



CPAWS Southern Alberta

Education Report | 2018-2019

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Image: Erika Jensen-Mann

Thank you to our supporters for helping us inspire the next generation of environmental stewards!

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) is Canada’s voice for wilderness. We are a not-for-profit charity with 13 chapters across Canada, from coast to coast to coast. We work on the ground regionally to contribute to the establishment of new protected areas, and effective management of our parks and wilderness spaces. For over 50 years CPAWS has made significant strides to safeguard Canada’s natural capital, and is the only nation-wide organization that has created more than half a million square kilometres of protected areas. Our focus is on public lands and waters, which make up 90% of Canada. CPAWS Southern Alberta chapter works to protect Alberta’s parks and wilderness areas, and educate and inspire Albertans to get outside and engage in stewardship. We have helped create significant protected areas in Kananaskis, the Whaleback, and the Castle. We work with government, industry, Indigenous nations, and other stakeholders—using science—to champion conservation solutions. We have a long-standing history in national park management, and our premier national parks, Banff and Jasper, would look very different today if it were not for the work of our chapter. We were instrumental in establishing the wildlife crossing structures in Banff National Park and were the brainchild behind the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y).

In addition to our conservation work, CPAWS Southern Alberta is a leader in environmental education, and has won provincial and national awards for our unique education programs. For over 20 years, we have been successfully delivering multi-visit, curriculum-linked, in-class environmental education and outdoor interpretive hiking programs to youth grades 2-12 and adult groups in Alberta, focusing on local stewardship. To date, we have reached more than **140,000** participants in this region.



The 2018-2019 school year was a year of growth for our Education Department. Over the past year, we...

- Reached new people and communities across the province, including Kainai and Piikani Nations;
- Engaged Albertans in conversations about climate change, and how we can all take action;
- Expanded our Discover Parks in Canada program—an interpretive hike to introduce new immigrants to parks, recreation and stewardship;
- Enhanced our partnership with Green Calgary for YYC’s Young Citizen Scientists—a multi-visit outdoor program where students tackle wildlife conservation issues through citizen science; and
- Facilitated the Eco-Leaders program—a youth leadership initiative with The City of Calgary that empowers students to create environmental solutions that positively impact their community.



Our school-based education program for Grades 2-12 links local conservation with curriculum, and includes programs on climate literacy, species at risk, trees and forests, water conservation, grizzly bears, and Alberta’s parks and wilderness. These programs follow a unique multi-visit formula of two in-class visits and a guided hike or snowshoe, fostering a connection to nature, and bringing deeper meaning to the learning experience. Our hands-on interactive programs are extremely relevant for students, teaching them current conservation issues in Alberta; inspiring them to care about our local environment, resources, and species at risk; and empowering them to engage in stewardship to make a difference.

The **CPAWS Action Challenge Initiative** is a chief component of our environmental education programs. We work with thousands of students each year, providing them with knowledge pertaining to the issues surrounding Alberta’s species at risk and their habitats. Our goal is to take the learning beyond the classroom and for students to take action to create a positive impact on the environment. We want students to be inspired and empowered to make a difference, to care about local conservation issues, and engage in stewardship by taking on an Action Challenge project.

Our adult education program is grounded in our expertise with school programming, and extends these learnings to an adult audience, including teachers, corporate groups, community groups, and new immigrants. Program topics include outdoor education, parks and protected areas, water stewardship, grizzly bears, and more. Each year the demand for adult education programming and experience is growing, especially in our successful new immigrant program.



The 2018-2019 school year's results further demonstrate the growing demand, and success, of our education programs. Thanks to continued support, each year we are able to fine-tune and build our programs to ensure their high quality. This year included developing new programs, adding to our repertoire, engaging more students than ever in environmental action, and continuing to receive positive feedback from participants. In terms of numbers, this meant that from July 2018 to June 2019 we delivered **493 programs to 12,775 Albertans**. These programs included:

- **205 hikes and snowshoe treks in Alberta's parks and protected areas**
- **164 classroom programs**
- **11 public family programs**
- **113 adult programs**
- **63% of our youth programs were delivered to high needs and rural schools**
 - **28% to rural schools**
 - **32% to high needs schools in Calgary**
 - **3% to high needs schools in rural areas**
- **94% of participants committed to or engaged in positive environmental stewardship**

Our success and future achievements would not be possible without our funders. Their support not only helps keep program costs at a minimum for schools, it is integral to run the education department, and deliver the sheer number of quality programs each school year. Thank you! The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society's Southern Alberta Chapter looks forward to sustaining and strengthening these relationships as we continue to provide outstanding educational programming in the region.



Image: Erika Jensen-Mann

OUR TEAM

The success of our education program directly correlates to the highly skilled and amazing people involved. It is important for us to recognize the incredible talent, passion for nature and conservation, and hard work that goes into running this successful program each year.

Jaclyn Angotti, *Education Director* – Jaclyn has ten years of experience leading science and environmental education programs. She has a BSc. in Biology with a Business minor from the University of Alberta. Jaclyn recently completed a Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of Calgary. The diploma included two certificates: Education for the Environment and Poo’miikapii: Niitsitapii Approaches to Wellness.

Vanessa Bilan, *Environmental Educator* – Vanessa is certified as an Apprentice Interpretive Hiking Guide with the Interpretive Guides Association (IGA). Childhood trips to the mountains grew into a passion and lead her to complete a Bachelor of Health and Physical Education in Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership at Mount Royal University. At CPAWS, Vanessa shares her love of nature and the outdoors with others.

Sheri Tarrington, *Environmental Educator* – For more than 15 years, Sheri has dreamed, delivered and inspired a vast spectrum of environmental education programming. Possessing an honour’s degree in Canadian Studies from the University of Guelph, she is an accredited Professional Interpretive and Hiking Guide renowned for her infectious enthusiasm and wide-eyed love of nature.

Hira Shah, *Climate Literacy Educator* – Hira holds a Masters in Conservation Biology from the University of Queensland in Australia, and has over six years of experience in the fields of communication and education. She recently completed an internship in Belize where she got to learn about new ways to communicate information about the environment for a diverse group of stakeholders.

Hanna Thai, *Energy Efficiency Educator* – Hanna just completed an Environmental Sciences degree at University of Calgary, where she honed her leadership and project management skills through the university’s Office of Sustainability and Students Union Eco Club, and by co-founding a non-profit called Generation Indigenous.

Alex Mowat, *Hiking Guide* – Alex is an IGA Professional Interpretive Hiking Guide, and involved in environmental advocacy, First Nations, parks, and guiding work. His recent work has focused on coastal wildlife and bear viewing in the Great Bear Rainforest, as well further north in Churchill, on polar bear viewing. To him, it is an honor and an inspiration to share nature's interconnections with students.

Julie Walker, *Hiking Guide* – Julie has been a hiking guide and outdoor educator for over 20 years. As an IGA Professional Hiking Guide, she has taken people of all ages outdoors, winter and summer. Her specialty is edible and medicinal plants, and the human/natural history connection. Julie’s philosophy of "connecting people with nature" drives her in her work as an interpretive guide.

Lauren Bally, *Hiking Guide* – Lauren’s love of the wilderness began at 12 when she went on her first weeklong canoe trip. She was so taken with the great outdoors that she completed a degree in Outdoor Adventure Leadership and a teaching degree so she could share it with others. As an IGA Apprentice Interpretive Hiking Guide, Lauren builds future leaders through her outdoor education programs.

Justin Howse, Hiking Guide - Justin has a Diploma in Biological Sciences specializing in Renewable Resources from NAIT, and is a Professional Interpretive Hiking Guide with the IGA. With his experience in the outdoors, Justin feels blessed to share his love of the environment with the people who join him on CPAWS hiking programs.

Lisa Coyne, Hiking Guide – Lisa moved to Canada from the United Kingdom in 2009 where she continued her strong love for outdoor adventure and conservation. She is certified as an Interpretive Guide with the Interpretive Guides Association. Beyond guiding, Lisa’s experience includes 9 years with Search and Rescue, and a previous life in law enforcement.

Tim Patterson, Hiking Guide – Tim is a recognized Indigenous Interpretive Guide and Educator teaching Indigenous ways of knowing and practices in mountainous environments. He holds a B.A. in Cultural Anthropology, is an apprentice guide with both the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides and the Interpretive Guides Association and is a Master Educator with Leave No Trace.

Doug Saul, Hiking Guide – Doug provides leadership to outdoor education and outdoor leadership groups in the Bow Valley and across Canada. He is a certified teacher, an ACMG Hiking Guide and an Outdoor Council of Canada Instructor-Examiner. Doug enjoys learning from the groups he works with and sharing the discoveries they make on each adventure.

Our programs would not be possible without our volunteers and the entire CPAWS Southern Alberta team!

- **Anne-Marie Sylak, Executive Director**
- **Katie Morrison, Conservation Director**
- **Judi Vandenbrink, Engagement Director**
- **Kirsten Olson, Office and Fund Program Administrator**
- **Becky Best-Bertwhistle, Conservation Engagement Coordinator**
- **Brooke Kapeller, Conservation Program Coordinator**
- **Winston Jamieson, Conservation Assistant**



PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

Elementary Programs

Species at Risk (Grades 2-5)

Classroom Program: We guide students on a unique, hands-on, curriculum-linked journey to becoming Environmental Detectives. They investigate Alberta wildlife that are at risk of becoming extinct.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Learning moves outdoors with a guided hike! We explore the complex case of local Alberta species at risk while hiking in their natural habitats. CPAWS hiking guides bring curriculum to life through outdoor games, activities, and stories.

Water Rangers (Grades 4-5)

Classroom Program: Students discover a wave of knowledge during an interactive journey down the Bow River. Participants learn about the importance of water in their lives, and how they can become Water Rangers!

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Youth discover the wonderful world of wetlands at a wetland! They collect samples and learn about different organisms that live in these unique habitats and explore the surrounding watershed.



Trees and Forests (Grade 6)

Classroom Program: We begin with tree biology and branch out to forest succession, ecosystems, and the ecological importance of forests. The students explore local tree species and investigate forest issues.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Youth walk among the giants and discover the important role of various plants in the forest ecosystem. They participate in hands-on identification and other topical activities and games.

Stories in the Snow (Grade 4-6)

Guided and Interpretive Snowshoe Trek: Classes discover dynamic and dramatic stories of the past and present while snowshoeing



along a beautiful wilderness trail. Students create their own stories about the surrounding Alberta winter landscape, play games, and discover the wonder of Alberta's wildlife and ecosystems.

YYC Young Citizen Scientists with Green Calgary (Grades 1-6)

YYC's Young Citizen Scientists introduces students to the fun world of Citizen Science, and teaches them to make and submit observations to a citizen science platform. Getting students involved in citizen science supports their learning in many ways. It strengthens their scientific literacy in both the scientific method and scientific observation skills. It builds on their natural curiosity to foster a connection to place, as well as a heightened interest in the natural world, leading to an increase in environmental stewardship. Moreover, it moves science outside of the merely theoretical, by contributing their work to meaningful scientific research that has real world impact.

Take the Action Challenge (all grades)

Action learning projects involve students tackling an issue or problem, or, in the context of the environment, working to improve an environmental setting. They are inquiry-based projects that allow students to build a deeper understanding of curriculum, while engaging in a current issue and making a positive difference in the world. In this interactive session, CPAWS Southern Alberta leads students through a brainstorming and planning session for their action project. By the end of the session, the class will have chosen an issue and have a plan of action to tackle it.



Secondary Programs

Discover Parks! (Grades 7-9)

Classroom Program: Students discover, experience, and value park ecosystems and explore the relationship between humans and the environment.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: These youth get outside and discover the wonders of Alberta parks!

Alberta's Winter Playground (Grades 7-9)

Guided and Interpretive Snowshoe Trek: We take science outdoors for the day during this snowshoe program. Classes snowshoe on a beautiful wilderness trail, play games, and discover the wonders of Alberta's wilderness and wildlife. They experience amazing sights and sounds of Alberta winters via the quiet of snowshoes.

Freshwater Ecosystems Discovery (Grade 8)

Classroom Program: Youth become stewards for Canada's fresh water ecosystems. Students dive into freshwater issues through interactive demonstrations, pictures, videos, and case studies.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Students discover the characteristics of fresh water ecosystems through site observation, sample collection, testing and exploring the surrounding forest. Interpretive games provide opportunity for students to develop a deeper understanding of our watershed.

Grizzly Bears Forever (Grades 7-12)

Classroom Program: Youth explore the biology of the threatened Alberta grizzly bear and their habitat. Through engaging activities, stories, and biofacts, students learn about bear biology and ecology, human impacts, staying safe in bear country, and the role they can play in grizzly bear recovery.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: The students explore the habitat of Alberta's threatened grizzly bear and learn about current research and human impacts through stories, biofacts, and activities.

Biodiversity in Winter (Grade 10-12)

Guided and Interpretive Snowshoe Trek: Winter offers a unique opportunity to study Alberta's biodiversity and the balances and imbalances of the ecosystem. Classes snowshoe through an Alberta ecosystem to investigate plant and animal population dynamics during the quiet of the winter.



Climate Connect (Grade 10-12)

Classroom Program: Climate change is one of the most challenging issues of our time. Through videos, data, discussions, and case studies, participants explore the science behind climate change. They learn about current climate action and how they can get involved.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Students get a first hand look at climate change happening in the ecosystem. They learn about species especially impacted by climate change, such as the wolverine, pika, and grizzly bear. Through hiking, games and discussions, they explore climate science and come up with an action plan to tackle climate change.

Aquatic Field Study (Biology 20 and 30)

Classroom: Youth learn about the Bow River watershed, where their water comes from, and the conservation issues surrounding water use in Southern Alberta. Students prepare diagrams of biogeochemical cycles, and then analyze how human activities affect these cycles.

Guided and Interpretive Hike: Students embark on a detailed exploration and analysis of ecosystem health through a comparative wetland study. Interpretive games provide opportunity for students to develop a deeper understanding of our watershed.



Adult Programs

CPAWS Southern Alberta has a variety of education programs designed specifically for adult audiences including teachers, corporate groups, university classes, and community groups. We use our award-winning education model and adapt it for effective learning beyond the classroom to the Alberta public. Education for adults is vital for increasing conservation literacy and stewardship in our region.

Teacher education: Supporting teachers is vital to enhancing environmental education in Alberta schools. Our teacher programs this year focused on climate literacy, environmental action learning projects, citizen science, park ecosystems and outdoor education.



Image: Erika Jensen-Mann

We presented at:

- Career and Technology Educators' Council (CTEC)
- Calgary City Teachers' Convention
- Palliser Teacher Convention
- Calgary Catholic School District high school science teachers' professional development day
- Alberta Council for Environmental Education Recharge conference
- Both the 2018 and 2019 Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM) conferences in October and May

Community education: Conservation education is important in the community to increase awareness and inspire action. Over the past year, the CPAWS's Southern Alberta team has sat on panels and provided guest lectures to many partners and community groups including the Canadian Federation of University Women, MEC, Patagonia, University of Calgary, Alberta Ecotrust Environmental Gathering, City of Calgary, Town of Okotoks, TransCanada, Nature Calgary, Rotary Club, Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area, Calgary Women's Flyfishers, Bow Habitat Station, Calgary



Image: Erika Jensen-Mann

Outdoor Recreational Enthusiasts (CORE) and TransAlta. Topics included watersheds, bear conservation and safety, forestry, parks and conservation, conservation planning, living sustainably and climate action.

New Immigrant education: Calgary is the fourth largest centre for newcomers in Canada. With a growing new immigrant population, programs and opportunities to learn about community and conservation are invaluable. CPAWS Southern Alberta is the only group in our region currently providing such programming for this demographic. This program builds language skills, conservation learning, and a sense of local community. CPAWS Southern Alberta collaborates with new immigrant groups across the city, including the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, the Calgary Immigrant Education Society and the Calgary Chinese Community Service Association, to provide programming to improve language, enhance conservation literacy of this region, develop a sense of place, build community, and share nature and conservation experiences from different countries.

Outreach education: In addition to more formal adult education programs, CPAWS Southern Alberta makes a concerted effort to provide outreach education to increase conservation literacy and support for parks and protected areas in our province. Each year, we participate in outreach events throughout Southern Alberta. Events include music festivals, farmers markets, sporting events, film festivals, and other community events as the opportunities arise.



Image: Erika Jensen-Mann

Community and New Immigrant Programs

Discover Parks!

Alberta is home to magnificent parks and wilderness areas. Participants learn about these amazing places from a user and conservation perspective. They discover the fascinating history and purpose of our parks through bio-facts, pictures, case studies, and stories. Participants come on a journey to discover and steward our Alberta parks! New immigrant participants learn about local parks, outdoor recreation, and stewardship.



Grizzly Bears Forever

The Grizzly bear is an iconic species, symbolizing Alberta's wilderness landscape. To safeguard the survival of this species, we need to understand them and ensure our own safety when recreating in bear country. Through biofacts, pictures, and stories, participants find out how truly fascinating and important grizzly bears are. They explore the impacts we have on bears and how we can all be bear stewards. We bust myths of the grizzly bear for new immigrants, inspiring them to visit bear country safely and responsibly.

In the Know about the Bow

Participants learn about the Bow River watershed, where their water comes from, and the conservation issues surrounding water use in Southern Alberta. Through interactive demonstrations and activities, CPAWS helps participants connect to their community by understanding water issues and learning about the impacts we can all have on our watersheds. New immigrant participants also share stories of water from their home countries and compare it to their new community in Calgary.

Climate Connect

Climate change is one of the most challenging issues of our time. It impacts our food, health, homes and jobs. Through stories and videos, participants learn the basics of climate change. They learn how climate change affects ecosystems, species at risk and human communities. We share easy, affordable ways for all participants (both long-time Albertans and new immigrants) to take action.

Discover Parks in Canada Interpretive Hike

New immigrants get to know Canada's parks in a park! Participants join a CPAWS interpretive guide at a local park for a day of exploring and learning. This hike is a great opportunity for new immigrants to improve language skills and develop a sense of place in this new home. The focus is on connecting to nature, learning about parks and wilderness in Canada, and learning how to be an environmental steward.

2018-2019 EDUCATION PROGRAM RESULTS

School Programs

CPAWS Southern Alberta had a very successful 2018-2019 season, delivering **369 school programs** that inspired students into conservation action. In fact, about **94% of our program participants committed to and/or completed some form of environmental stewardship action**. Of the 369 programs we delivered, **105 were delivered to rural schools, 119 to high needs schools in Calgary and 12 to high needs schools in rural areas**. Together this accounts for **64% of our programming**. High needs schools include those with students from low-income families and/or with added learning challenges. These schools have a high percentage of new immigrant and Indigenous students. Every year, we continue to build and strengthen relationships with Indigenous groups and provide programming to rural Indigenous communities. This year we provided programming for three Nations (Morley, Kainai and Piikani), delivering 25 classroom programs (44 visits) and 5 hikes to 584 Indigenous children.

We greatly exceeded our target numbers for school programs during the 2018-2019 school year, especially for hiking and snowshoeing. That's over 1,000 more students connecting to the outdoors than we had targeted for!

CPAWS Southern Alberta School Programs Numbers 2018 – 2019

Program	# Classroom Programs		# Program Visits (based on double visit model)		#Hikes		# Students		
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Classroom	Hike	Total
Species at Risk	30	40	60	75	15	12	891	271	1,162
Water Rangers (including Fresh Water Ecosystems & Aquatic Field Studies)	40	47	80	90	30	39	1,203	981	2,184
Trees and Forests	15	17	30	34	30	39	422	1,028	1,450
Discover Parks!	20	25	40	46	20	31	518	751	1,269
Grizzly Bears Forever	20	14	40	28	25	34	348	845	1,193
Snowshoeing for Sustainability	--	--	--	--	20	42	--	1,056	1,056
Climate Connect	10	6	20	12	10	8	147	190	337
Take the Action Challenge	15	8	--	--	--	--	178	--	178
YYC Young Citizen Scientists	5	7	10	14	--	--	464	--	464
Totals	155	164	280	299	150	205	4,171	5,122	9,293

Adult Programs

Our adult education programs continue to grow. In addition to new immigrant audiences, we provided adult education opportunities for seniors, public groups, university students, corporate sponsors, and professional development (PD) for teachers.

CPAWS Southern Alberta Adult Education Programs Numbers 2018 – 2019

	New Immigrant Programs		Community Programs		Teacher PD	
	# Programs	# Participants	# Programs	# Participants	# Programs	# Participants
Citizen Science					2	18
Climate Connect	1	40			6	46
Discover Parks in Canada hike	17	287				
Discover Parks!	18	398	3	67	1	7
In the Know about the Bow	1	15	2	44	0	0
Grizzly Bears Forever	4	157	4	171	1	37
Schoolyard Hikes	--	--	--	--	1	33
Take Action!	--	--	--	--	2	10
Conservation Outreach			50	2,000		
Totals	41	897	59	2,282	13	151



IMPACT

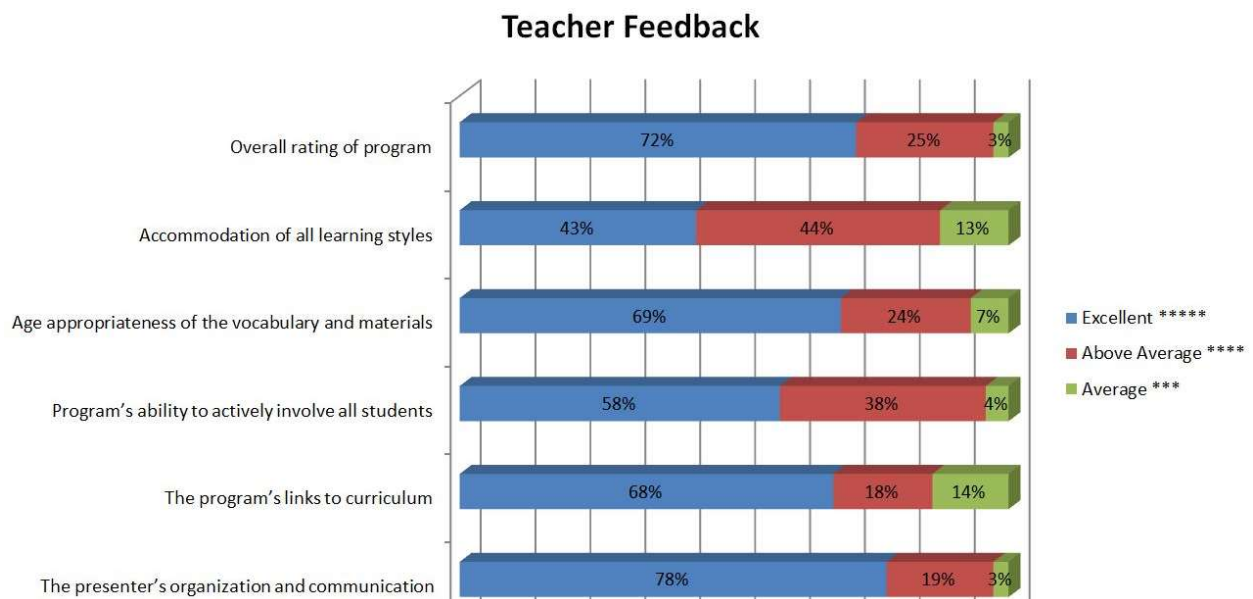
Part of making positive change includes measuring impact. To understand this impact, we need to measure evaluation feedback and action resulting from our education programs. Our evaluation process includes well-established evaluation of teachers and students, from both forms and interviews, as well as stewardship action taken. We measure the number of participants who commit to and/or take stewardship action through program activities (e.g. stewardship pledges) and evaluation form questions, as well as the projects submitted to the [Action Challenge Initiative](#). This rigorous evaluation and accountability provide the necessary feedback to maintain our quality, and make improvements where necessary. This is critical to our ongoing success.



We continue to receive positive feedback for our programs. Indicators demonstrate that our programs are exceeding expectations and inspiring participants to make a difference in terms of environmental stewardship. We continue to see a high percentage of participants engaging, or committing to engage, in stewardship as a direct result of our programs. The graphs below show that all of our program participants (youth, teachers, and adult new immigrants) are enjoying our programs, finding value in them, and being inspired to engage in positive stewardship action.

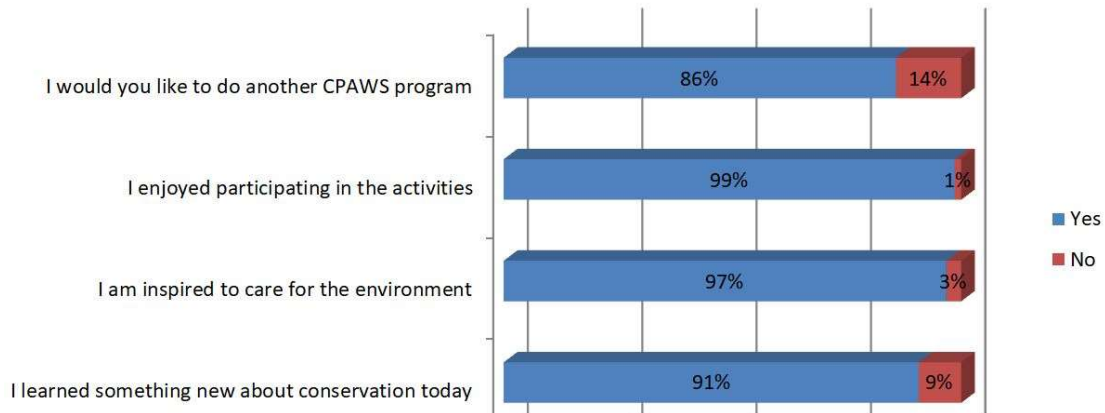
Evaluation Forms

The graph below shows the ratings that teachers gave to various factors of our education programs. Our teachers consistently rate our programs as excellent and above average, across all categories, and 100 percent said they will book a CPAWS program again!



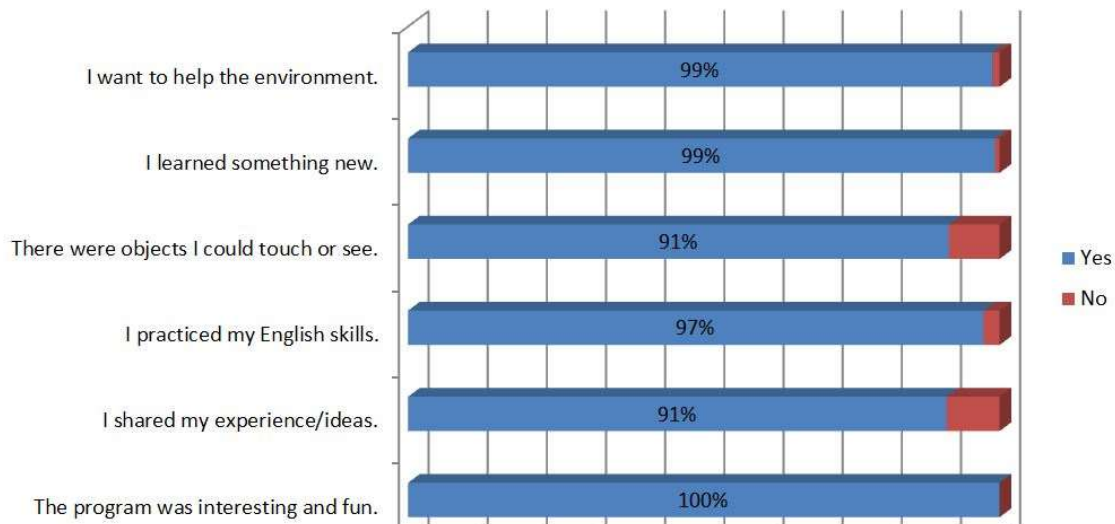
This graph shows student responses to questions about their experience during our programs. Students reported that they had fun, learned a lot, and were inspired to take action for the environment.

Student Feedback



The final graph shows the responses of adult new immigrants to questions regarding their experience during our programs. They responded that our programs were highly valuable, fun, and inspiring.

Adult New Immigrant Feedback



Testimonials

Feedback is critical to ensuring that our programs maintain our high standard. The following are some testimonials that we heard this last school year.

Student Testimonials

“The enthusiasm that the instructor had was quite nice and to me it felt new. I enjoyed the way they taught about climate change as well having fun and interactive activities in Jeopardy and fun videos in John Oliver. This was a great experience and would love to learn more again.”

-Grade 10 student, Notre Dame High School, Calgary

“The program was very different because we were learning but also playing games and activities. It was so fun because we got to work in groups, and alone. We were learning and it really didn't feel like it. Thank you so much. Very helpful!”

-Grade 7 student, Manachaban Middle School, Cochrane

“When my family goes swimming, they can swim and I am going to pick up garbage.”

-Elementary student, Saipoyi School, Kainai First Nation

Teacher Testimonials

“The best part of the program is the opportunities to take our learning forward into advocacy projects! Nice that things are made hands on for the young ones. Very clear delivery of sometimes complex content.”

-Teacher, W.O. Mitchell School, Calgary

“The snowshoe program is engaging to students physically and through its environmental education. I love how students learn about the local habitats, consider their impact on the environment and are encouraged to think about individual and group management and how they might respond as a concerned citizen. All activities are carefully planned to be fun and educational at the same time. There is appropriate rest and games are used to engage students prior to any disconnection.”

-Teacher, Sir John A. Macdonald School, Calgary



Image: Erika Jensen-Mann



"It's a great chance for students to go out to the mountains and get hands-on experience with the curriculum material. For many of them, they had never even been to the mountains before so it allowed them to gain a much more personal understanding of the content."

-Teacher, East Lake School, Chestermere



Adult New Immigrant Testimonials

"I really like to walk in the park, which makes my body and mind very relaxed and happy. Although my English is not good, I believe that everyone's heart is the same. I am very grateful to Alex for his patient and professional explanations. I have learned about the animals and plants that live in this area, and how humans can get along with them better. Nature is so generous; we must cherish and protect!"

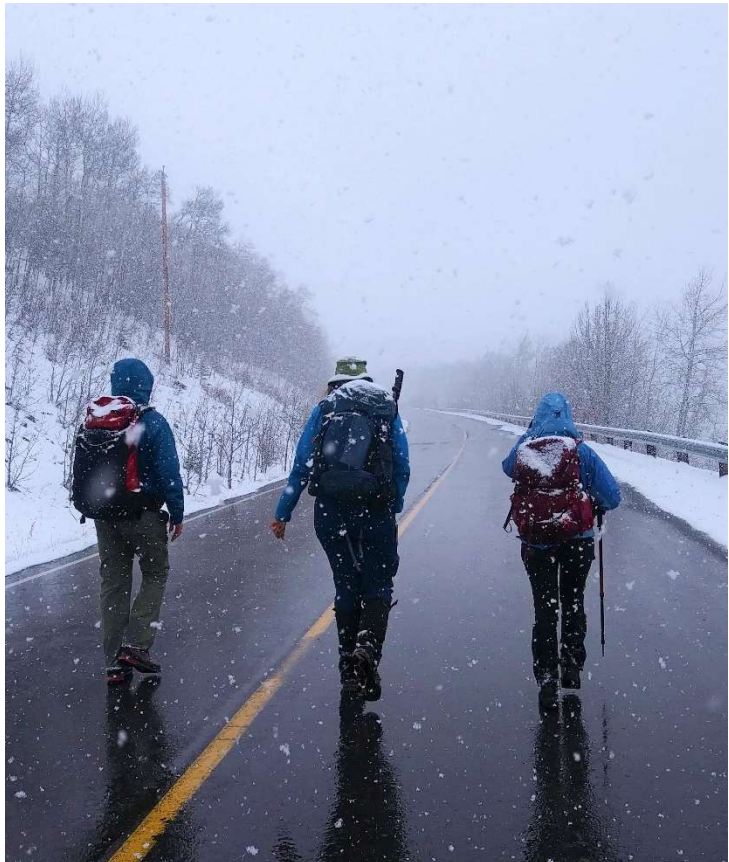
-Adult new immigrant hike participant

"I learned about parks to visit, wild animals and how to deal with them, about nature and how to protect them."

-Adult new immigrant workshop participant

"I discovered that there are a lot of ways to de-stress and enjoy nature. Being an introvert, I feel like checking out the parks right away."

-Adult new immigrant workshop participant



ACTION CHALLENGE

The CPAWS Southern Alberta Action Challenge is a unique feature of all of our education programs that truly sets them apart. Each year we work with thousands of students, linking local conservation with curriculum, building knowledge, and creating meaningful outdoor experiences that highlight Alberta's parks and wilderness and some of our local conservation issues.

Our goal is to empower students to make a difference, and inspire them to engage in positive environmental stewardship by taking on Action Challenge projects. Projects often include personal conservation efforts, fundraising campaigns, writing letters to government, and education awareness campaigns.

Each year, we give out three awards to schools and students who have demonstrated extraordinary conservation action, and who are an inspiration to others: our Awesome Action Award; our Hazel Gillespie Water Rangers Award; and our Gareth Thomson Award. We would like to thank the sponsors who donated prizes for the Action Challenge program.

CPAWS Southern Alberta congratulates the following 2018-2019 Action Award winners!

Awesome Action Award

Belvedere Parkway School

The Awesome Action Award is for an exemplary action stewardship project. This year's winner is a group of Grade 3 and 4 students from Belvedere Parkway School.

Belvedere Parkway's Eco-Leader Club spent their year dedicated to learning about native bees and how to help these important pollinators, as many bee species in Canada are at risk of extinction.

Belvedere students took action by planting a pollinator garden at school, participating in the Eco-Leaders Program, creating solitary bee homes and organizing school wide bee celebrations. By doing so, they became Calgary's FIRST Bee Canada School!

Their passion for education and action is why they were selected as this year's Awesome Action Award recipients with CPAWS Southern Alberta's Action Challenge.



Hazel Gillespie Water Rangers Award

Arbour Lake School

The Hazel Gillespie Water Ranger Award rewards any exemplary Action Challenge project, by a class in any grade, focused on water conservation and stewardship. Hazel Gillespie was a visionary and leader in Calgary who supported the original development of our Water Rangers program, who believed in inspiring youth to care about the environment and make a difference. This year's Water Rangers Award goes to a Grade 6 class at Arbour Lake School, who used everything from blind taste tests and announcements to information boards and petitions to halt the selling of single-use plastic water bottles at their school. These students have also ensured that their project will not end this year but will be a legacy project for future Grade 6 students at Arbour Lake School as well.



Gareth Thomson Award

Western Canada High School

Each year, we grant the Gareth Thomson Award to a junior or senior high class (Grades 7-12) that takes on the most inspiring Action Challenge project. Gareth Thomson is the founder of the CPAWS Southern Alberta education program. The dedicated Environment Club students from Western Canada High School wanted to reduce their schools' environmental impact. From bake sales to basketball game admission—they did it all and more, raising a total of \$950 to put toward Bullfrog Energy, a sustainable energy company that offsets carbon emissions. They went beyond fundraising and created educational campaigns about the positive environmental impacts of composting. CPAWS Southern Alberta is happy to award this year's Gareth Thomson Award to these hardworking students.



Individual Action Award

Reyhan, Grade 7

Every person can make a difference! This Grade 7 Calgary student proves it! Reyhan wanted to teach others about how much water goes into food production and help them understand that wasting food is also wasting water. His project, Stop Wasting Food, educated his school and those attending his exhibitor booth at SAIT about this issue. His desire to continue the project after this year shows his passion and commitment to garnering conversation and awareness to help us conserve water through our food choices. CPAWS Southern Alberta is proud to present him with this year's Individual Action Award!



RISK MANAGEMENT

For more than 20 years, CPAWS Southern Alberta has been providing safe, positive outdoor learning experiences for participants. A robust risk management plan with certified and highly trained guides ensures the continuation of a highly reputable and safe program. Each year, we update our risk management plan and train our guides accordingly. Our interpretive guides are all certified in Wilderness First Aid and hold their Interpretive Guides Association certifications.

Each season, we train our guides in our Emergency Response Plan and the use of the safety equipment they carry, including bear spray, air horns, GPS Spot messenger device, and radios, among other first aid equipment. We also register all programs and locations with STARS air ambulance service. This means that if anything happens, we have the ability to get help right away and trained responders to deal with any situation.

CPAWS Southern Alberta is an approved service provider and maintains Master Agreements with the Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, and Rocky View School District. This means that we are a reputable service provider with a known track record for quality and safety. In more than two decades, we have never had a major incident during our programs and we continue to work diligently to put safety first so participants have a fun, positive experience in the outdoors.



STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At CPAWS Southern Alberta, we are lifelong learners. We believe that education not only enhances our lives, but the conservation and education work that we do. CPAWS staff were fortunate this past year to participate in a multitude of professional development opportunities, as described below.

Campaigning and Communications

- Campaign Coaching - Skills for Change Alberta
- Digital Campaigning
- Misinformation and what to do about it, Evidence for Democracy (Webinar)
- Science Communication
- Crisis Communications: Planning and Response - Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) (Webinar)
- Election 2019: Engaging youth in climate action – David Suzuki Foundation (Webinar)

Climate and Energy Literacy

- Alberta Council of Environmental Education (ACEE)
 - Recharge Conference – the education team participated in over 20 workshops, many geared towards climate and energy education, as well as Indigenous culture and history
 - Pre-Conference Summit focused on creating a provincial movement advocating for advancing environmental, energy and climate change education
- Talking Climate: How can we build Canada's climate conversation? - Alberta Narratives Project
- 2019 Action on Climate Change through Education Conference - Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM)



Conservation

- Traditional and Contemporary Environmental Management Workshop
- Panel on Bison's Reintroduction into Banff National Park
- Forest Matters, History of Forest Management
- Westslope Cutthroat Trout 2019 Workshop
- Alberta EcoTrust Environmental Gathering
- Kainai Ecosystem Protection Association (KEPA) Summit
- Indigenous Guardians Program, Valerie Courtois, CPAWS (Webinar)
- UNDRIP Implications for Reconciliation and the Protection of Canada's Environment, Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Network and Sustainability Network (Webinar)
- Rural Economics – TREC (Webinar)
- Living with Wildfire in the West, Compass Science Communications (Webinar)
- Unraveling the complexity of mixed severity fire regimes: new insights from three Rocky Mountain ecosystems, Northern Rockies Fire Science Network (Webinar)

Environmental, Experiential, and Outdoor Education

- 2018 Classrooms to Communities Conference - EECOM
- Helping deliver impactful environmental and energy education programs - ACEE
- Society for Educational Resource Groups (SERG) – Bimonthly meetings
- Environmental Educators – Bimonthly meetings
- Mindfulness and Creative Nature Play with Dave Bauer
- Bird-focused Citizen Science with Liza Barney
- Calgary Zoo Conservation Champions Festival



Indigenous History, Culture, and Experience

- Aspiring Alliances in Indigenous Relations and Research (University of Calgary) - bimonthly workshops
- Graduate Diploma in Poo'miikapii: Niitsitapii Approaches to Wellness - University of Calgary
- Returning to the Circle - Indigenous Learners Gathering
- Buffalo Rock Tipi Camp - tour with Harley Bastien
- Land Acknowledgement workshop - Calgary Foundation
- Advanced Reconciliation - TREC
- Allies and Edgewalkers: A community gathering on active reconciliation

Leadership

- Stepping Up to Leadership program - TREC
- Senior Leaders program - TREC
- Mentoring and Developing Your Staff - TREC (Webinar)
- Engagement - How to Support and Sustain it Over Time in Yourself and Others - TREC (Webinar)
- Working with your Board: Making it Worth your Time and Effort - TREC (Webinar)
- Sustaining Staff Resilience and Effectiveness (Webinar)
- Building Trust with your Non-profit Team, Charity Village (Webinar)
- Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organization - Connections Conference

Risk Management and Interpretive Guiding

- Standard and Wilderness First Aid courses
- First aid scenario practice with Rocky Mountain Adventure Medicine
- Interpretive Guides Association training

Watershed Literacy

- Hidden in Plain Site: Bow River Flood Protection - City of Calgary
- Bow River Basin Council (BRBC)
 - Quarterly Forums
 - Science Forums
 - Collaborating for Resilient Watersheds

LOOKING AHEAD

The 2019-2020 school year will be action-packed for our education team. We are excited to bring these new programs and initiatives to Albertans very soon!

- **Take a Stand for Grasslands** – a new program connecting Albertans to their grassland ecosystems and inspiring action to preserve them.
- **Climate Connect** – enhanced climate literacy programs for elementary and junior high students, which will engage youth in climate education with fun activities, hope and positive solutions.
- **Energize** – an effort to highlight the importance of energy efficiency in all programming, showing its positive impact on species, water and ecosystems—includes a new energy efficiency workshop for adults and new immigrants.
- **Wild Wellness** – a new program providing participants a dose of nature play and discovery, which will make the most of nature’s positive effects on everything from creativity to calmness.



CONCLUSION

The 2018-2019 season was truly an exciting time. We engaged more people than ever, exceeded program targets, and increased our presence in rural and high needs schools throughout southern Alberta. We reached out to new communities, increased our adult programming audience, piloted and delivered new programs, and saw students engage in amazing stewardship action challenge initiatives. Our program feedback continues to be positive, and we constantly strive to improve our program to suit the needs of our participants and the community.

With the support of our funders and partners, we are able to continue to deliver award winning environmental education programs to thousands of Albertans. Thank you. We rely on you to ensure that environmental education is easily accessible for all in Alberta.

We are currently looking for additional funding for our education programs. To support our award-winning programs, or for more information about our programs, please contact us:

Email: education@cpaws.org | Phone: 403-232-6686

Or check out our website: <http://cpaws-southernalberta.org/campaigns/education>

You can also donate directly at <https://donate.cpaws.org/page/26361/donate/1>

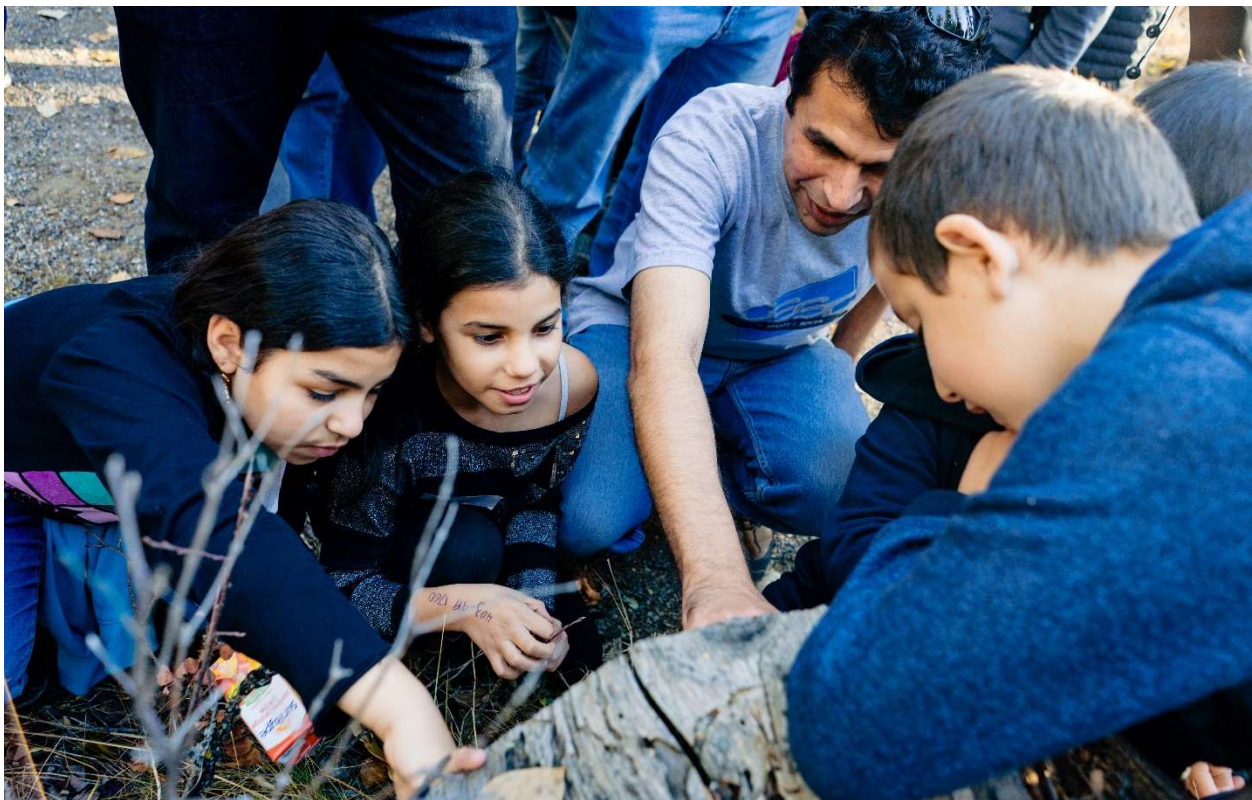


Image: Erika Jensen-Mann