comic, a cave man looks at the cave artist who has just finished a rudimentary rock wall picture of a hunter throwing a spear at his prey. The onlooker quips, “Enough strategic planning, let’s get out there and do something.”

We are all regularly faced with the question, “are we making a difference?” In a world where climate change, expanding carbon emissions and disappearing species are only too real and exacerbated by our governments’ actions it is easy to feel disempowered. Yet, Wildsight’s ongoing programs and accomplishments are reason to believe that it is possible to make a real difference. The issues are global in scale, but the solutions have to come from communities and individuals taking care of the things they love--- collectively, through action, we change the world.

Wildsight is on the ground in our communities, schools and with industry. We encourage working and playing in ways that are in harmony with a healthy environment. We are damned to a poorer existence for ourselves and all we share this planet with without the efforts of those who care enough to look outside narrow self-interest. Wildsight supporters are people who choose to stand up and act upon values that are rooted in love of place and the community of all beings. The stunning beauty of the Columbia and southern Rocky Mountain region is a shared gift that enriches our lives and provides the opportunity to keep one of the planet’s most intact wild ecosystems healthy. As you will read in this year’s annual report, Wildsight’s work in conservation, water, education and communities is making things better.

There are also a couple of quotes stuck on the fridge door. One is a reminder about how we approach life, “no one ever attained enlightenment on a full stomach.” The other is from Goethe, “The highest goal a person can achieve is amazement.”

I encourage all of us to look around and question whether our actions are simply about personal security and a full stomach, or if we dare to embrace this rich natural world that offers so much opportunity for amazement and acts of love.

For the wild,



JOHN BERGENSKE

Executive Director

John has been a recognized leader in protection of the environment and wild spaces in the Kootenay region for over three decades. His efforts with the Wildsight team have led to an increased protected areas network, higher environmental standards for the forest industry, and wildlife management area designations. John has done extensive field research on both mountain caribou and grizzly bears in the Purcell Mountains.





2013

REGIONAL

JURI PEEPRE	Chair
MARGIE JAMIESON	Vice Chair
MARION STOTTS	Secretary
MORGAN BLAKELY	Treasurer
AYLA BENNETT	Director
BAIBA MORROW	Director
BRIAN CONRAD	Director
ELLEN ZIMMERMAN	Director
GLENN FIEBIG	Director

MANAGEMENT

JOHN BERGENSKE	Executive Director
KAT HARTWIG	Water & Climate Director
KELLY WOOD	Past Operations Director
ROBYN DUNCAN	Operations Director

ORGANIZATION

TAMARA EIDSNESS	Administrator
STEPHANIE HIRN	Office Manager
SWIFTKICK ART+DESIGN	Graphic Design
TRISH BARNES CREATIVE	Writing Services
DAVE QUINN	Writing Services
LAUREL RALSTON	Writing Services

PROGRAM TEAM

JOHN BERGENSKE	Conservation
RYLAND NELSON	Southern Rockies
ROBYN DUNCAN	Purcells/Flathead
KAT HARTWIG	Water & Climate
HEATHER LESCHIED	Water Stewardship
RYAN VAN DER MAREL	Water Stewardship
RAEGAN MALLISON	Water Stewardship
RACHEL DARVILL	Columbia Headwaters
LARS SANDER-GREEN	Climate Solutions
MONICA NISSEN	Education
DAWN DEYDEY	Beyond Recycling
LEE-ANNE WALKER	Know Your Watershed



wildsight

ENVISIONS A LANDSCAPE
WITH FREE-RUNNING STREAMS
AND RIVERS OF PURE WATER,
EXTENSIVE AND CONNECTED WILD
SPACES, AND NATURAL HABITAT
THAT MAINTAINS THE FULL
COMPLEMENT OF INDIGENOUS
PLANTS AND WILDLIFE. WE SEE
HEALTHY HUMAN COMMUNITIES
THRIVING WITH SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOODS AND LIFESTYLES
BASED ON A CONSERVATION ETHIC



For over 25 years, Wildsight has been recognized as a leader in large-scale conservation, sustainable community initiatives, and environmental education. While our work focuses on the Kootenay region, and has received recognition from the communities in which we work, we are renowned throughout the province and across Canada for our effective conservation programs, excellence and innovation in all that we do.

Wildsight manages its fiscal responsibilities transparently and effectively, while providing healthy working conditions for staff, contractors and volunteers. We create opportunities for community members to address changing environmental issues creatively and effectively. Wildsight strives to ensure sustainability practices in the areas of people, community building, finances, and carbon emissions.



KELLY WOOD
Operations Director, Past



ROBYN DUNCAN
Operations Director

STRATEGIC VISION

We continue to be guided by our long-term vision for the Columbia and Rocky Mountain Regions. Our 10-year Strategic Vision Statements highlight four focus areas to help us work towards that vision: Conservation, Water, Communities and Organization. Our conservation goals are broken down into concrete targets, but each one starts with a vision: Healthy, functioning ecosystems, clean water, sustainable communities and organizational excellence.

MAKING CHANGE

We strongly believe in the power of grassroots change, and that our communities are where big changes in attitudes towards our environment will originate, and where small changes in behavior will occur at a large scale, to really make a difference. Our contractors and staff have deep roots in their communities, and these connections help drive our work, and at the same time make it a joyful undertaking, most of the time. Our work flies in the face of the cliché “us vs. them” mentality, as our Strategic Vision clearly defines healthy communities as one of our most important missions. Conservation, industry, community, and government of all levels are all in this together, and we firmly believe that community-driven solutions are the ones that are most likely to work.

With this firm belief in the validity of all sectors comes our innovative, multi-faceted approach to modern conservation issues. Modern conservation challenges require creativity, passion, and involvement across the board, and Wildsight is doing its best to lead the way to a healthy future for the Kootenays.

COMMUNITY ECONOMY

Our Ethical Purchasing Framework informs all of our consumptive decisions. We weigh every buying decision, whether it is about printing, catering, accounting, design, or any other goods and services, prioritizing local businesses and ethically sourced products. We know we have a footprint; we just try to make sure it lands in own back yard, and creates a sustainable path for others to follow.

Wildsight provides meaningful employment to Kootenay residents, including 2 staff, 11 program contractors, 5 outreach coordinators, 1 intern, and 25 educators. We also contract a range of professionals, including foresters, biologists, designers, and writers, to help us meet our goals of accuracy, effectiveness, and science-based conservation planning. These jobs enable people to live their passion, and contribute to a thriving Kootenay economy. Whether protecting our planet, educating our children, or building sustainable communities, our contractors and staff support Kootenay families by harnessing their passions to effectively engage in the ongoing discussion about the future of the region.

Our funders and donors are an important part of making our goals a reality and contribute to the local economy. The global significance of the Columbia and Rocky Mountain ecosystem brings a broad range of people to care about this place. Financial contributions support our programs for the health of the environment, the foundation of healthy communities. We report annually to the Canada Revenue Agency (<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/charitylists/>), and you can find all our financials on our website (www.wildsight.ca/financials).

WE'RE LISTENING

Wildsight’s conservation goals are driven by the ecosystem that we are a part of, employing conservation biology, evolving science and the experience of local people. Our work is steeped in the unique character of this place.

We want to hear from you. Our staff and contractors are all approachable, and open to ideas and open dialogue about any of the files they are working on. If they are not involved in the file you want to discuss, they can point you in the right direction. Wildsight is committed to transparency, approachability, and to making change together. Come to one of our offices. Check in with your local Wildsight Branch. Call the local Wildsight Program Manager in your area. We’re listening, and we look forward to another year working on a healthy future for our communities.



TAMARA EIDSNESS
Administrator



STEPHANIE HIRN
Office Manager

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE THE SUPPORT OF THE TRAINING RESOURCES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY (TREC) FOR ONGOING ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.



Image: Lucas Jmieff

SOUTHERN ROCKIES PARTNERS

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, National, BC Chapter and Southern Alberta Chapter

Crown of the Continent Conservation Initiative

Ecojustice

Headwaters Montana

International League of Conservation Photographers

National Parks Conservation Association

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Sierra Club BC

Yellowstone to Yukon

CONSERVATION FUNDERS

Brainerd Foundation

LaSalle Adams Fund

Leon Judah Foundation

McLean Foundation

Mountain Equipment Co-op

Patagonia

Small Change Fund

West Coast Environmental Law

Wilburforce Foundation

Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

444S Foundation

SOUTHERN ROCKIES

Overview

Wildsight’s Southern Rockies program continues to advance conservation in the region in new and innovative ways. Through direct engagement with industrial interests like Teck Coal and Canfor, the bar on industrial practices that impact, or protect, water quality and wildlife habitat is being raised, and an understanding of the value of protected landscapes is being integrated into company plans for the future. Expanded discussions with the Ktunaxa, naturalists, service clubs and outdoor recreationalists are opening doors to cooperative efforts toward ecosystem protection. Outreach efforts built on the use of photo and video presentations are getting a further boost through the launch of the Flathead Wild Art Exhibit. Another successful Bioblitz, focused on birds, increased the understanding of the values of the Flathead and engaged more people in the work to protect this special place.

Wildsight and our partners in the Flathead Wild coalition maintain that real conservation will be secured only after permanent protections are formalized: A national park in the south-eastern third of the BC Flathead; and a Wildlife Management Area that connects the World Heritage Sites of Waterton-Glacier and the Banff protected areas complex (Banff, Yoho, Jasper and Kootenay parks).

The national park – an expansion of the adjacent Wateron-Glacier International Peace Park – has been the obvious solution in this region for 100 years. Today, our work with government, stakeholders and the public is building momentum to achieve this long-term goal.

Wildlife Management Areas are protected by legislation that ensures wildlife and habitat values are prioritized during land-use planning, while allowing compatible uses.

Mapping for Conservation

Wildsight’s conservation mapping process combines the best, most recent science (including topography, forest cover, wildlife habitat and movement,

riparian systems, and existing development) with input from local outdoor enthusiasts and biologists to map existing conservation values as accurately as possible. This allows us to significantly refine our mapping of core protected areas and critical connecting landscapes. Information is continually updated and integrated into our ongoing discussions with Canfor and Teck.

Finding a Balance

Our objective is to reduce the environmental impact of mining and forest practices, while protecting key areas from development. Our discussions with industry focus on comprehensive long-term planning that balances our world-class wildlife and wilderness values with the region’s rich forest, mineral and coal resources.

Notable progress has been made with both Teck and Canfor. Our concerns about the toxic levels of selenium in the Elk River played an integral role in achieving corporate and government commitments to recovery efforts. The upcoming Elk Valley Water Quality Plan and the Elk Valley Cumulative Effects Management Framework are in their initial stages. Our concerns have been integrated into mine permitting and requirements for managing selenium and other toxics in the Elk River. Our work has been integral to Teck’s purchase of conservation lands that include the Flathead Townsite, Alexander Creek and Grave Prairie.

While coal mine expansion continues outside the Flathead Valley, campaign and media work around the Dominion Coal Blocks was integral to a commitment by the Federal Government that they will not permit mining in the Flathead and will continue work with the province toward protection of the Flathead.



JOHN BERGENSKE
Conservation Director



RYLAND NELSON
Southern Rockies Program Manager



Image: Bruce Kirkby

TAPPING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

WILDSIGHT CONSULTS AND COLLABORATES WITH THE WEALTH OF LOCAL EXPERTS IN OUR AREA INCLUDING:

DAVE QUINN
Wildlife Biologist

GREG UTZIG
Ecosystems Specialist

DENISE ENGLISH
Professional Forester

FOREST STEWARDSHIP

Forestry continues to be one of the major influences on land use in our region. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification system for forestry operations, incorporating input from First Nations, economic, environmental and social stakeholders, is an effective market driven tool to improve forest practices. In order to maintain FSC certification, forest companies must meet the FSC Forest Management Standards. Wildsight was instrumental in developing British Columbia’s FSC standards and has been a key player in Canfor’s move towards FSC certification for its tenure area in the Kootenays. Each year, Wildsight participates in FSC audits of forest operations from the U.S. border to Golden.

Canfor became the dominant corporate influence on the forest landscape in the East Kootenay when it purchased Tembec’s sawmills and forest tenures. Canfor inherited Tembec’s commitment to FSC certification across its operational area and has committed to expanding FSC certification to their long-standing tenure in the Invermere Forest District. Over the past eight years, Wildsight has been working with Canfor and Tembec to identify High Conservation Forests (HCVF’s), as required by FSC standards. These are areas where higher levels of management or full protection are required. On the ground, that means more protection for critical areas from logging and road building, increased riparian protection, the retention of more forest cover, and improved management for wildlife. However, while FSC certification is an important tool that helps improve some forest practices, it is being put to the test in the Kootenays.

Canfor has significantly increased its rate of logging this past year to make up for a three-year shut down of their Radium mill and resultant pressure from the BC government to meet the company’s required five year cut quota. At the same time, rising lumber prices are a stimulus for companies to maximize allowable cuts. New logging methods have increased concerns for Wildsight and many community members. Wildsight continues to monitor how these HCVF’s are managed on the ground to ensure critical ecosystem and wildlife values are protected, working directly with the company field staff, planners, and loggers in an adaptive management approach to address concerns.

Wildsight’s conservation mapping is used to identify and protect critical habitat for species, such as endangered mountain caribou, along with intact, unroaded drainages. Our efforts have been focused this year on the Flathead drainage due to immediate threats to currently intact and critical wildlife values, as well as due to the momentum and new developments in the international Flathead Wild campaign.

Wildsight has initiated a forest watch group in the Invermere area in order to engage more people in management of the forests in their backyards. Some timber licensees, including the government’s BC Timber Sales, are not up to FSC standards. A significant challenge remains to integrate FSC conservation mapping into all forest plans and to raise the bar for forest management across the region.

The provincial government continues to reduce wildlife and forestry staff and resources, further abdicating responsibility for environmental monitoring and planning to protect our wildlife and forests. Wildsight’s Forest Stewardship Program is increasingly important as a critical voice for the future of this region.

PURCELLS

Jumbo Wild

The Central Purcell’s Jumbo Valley continues to dominate controversy and conservation efforts for this region as the single major threat to local democracy, to sustainable regional planning, and to large-scale connectivity in the Purcells. In the face of opposition from the local MLA, an overwhelming majority of local residents, the Ktunaxa First Nation, local governments and the Union of BC Municipalities, the creation of the Jumbo Glacier Mountain Resort Municipality (JGMRM) in February 2013 was unprecedented. A Mayor and 2 Councillors were appointed to preside over 65 square kilometres of what was previously crown land, an area with no resident population!

Public outrage has also been unprecedented, with 150 people protesting the inaugural JGMRM meeting in Radium. In addition to this gift of public land, the

“IF WE DESTROY THESE PLACES, WE ARE ALSO DESTROYING OUR CULTURE”

Paul Walde, Composer
Requiem for a Glacier



Image: Dave Quinn

PURCELLS PARTNERS

- BC Ministry of the Environment
- Cabinet Purcell Mountain Corridor Partner Group, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative
- Conservation Northwest
- Friends of Scotchmen Peaks
- Jumbo Creek Conservation Society
- Kootenay Mountaineering Club
- Ktunaxa Nation Council
- North Columbia Environmental Society
- Rocky Mountain Trench Society
- Sierra Club BC
- West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild
- West Kootenay Eco Society
- Wilderness Committee

politically appointed council received more than \$200,000 of public money to cover initial start-up costs, given the lack of tax-base. A judicial review filed by the West Kootenay Eco Society challenges the existence of the JGMRM, asserting that it is unconstitutional to have a municipality with an appointed Mayor and Council and no population.

Volunteers continue to monitor industrial activities at the proposed resort site, in an attempt to force JGR to stick to the hitherto ignored, but legally binding commitments it made in the Environmental Certificate attached to the Master Development Agreement. These actions included a volunteer monitoring camp in upper Farnham Creek.

The Ktunaxa First Nation has reinforced its commitment to protecting Qat’muk, a culturally essential protected area that includes the area claimed by the Jumbo Resort. Public support to keep the area wild continues to grow as the larger population of the region begins to understand the cultural significance of this area to the Ktunaxa. Their judicial review continues, challenging that the Master Development Agreement signed between Glacier Resorts Ltd. and the Province of BC violates their aboriginal rights and title.

Despite, or maybe because of the recent lifeline thrown to the proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort with the announcement of the approved Jumbo Resort Municipality, the people of the Purcells are now more than ever committed to keeping Jumbo Wild, and creating a long-term vision for the future of this wild mountain range.

Wildlife and Habitat

Across the southeastern Purcells, Wildsight partnered with the BC Ministry of Environment on a late-winter wolverine DNA study. Twelve wildlife cameras monitored wolverine DNA collection sites set up by the Ministry of the Environment, and helped document this little-known, tough-as-nails carnivore. Preliminary data revealed DNA of nine individual wolverines, offering rare insight into the lives of these rare, secretive, and little-known iconic large carnivores.

This year Wildsight’s Robyn Duncan assumed the Chair of the Rocky Mountain

Trench Society, a multi-stakeholder group focused on ecosystem restoration of the rare grasslands of the Rocky Mountain Trench.

Recreation Access

Wildsight continues to engage in, and push for, publicly directed backcountry recreation access planning for the entire Invermere Timber Supply Area - the only area in the region without an official recreation access plan. The Columbia Valley Recreation Access Committee continues to move forward, despite flagging support from government. Meetings were ongoing for the 2012-2013 season, and Wildsight will continue to be deeply engaged in the process to create a backcountry recreation access plan for the Invermere area.

We continue to work towards a solution for the snowmobile/quiet recreation conflict in the Catamount Glacier area of Forster Creek near Radium. A working group of stakeholders, including Wildsight, the Columbia Valley Hut Society, local snowmobiling clubs and outfitters, and the village of Radium (who get their water from this watershed), is still working towards an effective and sustainable management plan. Wildsight will continue to fight to protect the rights of quiet, traditional recreation, and the rights of wildlife that rely on winter tranquility for survival.

MOUNTAIN CARIBOU

Endangered mountain caribou populations continue to struggle across B.C.’s Inland Temperate Rainforest. Continued declines serve to emphasize the importance of recovery efforts for North America’s most endangered large mammal.

Wildsight continues to participate directly in the province’s multi-stakeholder advisory group, which helps steer implementation of the 2010 Provincial Mountain Caribou Recovery Strategy. At a meeting this summer with provincial caribou biologists, the importance of matrix habitat was re-emphasized. Matrix habitat includes primarily low elevation habitats not included in the core mountain caribou protection plan. It is essentially sheltered habitat across low-elevation valleys,



ROBYN DUNCAN
Purcells Program Manager



Seepanee Ecological Consulting: Grylloblatta Ecological Consulting

We know this wolverine spends time in the southern Purcells, thanks to last year’s winter wolverine study.



MOUNTAIN CARIBOU PARTNERS

- BC Nature
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (BC Chapter)
- Conservation Northwest
- Ecojustice
- ForestEthics
- Fraser Headwaters
- North Columbia Environmental Society
- Quesnel Watershed Alliance
- Sierra Club BC

critical for population linkages with minimal predation risk. Work is underway in hopes of providing maternal penning to protect calving in the Revelstoke area, as calf survival remains a central focus in recovery efforts.

Further translocation efforts are on hold until there is higher confidence of success after the high mortality rate of the animals involved in the 2012 Purcell transplant. These animals attempted to move through areas of matrix habitat no longer suitable for caribou, and as a result suffered high rates of predation and stress. Conservation interests continue to point to successful transplant programs that have essentially saved or reintroduced threatened or extirpated populations, including elk in Banff, swift fox in the Canadian prairies, badgers in the East Kootenay, and mountain caribou in the south Selkirks. As forestry operations have severely fragmented caribou habitat in many areas, it will take decades for the effect of key recovery efforts to be realized.

Wildsight and its partner groups remain committed to the ongoing legal challenge of the Federal Government’s failure to fulfill its legal obligations under the Species at Risk Act. The mountain caribou is one of the species highlighted in our court challenge of the federal government’s failure to table a management plan for recovery of Southern Mountain Caribou.

Intact ecosystems are key to maintaining water quality and to fostering the ability of our ecosystems to adapt to our changing climate. For these reasons, and for mountain caribou, Wildsight will continue to fight to protect the values that caribou require to ensure continued survival.

COLUMBIA HEADWATERS

While wetlands across the planet are being lost to draining, flooding and development, the Columbia Wetlands remain in a near pristine condition and are one of the world’s living treasures. They provide an essential and increasingly rare intact life support system for 15,000 migrating waterfowl, more than 300 pairs of resident great blue heron, songbirds, shorebirds, birds of prey, Kokanee salmon, Rocky Mountain whitefish, burbot, several varieties of trout, rubber boa, painted turtle and Columbia spotted frog, to name but a few of the 216 species

documented here. This ecosystem is also essential winter range for hundreds of elk and deer. Moose, wolf, cougar, coyote, mink, river otter, beaver, and black and grizzly bear are all found here.

The Columbia Wetlands are essential to people too. As nature’s water filter and sponge, they play a key role in keeping our water clean and pure and providing flood control. The wetlands, along with the Columbia River water system, are the primary source of fresh water to over 15 million people. Wildsight’s Rachel Darvill is working on a Master’s thesis exploring the intangible aspects of these ecosystem services and methods to identify, map, and protect ecosystem services that are difficult or impossible to quantify, such as aesthetics and forest food gathering.

In 1996, Columbia Valley residents and government agencies came together, protecting the 180km stretch of the Columbia River and wetlands from Fairmont north to Donald as a Wildlife Management Area. In 2005, the Columbia Wetlands received international recognition as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. Recreational and historical uses - fishing, hunting and trapping - continue, but under an innovative philosophy that places wildlife and habitat values first.

Wildsight is joined by the Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners, a multi-stakeholder organization encompassing NGOs and government associations, all unanimous in their support for federal boating regulations to protect the environment within the Columbia Wetlands. After two parts of the three-part regulation were made law, allowing only non-motorized boats in the wetlands and prohibiting wake boarding and towing activities on the main channel, the third part of the regulations remains outstanding. Wildsight and our partners continue to be optimistic that a 20 horsepower limit on motorized vessels will complete the necessary regulatory protections and lead to long-term conservation of the Columbia Wetlands.



RACHEL DARVILL
Columbia Headwaters



ELLEN ZIMMERMAN
Columbia Headwaters

The Columbia Mountains and Southern Rocky Mountains area have healthy, fully functioning ecosystems. A network of protected wilderness landscapes and other conservation lands encompass the full richness of native animal and plant communities.

The glaciers, rivers, lakes and wetlands of our region form the headwaters of the Columbia River, the fourth largest river in North America. This complex river system provides flood control, filtration, and carbon storage - ecosystem services that benefit human and wildlife communities.

Image: Michael Ready

“PURSUING THE OUTCOMES OF THE SYMPOSIUM - INCLUDING FOSTERING THE CROSS-CULTURAL NARRATIVE BETWEEN FIRST NATIONS AND NON-ABORIGINALS - IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS PLACE-BASED APPROACH TO GOVERNANCE. THE SYMPOSIUM HELPED CONTEXTUALIZE IDENTIFIED NEEDS IN THE BASIN SUCH AS DRAWING ON STRENGTHS OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, AND DEVELOPING A NEW STEWARDSHIP ETHIC FOR FRESH WATER. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THIS WORK CONTINUES FOR THE LONG-TERM HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITIES IN THE COLUMBIA BASIN.”

Oliver Brandes,
POLIS Project
on Ecological Governance

LIVING LAKES CANADA

Wildsight continues to raise the bar on water stewardship with our Living Lakes Canada (LLC) program. Modeled on our successful water stewardship programs in the Kootenay region, our work has been locally, regionally and nationally recognized for its innovative, community-based approach to addressing complex watershed issues. LLC is connected to water-based, grassroots organizations around the globe through membership in the international Living Lakes Network. From the rehabilitation of eutrophic lakes in Germany and peat mining policies in England, to selenium issues in BC and Alberta, our local and global communities work hand-in-hand to help Canada move forward in solving our water stewardship challenges of the 21st century.

In Canada, LLC works across watershed and political boundaries to foster dialogue, basin-to-basin transfer of knowledge and collaborative watershed planning. We engage in water stewardship work across Canada while staying rooted in the Columbia Basin. We hosted a “Think Like a Watershed” symposium, in partnership with the Columbia Basin Watershed Network, sparking important dialogue on watershed governance in the Columbia Basin. Keynote speaker John Ralston-Saul, along with the many other presenters, shifted our way of thinking towards a new paradigm of water management.

Like all conservation efforts, LLC’s work continues to be challenged by increased federal and provincial downloading of stewardship responsibilities to the non-governmental sector, alongside funding cutbacks. LLC believes effective collaborations and strong partnerships are key to nurturing water stewardship ethics and efforts at regional and national levels.

Some of our major achievements this year included:

Nominated by LLC, Lake Winnipeg was recognized with the dubious distinction of 2013’s “Threatened Lake of the Year” by Global Nature Fund. The world’s 10th largest freshwater lake drains a watershed of nearly 1 million square kilometers, including 90% of the prairie agricultural land in Canada. Lake Winnipeg is considered to be one of the most eutrophic large lakes in the world. LLC supported Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping for Lake Winnipeg’s South Basin as part

of the Lake Winnipeg Health Plan. Living Lakes Canada advisor Bob Sandford engaged the Mayors and Reeves of the South Basin regarding the importance of policy implementation.

Partnered with Nature Canada on the national “I Love My Lake” outreach campaign, designed to inspire all Canadians to declare their love for lakes and their desire to safeguard them for future generations. In the Kootenay region, we used a grassroots approach by building momentum in the lake communities of Slocan and Kootenay Lakes to move water science to action for lake management and sensitive foreshore habitat protection.

Launched a community-based groundwater monitoring pilot project for the Columbia River Headwaters region, building baseline data to fill the current gap of groundwater inventory in British Columbia.

Delivered Streamkeepers and Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network field training workshops for 14 individuals, bringing our total trainees to 61 groups and individuals from industry, non-government organizations, and Living Lakes Canada’s membership.

Provided mentorship and leadership to help build the First Nations driven Keepers of the Water to further organizational development and capacity building in the Mackenzie Basin.

Spearheaded the Upper Athabasca Monitoring program, engaging and training Keepers of the Athabasca to conduct water monitoring initiatives and manage data to better understand the health of the upper reaches of the Athabasca River.

Participated in the Columbia River Treaty Review public engagement process hosted by the province of British Columbia.

Developed Friends of Kootenay Lake, in partnership with West Kootenay EcoSociety. This grassroots water stewardship organization is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of Kootenay Lake.

Hosted outreach tables at: Kokanee Creek Salmon Festival, Nelson Marketfest, Creston Valley Market, Meadow Creek Market, Harrop Harvest Festival, and Lush Whistler and Calgary locations.



KAT HARTWIG
Water & Climate Director
Executive Director, Living Lakes Canada



HEATHER LESCHIED
Program Manager, Water Stewardship
Living Lakes Canada



Image: Joe Riis

LIVING LAKES CANADA MEMBERS

Alberta Lake Management Society
BC Lake Stewardship Society
Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations
Freshwater Future
Keepers of the Athabasca
Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation
Lake Winnipeg Foundation
Nature Canada
Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition

LIVING LAKES CANADA FUNDERS

Alberta EcoTrust
BC Hydro
Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program
Columbia Basin Trust
EcoCanada
Fortis
Lush
Real Estate Foundation of BC
Royal Bank of Canada
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Teck
Tides Canada
Vancouver Foundation
Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation

Named as a Water Leader under the framework of POLIS Project on Ecological Governance and Real Estate Foundation of BC research for report entitled, The State of the Water Movement in British Columbia: A Waterscape Scan & Needs Assessment of the BC NGO Sector”

Only Canadian NGO invited to participate in Storm Warning: Water, Energy and Climate Security in a Changing World conference hosted by the University of Regina and University of Texas, in partnership with the UN Water for Life Decade in Canada.

Named BC Hydro Community Champion for success in community based stewardship approaches.

Ethical beauty retailer LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics selected Living Lakes Canada, as a feature water initiative as part of their ‘Take Back the Tap’ campaign to raise public awareness around the impacts of the bottled water industry. Living Lakes Canada was profiled in all 179 stores across North America.

From New Brunswick to Bowen Island, Living Lakes Canada worked across the nation to support, lead, or deliver workshops and presentations attended by well over 2000 people at the following events:

Living Waters Rally, Ottawa, Ontario
Living Lakes Canada Presented three workshops entitled; Introduction to Community Based Monitoring; Tools for Assessing Water Health; and, Implementing Water Science into Decision-Making.

Banff Mountain Film Festival with Kicking Horse Coffee, Banff, AB
National CABIN Science Forum, Fredericton, New Brunswick
Living Lakes Canada presented a workshop entitled: Citizen Science Using the CABIN Protocol

Canada Water Week 2013: I Love My Waterbody
Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments Annual Meeting
Living Lakes Canada, Regional District of East Kootenay and Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations

delivered a partnership presentation entitled: Building a Foundation for Lake Stewardship

Salmon Enhancement Program Workshop, Bowen Island, BC
Living Lakes Canada delivered a workshop entitled: Advanced Stream Habitat Survey

Keepers of Athabasca Tar Sands Healing Walk, Fort McMurray, AB
Columbia Basin Salmon Festival Feast, Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
Columbia Basin “Think Like a Watershed” Symposium, Fairmont Hot Springs, BC

Living Lakes Advisory Board

Bob Sandford, Canadian Partnership initiative of the UN Decade of Water for Life; Dr. David Schindler, University of Alberta; Oliver Brandes, POLIS Project on Ecological Governance; Dr. Hans Schreier, University of British Columbia; Karen Kun, Waterlution; Bruce MacDonald, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (retired); Anne Levesque, Small Change Fund; Allan Casey, Author; Merrell-Ann Phare, Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources; Kerry Freek, Water Canada Magazine; Dr. Allen Curry, University of New Brunswick – Canadian Rivers Institute.

Living Lakes Partners

Global Nature Fund; University of Waterloo Water Policy and Governance Group; Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation Freshwater Advisory; WWF Canada; Pacific Streamkeepers Federation; POLIS Project on Ecological Governance; Columbia Basin Watershed Network; Kootenay Lake Partnership; East Kootenay Integrated Lake Management Partnership; Lake Windermere Ambassadors; Canadian Freshwater Alliance, Canadian Columbia River Inter-tribal Fisheries Commission; Kootenay Conservation Program; Selkirk College, Rural Development Institute; Columbia Basin Trust Environmental Strategic Planning Advisory, Mountain Equipment Co-op Freshwater Advisory.



RYAN VAN DER MAREL
Program Coordinator, Water Stewardship
Living Lakes Canada



RAEGAN MALLINSON
Program Intern, Water Stewardship
Living Lakes Canada



Students of the region are ecologically literate, possessing the knowledge, skills and attitudes that constitute a conservation ethic. Our school-based programs prepare future leaders for the challenges of sustainability.

Wildsight will:
 Deliver field trip programs to get local children outside to explore and learn from the wild ecosystems of our region
 Expand & develop student learning opportunities related to sustainable living in conjunction with Ministry of Education learning objectives
 Work with educators to pursue the vision of experiential environmental education (EE) becoming incorporated into schools and learning outcomes across curriculum

ALL THE KIDS ARE GOING WILD!

EDUCATION IN THE WILD OUTREACH

4101 STUDENTS
 208 FIELD TRIPS
 24 COMMUNITIES
 16 EDUCATORS
 1500 VOLUNTEER HOURS

BEYOND RECYCLING OUTREACH

11 SCHOOLS
 290 STUDENTS
 2 NEW LESSONS (22 TOTAL!)
 115 ECOCHALLENGERS
 354 TONNES OF CO2 REDUCTIONS

KNOW YOUR WATERSHED OUTREACH

14 COMMUNITIES
 620 GRADE 8 STUDENTS
 34 CLASSROOMS
 6 COMMUNITY STUDENT ACTION PROJECTS

In our thirteenth year of classroom-based Environmental Education (EE) programs, Wildsight continues to set the regional standard of excellence with teachers, parents, and most importantly, students. In the 2012-2013 school year, 4,401 children participated in 208 Education in the Wild programs. The wild 'backyards' of our communities are the perfect classroom to connect with nature, building ecological literacy and the foundation for healthy lifestyle habits. Our success shows in the high return rate of participating teachers, the positive and appreciative feedback, the increasing awareness on the part of teachers, administrators and school district managers of the environmental education opportunities offered by Wildsight, and in the excitement, engagement, and delight of participating students.

EDUCATION IN THE WILD

Wildsight's Education in the Wild programs help children build an understanding and appreciation of the complex mosaic of balanced ecosystems. These programs are directly linked to grade-specific learning outcomes detailed in the BC Ministry of Education Prescribed Learning Outcomes. These programs help develop ecological literacy and inspire ethics of conservation and stewardship in our young people, out future leaders. By understanding and valuing functioning, healthy ecosystems, we are building the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to address the challenges of sustainability.

Classroom with Outdoors

Classroom with Outdoors programs are day-long field trips that take intermediate classes outdoors to learn about the ecology of their wild 'backyards'. Offered to grades 4-7, these field trips focus on grassland, wetland or forest ecosystems. Field science comes alive with dip-netting, water quality tests, magnifying glasses, bug boxes, discovery scopes, forest inventories and plant classification. With pre-trip and post-trip follow-up lessons, teachers are supported in preparing for the experience, and incorporating the day's activities into their greater teaching plan in science, and across the curriculum.

Classroom with Outdoors creative genius Lee-Anne Walker launched the program in 2000. While the program continues to evolve, Walker has been a constant, delivering it to Elk Valley classrooms for 13 years. This spring, Walker passed the torch, leaving behind a true legacy. Now offered across the Columbia Basin, Classroom with Outdoors connected 1750 students to nature this year alone through 70 different field trips.

Winter Wonder

Winter Wonder is a part-day introductory winter ecology field trip offered to Kindergarten through Grade 3 kids. Winter comes alive through the exploration of snow crystals and their formation with magnifying glasses and crystal identification sheets and through animal tracks in the snow.

This year, 2732 kids, in 140 programs, across the Columbia Basin became detectives, exploring the magic of winter ecology, discovering snow crystals and their formation with magnifying glasses and crystal identification sheets and following animal tracks in the snow. Led by a costumed character, Frosty Flake, Jayne Frost or Captain Powder, kids love this program.

Eco Stewards

In the research and development stage, the Eco-Stewards program will involve participants in hands-on field science and data collection as well as student-directed environmental stewardship action projects.

Our programs are popular with students and teachers alike. This year, student teachers from the UBC Teacher Training Program observed our programs to help formulate ideas for their own education careers.

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING - BEYOND RECYCLING

Now in it's fourth year as a region-wide program, Wildsight's Beyond Recycling is a classroom-based program for grades 4-7, whose central theme is to encourage students to think 'beyond' simply recycling, and move forward towards effective and positive environmental action and solutions for sustainable living. Our team



MONICA NISSEN
 Education Program Manager



LEE-ANNE WALKER
 Program Coordinator Know Your Watershed



DAWN DEYDEY
 Program Coordinator Beyond Recycling



EDUCATION IN THE WILD PARTNERS

Columbia Basin Trust
Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network
Crowsnest Pass Conservation Society
Columbia Basin School Districts

EDUCATION IN THE WILD FUNDERS

BC Gaming Fund
Columbia Basin Trust
Columbia Power
Creston Kootenay Foundation
Fortis BC
North Face Explore Fund
Osprey Foundation
TD Friends of the Environment
Teck Coal
Teck Trail Operations

KNOW YOUR WATERSHED FUNDERS

Columbia Basin Trust

of eight talented educators uses the Ecological Footprint concept as a conduit for classroom and school-wide community change. This interactive program complements BC Ministry of Education curriculum, providing opportunities for teachers to incorporate the activities and lessons into their own teaching. Beyond Recycling educators visit participating classes once a week from October through May.

This year, 290 students in eleven communities took part in ‘Beyond Recycling’, with 115 of these students, and their families, participating in the programs month-long EcoChallenge, saving over 354 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. This empowering EcoChallenge proves to students that simple individual actions can have a big impact. We increased the number of lessons from 20 to 22. These new lessons allowed us to engage administrators, parents, educational assistants, entire school communities and communities at large.

KNOW YOUR WATERSHED

Know Your Watershed (KYW) is a regionally-based water stewardship education program designed for Grade 8 students. Wildsight delivers this Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) program. Since the pilot in 2010, the program has tripled in size, and is building capacity towards the goal of reaching every grade 8 student in the Columbia Basin. This year, we delivered the program to 14 communities, reaching 620 grade 8 students in 34 different classes. New schools this year included Kimberley’s Selkirk Secondary School, Castlegar’s Stanley Humphries Secondary, and Kaslo’s J.V. Humphries Secondary School.

A key component of the KYW program is the community connections it fosters. Each class connected with water managers for tours of municipal water treatment and sewage facilities, while community-based water groups helped students conduct stream surveys.

Six of the communities completed very ambitious Student Action Projects. These ranged from marking storm drains with fish symbols to remind residents that storm water returns directly to local waterways without treatment, to streamside restoration and clean-up efforts, to the installation of bird houses and an Earth Day

display of giant benthic macro invertebrate models.

Our Educator Team

The success of our education programs could not be achieved without our highly qualified educators: Monica Nissen, Gillian Cooper, Patty Kolesnichenko, Lee-Anne Walker, Sanne van der Ros, Kalista Pruden, Gillian Sanders, Marcy Mahr, Jennifer Vogel, Kim Thorn, Dawn Deydey, Signy Fredickson, Mary Searchfield, Genna Lazier, Janette Vickers, Wendy Pope, Catherine Plotnikoff, Alison Daley, Ayla Bennett, Bree Lillies, Allie Dickhout, Dave Quinn, Jenny Wallace, Jess Thomson, Becky Phillips.

“I fully endorse this program without reservation. It is the only program of its kind of which I am aware that so effectively delivers information, impacts on attitudes, and changes behaviour in intermediate-aged children and their families. The materials are current and engaging for the children in my classroom. The topics covered are relevant in their lives. Most importantly, the teaching methods and learning activities employed in the program are current, formatted for children of this age, engage many forms of technology, require active participation on the part of students, and produce measurable change in attitudes and behaviour.”
John Schnare, Rosemont Elementary School

BEYOND RECYCLING PARTNERS

Regional District of Central Kootenay
Rosemont Elementary
Salmo Elementary
McKim Middle School
Brent Kennedy Elementary
Redfish Elementary
Twin Rivers Elementary
JV Humphries
Elementary/Secondary School
Trafalgar Middle School
Isabella Dicken Elementary
Lucerne Elementary/Secondary School
Erickson Elementary School
Robson Community School

BEYOND RECYCLING FUNDERS

Columbia Basin Trust
Government of Canada – NSERC
BC Hydro
Fortis BC
Regional District of the Central Kootenay
Waste Management Inc.



Wildsight plays a vital role in translating climate change science, climate legislation and opportunities for local solutions into a language that can be understood and appreciated by the general public.

Wildsight's Climate Solutions for the Kootenays bridges the gap between the global issue of climate change and the opportunities that exist locally to realize tangible emissions reductions.



LARS SANDER-GREEN
Program Coordinator

2013 CLIMATE SOLUTION EFFORTS ADD UP

- 4 COMPOST WORKSHOPS
- + 2 DEMONSTRATION HOMES
- + 50 COMPOSTERS DISTRIBUTED
- + 88 VOLUNTEERS
- + 130 VOLUNTEER HOURS
- + 2700 PEOPLE WATCH 'CHASING ICE'

COMMUNITY-BASED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS FOR THE KOOTENAYS

Climate Solutions focused on the communities of Kimberley and Cranbrook. Aimed at educating residents and businesses about their carbon footprints, the project reached nearly 3000 people this year. A series of home renovation demonstrations, compost workshops, classroom-based waste reduction programs and green business forums provided concrete ideas and projects to reduce their carbon emissions.

Our touring screening of the film Chasing Ice, paired with climate change education, reached 2,300 students from Grades 5-12 and 400 community members in Kimberley and Cranbrook. The film had an obvious effect on students and adults alike, and was an effective tool to help communicate the need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions at the personal, community, and societal level.

Over 100 people learned about composting at four Learn to Compost workshops. Designed to reduce organic material input to our landfills, and the associated methane production, effective composting techniques will go a long way in reducing this potent greenhouse gas produced by decomposing organic material. Fifty discounted composters were distributed at these workshops. The project also engaged seven committed volunteers to help design a community composter accessible to all.

Two local demonstration homes were the focus of 6 green businesses and 11 volunteers for hands-on home energy efficiency upgrades. An open house shared resources and techniques for other homeowners to increase their home energy efficiency.

A directed presentation, Greening Your Business, reached 20 members of the Cranbrook Junior Chamber of Commerce, as well as School District and local government representatives, on ways to reduce their carbon footprints.

PESTICIDE REDUCTION

Wildsight works locally, regionally and provincially to reduce cosmetic pesticide use in our communities. We are a lead partner in the Pesticide Free Columbia Basin Coalition, bringing together health organizations, local businesses, landscapers, sports teams, environmental organizations, local government officials and concerned citizens.

We belong to regional and provincial coalitions that bring the efforts of diverse health and environmental organizations together for a healthier environment. We promote local bylaws that ban the use of cosmetic pesticides and provide information for pesticide free lawn and garden care. We advocate for strong provincial legislation that would ban the use, sale and retail display of cosmetic pesticides, protecting British Columbians, water quality, wildlife species and our pollinators, like the native and honey bee, from harmful effects of these toxic substances. We were the primary organization in leading Cosmetic Pesticide Provincial Legislation as a policy priority with Organizing for Change.

A province-wide consultation process, set up in the bi-partisan Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides, resulted in little change on the way cosmetic pesticides are regulated in BC. The Committee's recommendations flew in the face of the overwhelming majority of public submissions supporting legislation that would ban the use, sale and retail display of cosmetic pesticides, instead recommending incremental changes to pesticide applicator regulations.

PESTICIDE REDUCTION PARTNERS

- Canadian Cancer Society
- Pesticide Free Columbia Basin Coalition
- Prevent Cancer Now!
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
- West Coast Environmental Law
- David Suzuki Foundation

Organizing for Change: Greenpeace, Sierra Club BC, West Coast Environmental Law, CPAWS BC, Dogwood Initiative, BC Sustainable Energy Association, Pembina Institute, Conservation Northwest, EcoJustice, Forest Ethics, Georgia Straight Alliance

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS FUNDERS

- Environment Canada – EcoAction



OUR LOCAL BRANCHES



Wildsight branches work with our communities to maintain truly environmentally sustainable lifestyles in harmony with our natural ecosystems. Our communities have pride in, and protect our clean water, air and soil, in each unique regional ecosystem.

We have five Wildsight branches in the Kootenay region: Kimberley-Cranbrook, Elk Valley, Golden, Creston and Invermere. Each of our individual and diverse Wildsight branches is highly regarded for work on programs relevant to its own community, including cutting-edge work on minimizing our ecological footprint and promoting renewable energy, sustainable transportation, responsible land use planning, local food production, and sustainable building.

It's all about building community. Small, local steps that make big, global changes.

Food is bringing our communities together on a whole new level. From our farms and gardens to our plates, people want to be involved in growing local food sustainability. The One World Garden Workshop series followed the life of a garden through the local seasons, the Golden Sprouts Mentoring Project connected 50 youth with local, seasoned gardeners and the Apple Capture Project connected hundreds to the free loan of fruit presses, dehydrators and saucers to take the apple from the tree to the freezer.

The Green Building Conference is connecting homeowners and industry professionals with best practices on building - and renovating - green to increase energy efficiency.

The Elk River Alliance is a forum for Elk Valley residents to work towards a new ERA in watershed thinking in one of the nation's most intensive coal mining regions.

The Creston Valley Bird Festival is paying homage to the biodiversity hotspot and critical migratory path for thousands upon thousands of birds each year.

The new Golden River Days is a four-day festival to celebrate the importance of the Kicking Horse and Columbia Rivers to everyday life for Goldenites.

Wild Nature Tours Invermere hosted nearly 80 people on 7 tours throughout the summer, connecting visitors and locals alike to the magic of the Columbia Valley.

Our local branches are leading the way to find sustainable solutions for our communities in an increasingly unpredictable future.



The Creston Branch continues to shine in its ability to bring ideas and presenters into the Creston Valley to continue the ongoing dialogue on the many environmental issues facing the community.

In 2013, over 400 people attended the Creston Branch's continued highly successful community speaker series. We hosted 5 evening speaker events that had an average of 80 people attending for a total of 400 people. Presentations by mountaineer, author, and cinematographer Pat Morrow, and by local grizzly biologist Dr. Michael Proctor, were among the highlights. In addition to the regular speakers, over 200 people attended the branch's annual slideshow, which moved to the local movie theatre two years ago due to its immense popularity.

The big event of the year was the Wildsight sponsored "Creston Valley Bird Fest". Attended by 200 people from across the province, the festival featured keynote speaker Brain Keating and is sure to become an annual favourite.

Living in an agricultural center, members of the Creston Branch continue to work hard to promote sustainable food systems through Community Supported Agriculture and eating locally.

As lead shareholders in the Creston Community Forest, the Creston Branch continues to engage with other community organizations to ensure that sustainable forestry practices are the norm in and around the community, not the exception, and that water quality is the number one goal in all forestry practices.

Wildsight Creston is run by passion and dedication – 20 volunteers put in well over 1250 hours to bring these great programs to the Creston Valley.

Branch Partners

Creston Community Forest (shareholder)
Creston Valley Bird Fest
Creston Food Action Coalition

Branch Funders

Columbia Basin Trust, Creston & District Credit Union, Ducks Unlimited, Fortis, Gosling Foundation.

MEASURING SUCCESS | OUTREACH

CRESTON VALLEY BIRD FEST
3 DAYS
16 EVENTS
1 ART BENEFIT
200 ATTENDEES

CRESTON VALLEY SPEAKER SERIES
5 EVENING SHOWS
400 ATTENDEES

WILDSIGHT CRESTON

BERND STENGL President
RALPH MOORE Vice President
ALEXANDRA DANSEREAU Secretary
SUSAN LOW Treasurer
JIM SMITH Director
DREW GAILIUS Director
ED McMACKIN Director
TANNA PATTERSON Directo

CONTACT WILDSIGHT CRESTON

2809 Erickson Road
Creston, B.C. V0B 1G1
250.482.5741
CrestonValley@Wildsight.ca



MEASURING SUCCESS | OUTREACH

ELK VALLEY EARTH DAY
TRASHY BUT FLASHY FASHION SHOW
STUDENT ACTION PROJECT
NATIVE PLANT DISPLAY
I LOVE MY RIVER STORY BOOTH
140 ATTENDEES

FERNIE ECOGARDEN
19 PLOTS RENTED
WEEK LONG KIDS CAMP
23 YOUNG GARDENERS
PLANT SALE AND SEED SWAP
1 ANGEL GARDEN

HOMETOWN HEROES
10 YEARS OF DEDICATED PASSION
1 FERNIE ECOGARDEN
COUNTLESS WORKSHOPS
1 LARGER THAN LIFE LEGACY
\$10,000 PRIZE
DAWN DEYDEY DECLARED HOMETOWN HERO

ELK RIVER WATERSHED DISCOVERY DAY
CAMPS
18 YOUTH
2 5-DAY CAMPS
500 TREES PLANTED

ADVOCATES FOR LOCAL LIVING
7 FILMS
THINK LOCAL FIRST DISCOUNT CARD
FERNIE RIDE BOARD
FERNIE MUG CLUB
APPLE CAPTURE PROJECT
A MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

Engaging with a range of new funders and community partners, Wildsight’s Elk Valley Branch has been directing much of it’s energy towards the recently formed Elk River Alliance (ERA), connecting people to the Elk River, keeping it drinkable, fishable and swimmable for future generations. The bulk of our programming focuses on water monitoring, education, stewardship, and celebration. Our watershed-level planning looks at all inputs and attempts to address the cumulative effects of all activities within the Elk Watershed towards a new ERA in watershed thinking.

The branch has been coordinating community-based water monitoring on Alexander Creek since 2012, and on Lizard Creek since 2013. Both of these rivers are under threat from planned industrial or urban developments. ERA ran a Streamkeepers citizen-science training workshop in August. This valuable baseline data, collected utilizing standardized citizen-science protocols, will be available on the ERA website.

In 2013, ERA partnered with Cranbrook’s Lotic Environmental to begin phase 1 of a **Report to Residents on River Health**. The report will help inform and improve decision making in the valley bottom where Elk Valley residents and visitors live, work and play. This initial step will look at the Elk River from Elkford to Elko, identifying the current state of health, problems and pressures that exist. The Elk River is an internationally renowned fishing destination.

Silver Springs Lakes are unique wilderness recreation lakes near Elko, whose shorelines are rapidly being degraded by unsustainable recreation. To address this, ERA started Silver Springs Stewardship Solutions, interviewing 40 local groups to gather information on recreational experiences and potential solutions. A plan will be unveiled in May 2014.

ERA engages directly with several community water management panels, including Teck’s Community of Interest Panel, Teck Coal/Ktunaxa Nation Council Cumulative Effects Management Framework Working Group, and the Columbia Basin Watershed Network.

With the release of scientific reports about rising selenium levels and potential harmful effects on fish in the Elk watershed, ERA, in partnership with Teck Coal, hosted the **Selenium Sunday Dialogue**, attended by 50 participants at the Fernie

Arts Station. This dialogue was the catalyst to a meeting specifically for fishers, hosted by Teck Coal. At this meeting, ERA received requests for a ‘one stop shop’ for selenium and other water quality information. As a result, our website was significantly updated and we designed a waterproof ‘Fish of the Elk River’ card to promote ERA and water quality resources available on line.

Our **Elk Watershed Discovery Day Camps** brought together 18 youth from across the region to two 5-day camps. The camps exposed Elk Valley youth to how professionals use math and science in their everyday jobs, how they became professionals and what foresters, ecologists, environmental managers, environmental engineers, geologists, civic water technicians, fly fishers, and rafting guides really do. Campers planted 500 trees and donated a total of 150 volunteer hours to water quality and conservation programs in the area, including the West Fernie wetland conservation plan, water quality testing on Lizard Creek, and installing rainwater catchment and water barrels at the Fernie Eco-Garden.

At the **3rd annual Elk River Swim Drink Fish Festival**, in conjunction with World BC Rivers Day and the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, over 30 volunteers cleaned up 40 kms of the Elk River shoreline and staging areas.

The Fernie Ecogarden rented out 19 plots this year, including greenhouse space, ran a week-long kids camp for 23 young gardeners, hosted a plant sale and seed swap, and started up Angel Garden, a place where families can remember loved ones who die young. Dawn Deydey, Community Ecogarden founder, was recognized for her incredible contributions to community sustainability as the recipient of Earth Day Canada’s 2013 Hometown Heroes Award. Deydey donated the \$10,000 award back to the branch to continue community programming.

Long-time Wildsight board member, staff, and supporter Lee-Anne Walker donated her company Wild Nature Tours the Wildsight this year, to run as a non-profit ecotour enterprise. Wild Nature Tours offered snowshoeing at Fernie Alpine Resort, Mount Fernie Provincial Park and Island Lake Lodge, connecting visitors to the wonder of winter in Fernie.

Finally, the Advocates for Local Living (ALL) ran a series of seven, thought-provoking films and discussions as part of their Think-Tank Cinema. ALL also coordinated a Think Local First discount card program, a Fernie Ride Board to promote carpooling, and the Fernie Mug Club to minimize the use of single-use coffee mugs. ALL continues to coordinate Elk Valley Bear Aware as well as managing the Apple Capture Project, with online access to apple presses, food dehydrators, and other food preservation tools.

ALL continued to coordinate the successful Elk Valley Earth Day events including the Trashy but Flashy fashion show, a native plant display, tree giveaway, and the I Love My River Story Booth. Local grade 8 students participating in Know Your Watershed’s Student Action Project made a “What’s Bugging You in Water” display – storyboards and large specimens of benthic invertebrates – for Wildsight’s Earth Day event. 140 residents viewed this exhibit and the passion of the youth for what benthic invertebrates can tell us about water quality in streams.

Branch Partners

Overwaitea, Extra Foods, The Free Press, Fernie Secondary School, TD Canada Trust-Fernie Branch, City of Fernie, District of Sparwood, Lotic Environmental, Keefer Ecological Consulting, Pacific Streamkeepers Federation, BC Parks, CBT Know Your Watershed education program.

Branch Funders

Teck Coal, Vancouver Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust.



LEE-ANNE WALKER
Executive Director, Elk River Alliance

AYLA BENNETT
Program Coordinator, Elk River Alliance

WILDSIGHT ELK VALLEY

MIKE BENNETT President
MARCIE WELSH Treasurer
FERN MARRIOTT Director
LISA A.M. JANSSEN Director
SHARON SWITZER Director
TED RALFE Director
TERRY NELSON Director

CONTACT WILDSIGHT ELK VALLEY

891 2nd Ave, Box 537
Fernie, B.C. V0B 1M0
250.423.3322
ElkValley@Wildsight.ca



MEASURING SUCCESS | OUTREACH

GOLDEN SPROUTS
10 GARDEN MENTORS
50 LOCAL YOUTH
1 ABUNDANT LOCAL HARVEST

GOLDEN RIVER DAYS FESTIVAL
4 DAYS OF FESTIVAL FUN
2 RIVERS
1 COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

EVENING SERIES PRESENTATIONS
6 EVENING PRESENTATIONS
400 INSPIRED ATTENDEES
1 SENSE OF GREATER COMMUNITY

INVASIVE WEED CONTROL
MULTIPLE COMMUNITY WEED PULLS
MANY BAGS OF INVASIVE WEEDS REMOVED
1 HEALTHIER ECOSYSTEM

EARTH DAY LAKE CLEAN UP & POTLUCK
20 VOLUNTEERS
MANY BAGS OF GARBAGE REMOVED
1 SHORELINE CLEANED-UP

MAY BIRDING MORNING
26 KEEN BIRDERS
1 BEAUTIFUL EARLY MORNING

Wildsight Golden volunteers rolled up their sleeves and got their hands dirty in 2013. The branch coordinated invasive weed pulls, connected young gardeners with mentor gardeners, connected Golden schools with wildlife in their backyard, continued citizen science water monitoring on local creeks, and started a whole new four-day festival: Golden River Days. The branch also brought a great line-up of conservation-themed speakers and films to town, as well as hosting birding mornings and an Earth Day potluck.

In April, over 20 volunteers donned rubber boots and work gloves for the branch's annual Earth Day Reflection Lake Cleanup and Potluck. This left the shores of Reflection Lake in great condition for the mid-May Birding Breakfast. Ellen Zimmerman led the morning event, where 26 keen birders enjoyed hot coffee and muffins, while they peered through spotting scopes and binoculars at the arriving migratory birds.

The spring thaw allowed the Golden Sprouts Garden Mentoring Project to germinate. Over 50 local youth connected with 10 local gardeners, to learn about and practice gardening in the Columbia Valley. New skills and valuable community connections flourished in this program.

The Edible Garden Tour connected gardeners throughout town to share wisdom on growing edible crops in our local climate.

Throughout the summer, the branch coordinated regular pulls of invasive weeds, and has a representative on the newly-formed Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society, whose mission is to work with stakeholders and land managers to create coordinated invasive weed management plans for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District.

The branch also hosted six evening presentations, including Pat and Baiba Morrow's *Mountains: The Sacred and Profane*, Kevin Van Tighem's book launch of *Bears Without Fear*, Wayne Sawchuck's *Riding the Great Divide*, the films *Peace Out* (about the controversial Site C hydroelectric dam construction proposal on the Peace River), *Chasing Ice*, as well as Juliet Craig's presentation, *Bats of the Kootenays*. Nearly 400 people attended this thought-provoking series.



Branch volunteers also coordinated the inaugural, four-day Golden River Days Festival. The events highlighted Golden's unique situation at the confluence of the Kicking Horse and Columbia Rivers, and celebrated the importance of these waterways to the lives of Goldenites and to the environment. The events brought our community together, promoting understanding and support of environmental values.

Branch Partners

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
Golden Food Bank
Ministry of the Environment
Mt Motor Sports
Golden Gentlemen's Club
Rotary Club
School District #6
Town of Golden

Branch Funders

Columbia Basin Trust
Community Gaming Grant
Town of Golden
BC Lottery Commission
Columbia Shushwap Invasive Weed Society

"Wildsight gives me hope. We live in a time when conservation seems secondary to consumption and Wildsight-Golden gives those of us who might think differently a way to connect and support one another so that we do not feel so alone."
Meg Langley, Director



JANE POWELL, Wildsight Golden
Outreach Coordinator

WILDSIGHT GOLDEN

JOAN DOLINSKY President
MARYANN EMERY Treasurer
SANNE VAN DER ROS Secretary
ELLEN ZIMMERMAN Director
GLEN FIEBIG Director
JULIE CALWELL Director
MEG LANGLEY Director
RACHEL DARVILL Director
SUE ROWE Director

CONTACT WILDSIGHT GOLDEN

Box 955, Golden BC V0A 1H0
JoanDolinsky@gmail.com



MEASURING SUCCESS | OUTREACH

WILMER WETLANDS CLEAN-UP
50 TIRES PULLED OUT THIS YEAR
250 TIRES REMOVED IN RECENT YEARS

LAKE ENID RESTORATION PROJECT
1 DAMAGED RECREATION AREA
6 NEW INTERPRETIVE SIGNS PLANNED
2 DAYS OF NATIVE GRASS RE-SEEDING

ANNUAL CAMP-OUT
1 BLUSTERY WEEKEND
5 EAGER HIKERS
1 FABULOUS HIKE

EVENING SERIES
5 EVENING PROGRAMS
350 ATTENDEES
1 COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS

WILD NATURE TOURS
7 TOURS
80 PARTICIPANTS
2 VOYAGEUR CANOE TRIPS
1 POET LAUREATE OF CANADA
1 EVEREST SUMMITEER

The Invermere Branch continued its dedication to connecting people with our wild landscapes with a number of successful restoration, recreation, and industry-related conservation initiatives in 2013.

Wild Nature Tours. What started out as a simple idea to get visitors and locals outdoors and reconnected with Nature turned into an enterprising non-profit venture with the help of our paid summer intern. Over the summer, seven tours attracted nearly 80 participants and included bird watching, a High-ku Mountain Walk with Canada's Parliamentary Poet laureate Fred Wah, a hike with an Everest summiteer, and a voyageur canoe trip down the Columbia River. Based on this year's wild success, the program will continue next summer.

Wilmer Wetlands Clean-Up. A lot of rubber was hauled from the wetlands. Volunteers removed another 50 tires from the wetland shores over the winter, bringing the total to over 250 tires removed in the past few years.

Lake Enid Restoration Project Lake Enid is a heavily used and abused, but cherished, recreation area near Wilmer. Extensive ecological damage has resulted from decades of irresponsible Off Road Vehicle (ORV) use. With support from the Ktunaxa Nation Council and funding from the East Kootenay Range Enhancement Program, the branch began the long process of healing Lake Enid with critical fencing, scarification and native grass reseeding. Six interpretive signs are planned to highlight responsible recreation guidelines, as well as the natural and cultural history of this popular area.

The branch's Green Drinks informal discussion forum continues to be a productive outlet for debate on current environmental issues.

Over 350 people attended the five evening programs of our ongoing public education series, including a well-attended program on Bhutan's ideology of Gross National Happiness, kick-starting a community discussion that continues to this day.

In addition to participating in Bike to Work Week and the well-attended Wings Over the Rockies Bird Festival, the branch hosted booths at the Invermere Farmers Market, at local grocery outlets on busy summer afternoons, at Summer Splash, and at the Windermere Fall Fair.



Branch representatives continue to sit on a number of advisory stewardship groups, including the Columbia Valley Recreation Access Council, the Jumbo Creek Conservation Society, Invermere District Forest Watch, and the Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partnership.

Branch Partners

Groundswell
Slow Food
CBEEN
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative
CWSP Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners
District of Invermere
Regional District of East Kootenay
BC Cancer Society
Rocky Mountain Trench Society

Branch Funders

Government of Canada - Canada Summer Jobs
East Kootenay Range Enhancement Fund

“Everything was great - listening to Fred and others speak about their values and the importance of the environment reinforced my commitment to Wildsight and other organizations that promote conservation and nature. Thanks.”
Bob Campsall, participant in Wild Nature Tours High(ku) Walk



ABBEY REISLE, Wildsight Invermere
Summer Intern

WILDSIGHT INVERMERE

BAIBA MORROW President
JIM GALLOWAY Vice President
SARAH LOCKE Secretary
JOHN ASHBY Treasurer
ANDREA HUGHES Director
ARNOR LARSON Director
MARION STOTTS Director
NORY ESTEBAN Director

CONTACT WILDSIGHT INVERMERE

Box 2741, Invermere, BC V0A 1K0
250.341.3554
Invermere@Wildsight.ca



KIMBERLEY | CRANBROOK

MEASURING SUCCESS | OUTREACH

GO WILD
20 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
5 DAYS
1 EPIC BACKPACK TRIP

GROW FOR IT
2 DAYS
9 WORKSHOPS
3 FILMS
170 INSPIRED GROWERS

ONE WORLD GARDEN WORKSHOPS
2 COMMUNITIES
12 WORKSHOPS
150 GARDENERS

CLEAN AIR PROJECT
45 OLD WOOD STOVES REMOVED
45 NEW, EFFICIENT WOOD STOVES INSTALLED

APPLE CAPTURE
2 COMMUNITIES
5 FRUIT PRESSES
4 DEHYDRATORS
1 NEW STORAGE SHED
1 BACKYARD-SHARING NETWORK
LOCAL, NUTRITIOUS APPLE JUICE
REDUCED WILDLIFE CONFLICT

The staff and volunteers of Wildsight Kimberley-Cranbrook continue to blaze a path towards a sustainable future, with a bin full of exciting and successful programs, including Food Sustainability, Clean Air and Climate Solutions, Sustainable Landscapes, Education, and the Cranbrook Clean Bin Project.

Since 2011, the Apple Capture Project has been helping residents transform unwanted apples into delicious local food products, while keeping yards clean to minimize conflicts between humans and wildlife. Five loaner fruit presses and four food dehydrators are now available free of charge to all residents. Additional fruit picking and pruning equipment adds to the efficiency of the harvest and the health of our local fruit trees. This year new equipment storage facilities were built in partnership with the College of the Rockies Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Cranbrook Food Action Committee. Both towns fully embraced this new family friendly activity that reduces bear attractants, and creates a healthy local food source from would-be waste.

As part of the Growing Communities initiative, over 170 people planned their backyard food futures during the “Grow For It: Local Food & Garden Forum”. A dedicated group of volunteers helped vision and execute the weekend, which included a film night, speaker series, and a permaculture workshop with guru Toby Hemenway.

As part of the Welcoming Communities project, the branch, along with local partners, initiated the One World Gardening Workshop Series. This series of six, free gardening workshops connected newcomers and beginning gardeners with local knowledge, resources and the experience they need to start growing their own food. Hosted in both communities, the workshops followed local gardens from spring preparation to fall harvest. More than 150 people got their hands dirty in these workshops.

Our successful partnership with the Cranbrook Food Action Committee led to the launch of a new project, East Kootenay Community Eats. Drawing on the successes of Cranbrook’s Public Produce Garden, we have a vision to for shared community food sustainability. We are moving forward towards the creation of a Public Produce Garden in Kimberley, and on a feasibility study for a mid-week Farmers Market. In Cranbrook, we are joining local partners to construct



a commercial kitchen. To be located in the centre of a new community hub, the kitchen will provide space for workshops and gatherings – completing the food cycle from garden to kitchen – with the potential for future social enterprise developments.

The Clean Air and Climate Solutions program upgraded another 45 old smoky stoves in the Cranbrook and Kimberley area, replacing them with newer, more efficient models, through the Wood Stove Exchange Program.

The Kimberley Sustainable Landscaping Guide provides a one-stop-shop for information on gardening with native species, invasive plant management, water and energy wise gardening, and living with wildlife. People can see the embodiment of sustainable landscaping at the Marysville Falls Eco Park, our showcase restoration project featuring only native plants.

Our Go Wild program took 20 high school students on a professionally guided backcountry trip into Waterton Lakes National Park and Akamina-Kishinena Provincial Park. The students challenged their own capabilities, gained outdoor leadership skills, developing a passion for mountain environments that will last a lifetime.

In spring 2013, over 1500 Cranbrook students and teachers learned about waste reduction first-hand. Faced with a mountain of garbage representing a day’s worth of school garbage, and inspired by the “The Clean Bin Project” film, students embarked on a week-long challenge to reduce their waste. After the challenge, all schools succeeded in reducing their daily waste production by 10-25%, and nearly 80% of Cranbrook elementary school are now composting. In the community, seven residents embarked on a month-long challenge to see who could reduce their waste the most, bringing awareness of this issue to a broader audience.

Over 1600 people attended the branch’s wildly popular public events, including a screening of the Best Of Banff Mountain Film Fest, the long-running One Planet Film Series, and a number of other events aimed to inspire change at a community level.



HELEN SANDER, Wildsight Kim/Cran Program Manager



ERNA JENSEN-SHILL, Wildsight Kim/Cran Events Program Manager



JESSICA WINDLE, Wildsight Kim/Cran Food Sustainability Program Manager



SHANNON DUNCAN, Wildsight Kim/Cran
Food Sustainability Coordinator



SKYE MCDOUGALL, Wildsight Kim/Cran
Clean Bin Project Coordinator

WILDSIGHT KIMBERLEY | CRANBROOK

DEAN CHATTERSON President

ILONA HALE Vice President

KATHI CHORNEYKO Secretary/Treasurer

BECKY BATES Director

BRIAN CLARKSON Director

DAN MOE Director

DARYL CALDER Director

MARGIE JAMIESON Director

VIRGINIA ANDERSON Director

CONTACT WILDSIGHT KIM | CRAN

2 - 495 Wallinger Ave
Kimberley BC V1A 1Z6
250.427.9325 ext 221
KimCran@Wildsight.ca

Branch Partners

- BC Hydro
- BC Lung Association
- Built Green
- Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation
- Canadian Home Builders Association
- City of Kimberley
- Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy
- College of the Rockies
- Columbia Basin Trust
- Cranbrook and District Community Foundation
- Government of Canada
- Interior Health
- Kimberley and District Community Foundation
- New Horizon’s For Seniors
- Province of BC
- Regional District of East Kootenay
- TD Friends of the Environment

Branch Funders

- Aqamnik Elementary School
- British Columbia Ministry of Environment
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Columbia River Intertribal Fisheries Commission
- Citizens for a Liveable Cranbrook
- City of Cranbrook
- City of Kimberley
- College of the Rockies
- Cranbrook Schools
- Cranbrook Food Action Commitee
- East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council
- East Kootenay Citizens for Clean Air
- Gerick Sports
- Jose Galdamez
- Kimberley Allotment Garden
- Kimberley Arts Council
- Kimberley Girl Guides
- Kimberley Independent School
- Kootenay Rockies Innovation Council
- Ktunaxa Nation Council
- East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council
- Regional District of East Kootenay
- Selkirk Secondary School





wildsight

2-495 Wallinger Avenue
Kimberley, British Columbia
V1A 1Z6 Canada
office@wildsight.ca

www.Wildsight.ca