

# CPAWS

CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY  
SOUTHERN ALBERTA CHAPTER

CPAWS Southern Alberta acknowledges the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). Southern Alberta is also home to Region III of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

## Chapter Team

Anne-Marie Syslak | Executive Director  
Katie Morrison | Conservation Director  
Jaclyn Angotti | Education Director  
Kirsten Olson | Office & Fund Program Administrator  
Ian Harker | Communications Coordinator  
Peter Zimmerman | Parks Program Supervisor  
Becky Best-Bertwistle | Conservation Engagement Coordinator  
Vanessa Bilan | Environmental Educator, Hiking Guide  
Alex Mowat | Hiking Guide  
Julie Walker | Hiking Guide  
Justin Howse | Hiking Guide  
Lauren Bally | Hiking Guide  
Edita Sakarova | Bookkeeper

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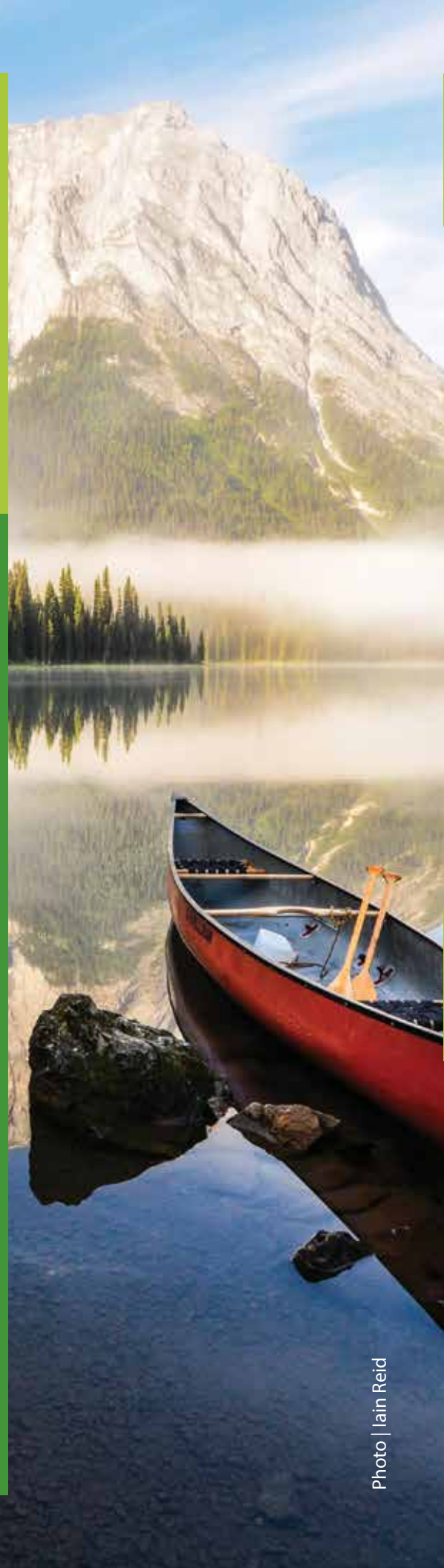
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Ian Harker  
Neda Russell

Cover Photo | Stephen Legault | Headwaters of the Sheep River, in the Burns Lake region, Elbow-Sheep Wildland Park

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## Keeping the West Wild

**Anne-Marie Syslak** | Executive Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta

**W**hen you ask an Albertan about their favourite park or wilderness area it doesn't take long for them to respond. In doing so, you often hear epic stories of adventure, fond memories of seasonal family trips, and you always see smiles. Our wild Alberta is something that we cherish, it defines

who we are and why we love our province so dearly. It is part of our outdoor heritage and our personal identities.

Our roots are strongly woven into the landscape. Indigenous peoples, ranchers, oil and gas workers, hunters, anglers, and weekend warriors—we all rely on our natural lands to provide for us in a variety of ways. But to ensure the long-term health and wellbeing of our landscape, we need to be informed, prioritize, plan, and together care for our Alberta. Whatever our activity, our career, or political stripe, we are all conservationists.

In this edition of Green Notes, we will listen to the voices of many Albertans talk about the special places that contribute to their Alberta identity. We will learn about the history of places like Kananaskis and appreciate the value of the land from different perspectives. The common theme is a love for our Alberta wilderness, and that taking care of the places we love is of interest to all.

The Porcupine Hills and Livingstone land footprint management and recreation plans are examples of the balanced planning efforts CPAWS participates in to help preserve our outdoor heritage. These plans create certainty for maintaining the ecological health

of the region, while still allowing room for different recreational users.

Expanding Alberta's network of parks and protected areas provides more places for us to explore and love. Safeguarding our wilderness assets is of benefit to Albertans today and tomorrow.

The new boreal parks, along with the Castle parks, have created momentum to do more. With your voice, there is a great opportunity to see the Bighorn protected by the end of the year. Preserving the Bighorn will connect habitat in Banff and Jasper, protect headwaters, help keep Alberta wild, and offer new areas to explore.

Keeping the west wild ensures a continued history of Alberta's outdoor heritage and creates a future where we can experience this awesome wilderness, building our stories and adventures for all time.



## Seizing the Opportunities

**Phil Nykyforuk** | Board Chair, CPAWS Southern Alberta

**S**ummer is an incredible time in Southern Alberta. The days are long, the sun is bright, the birds sing sweetly, wildflowers are in bloom, and we are surrounded by new life. This is a great time to get out

and enjoy nature. Opportunities abound for hiking, backpacking, camping, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

We are blessed to live in one of the best places on earth to enjoy the outdoors. We have world class parks and protected areas in our backyard, including Banff, Kananaskis, and Waterton. These incredible places were protected through the foresight of those who came before us. As our population continues to grow and thousands of newcomers arrive each year, we have an opportunity and need to expand our network of amazing parks and protected areas.

Both the federal and provincial governments have committed to expanding our

network of parks through the Pathways to 2020 targets. This is a commitment made by both levels of government to protect 17% of our land by 2020, in keeping with the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity. We must seize this opportunity! As Alberta grows and develops, the window will close on our ability to create new protected areas.

Get out and enjoy nature this summer! Visit our iconic parks and help us be a strong voice for the creation of new parks. We owe this legacy to the next generation of Albertans.

# Kananaskis Celebrating 40 Years

Kirsten Olson | Office & Fund Program Administrator, CPAWS Southern Alberta



Premier Peter Lougheed officially dedicated Kananaskis Country and Kananaskis Provincial Park in 1978; the park was renamed in 1986 to honour Peter Lougheed when he retired as premier. The story of Kananaskis Country and the effort to preserve it began much earlier and continued long after the region's formal establishment.

The Dominion Lands Act of 1872 was the original authority for future parks in present-day Alberta. It granted rights of way to the national railway system, gave lands in Western Canada to colonizers, and set aside land for First Nations reserves and future parks.

In what became southern Alberta, these are the traditional lands of the Stoney-Nakoda, Kootenai, Siksika, Kainai, Peigan, and Tsuut'ina nations.

The first park in Alberta extended from north of Jasper to as far south as Lake Louise, and was a result of the Rocky Mountain Park Act of 1887. When that legislation was replaced by the Dominion Reserves and Parks Act in 1911, reserved lands were reduced by more than half. The Natural Resources Transfer Agreement of 1929, and the resulting National Parks Act of 1930, removed areas to the east and south of Banff that were of potential commercial value. This included much of today's Kananaskis Country and Peter Lougheed Provincial Park. These lands were turned over to the Alberta government and became provincial public lands. That same year, the provincial government passed the Provincial Parks and Protected Areas Act, and the first provincial parks were created in 1932. But it took another half-century before Kananaskis received such recognition.

Kananaskis was always a mixed-use area, made accessible by roads that facilitated extraction of coal and minerals for construction and industry. It had also been used for natural gas and hydroelectric production. Work camps built in the 1930s provided forestry work for single young men during the Great Depression. During the Second World War, the camp was used first as an internment camp for civilian internees and later for prisoners of war, closing in 1946.

In 1977, Premier Lougheed's cabinet approved the creation of the Kananaskis Planning Area (Kananaskis Country) a 4,160 kilometre tract of land southwest of Calgary. Kananaskis Provincial Park was included in Kananaskis Country. The first few years of policy around Kananaskis centred on development, chiefly roads and utilities; hotels; a golf course; and small, privately-owned alpine villages.

An encouraging step toward conservation took place nearly a decade later. In 1986, the province approved the Kananaskis Country sub-regional Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The plan's management objectives outlined that the development and utilization of resources in the planning area "occur in a manner consistent with the principles of conservation and environmental protection." The focus had shifted to management of resources, including watersheds, wildlife, fish, grazing lands, minerals, heritage, and forestry. But there was still no clear plan for the future of Kananaskis, and pressure from commercial developers continued.

“ Picking a favourite wild area, trail or park in Alberta, like picking a favourite child, is darn near impossible! I've travelled the planet adventuring, but there is something special about being in Alberta. Be it skinning-up a mountain-side thru the powder snow, trail running thru the poplar forests of the parkland, or cycling along a farm road lined with prairies grasses - too many 'favourites'. I'd say my very favourites are anytime I am lucky enough to stumble across wildlife in these areas, seeing wildlife always makes it better. ”

Laval St Germain,  
Adventurer

In 1992, Three Sisters Resorts proposed a development at Wind Valley, which is part of a critical wildlife corridor between Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country. The Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) held hearings on the proposal, and CPAWS Southern Alberta, the Sierra Club, and the Alpine Club of Canada were granted intervenor status. People opposed to the development could purchase "Keep the Wind Valley Wild" t-shirts and attend the "Wind Valley Wind-dig" fundraising event. During the hearings, two deficiencies in the developers' Environmental Impact Assessment were identified; the negative impact on large mammals, and the fact that Wind Valley had previously been set aside as mitigation for development in Kananaskis Country. The NRCB ruled in CPAWS Southern Alberta's favour, and the provincial cabinet endorsed the ruling in late December 1992. The Alberta government ensured protection of Wind Valley through special places designation in March 1994.

Increased pressures on the area led to attempts to assess public opinion on future development and use of Kananaskis Country. A 1996 poll conducted by the government showed public opposition to further commercial development in the area. Another poll, done by CPAWS Southern Alberta and other conservation organizations, supported these results, as did yet another poll done by the Calgary Herald. Instead of accepting these results, Environmental Protection Minister Ty Lund launched a new survey asking for public input on appropriate levels of future development and issues relevant to the Spray and Kananaskis valleys.

Kananaskis Country was facing numerous applications for commercial development and increasing pressures

from a growing urban population. At the same time, it was still being administered with an outdated recreation policy and an outdated IRP. CPAWS Southern Alberta and other like-minded organizations wanted to clearly establish the future of Kananaskis Country, and they continued to engage the provincial government on key areas that should be conserved. The establishment in 1998 of the Elbow-Sheep Wildland and Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Parks was cause for celebration.

CPAWS Southern Alberta became involved with the development of the Kananaskis Recreation Development Policy, including making recommendations to the Minister of Environmental Protection, preparing a statement, and encouraging attendance at public meetings. The final recommendations were presented to the minister at the end of January 1999, but release to the public was delayed until policy decisions were made. By the summer of 1999, CPAWS Southern Alberta and its supporters were relieved to find that there would be no new recreation developments in Kananaskis, and that existing proposals would be subject to stringent environmental reviews.

A large recreation facility was still being proposed for the Spray Valley in the spring of 2000 when Environment Minister Gary Mar announced the creation of Spray Valley Provincial Park, increasing protection for the area and canceling the proposed development. This 358 square kilometre park connected Peter Lougheed Provincial Park to Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park.

In 2001, the provincial government announced three new provincial parks in Kananaskis; Sheep River, Bluerock

Wildland, and Don Getty Wildland, which added more lands to the network of protected areas in the Rocky Mountains. Spray Valley and Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Parks were expanded in 2004 as part of the Evan Thomson Provincial Recreation Plan.

The government heeded public outcry to end commercial development in Kananaskis, and CPAWS Southern Alberta and all our supporters celebrated this hard-fought success. We continue to offer input into regional plans in Southern Alberta, ensuring that management plans continue to hold conservation and environmental protection at their core. The Kananaskis landscape was changed drastically in 2013 as a result of unprecedented flooding, but during the course of rebuilding the structures, the ecological integrity of the area has remained intact.

Kananaskis would look very different than it does today if it hadn't been for the work of CPAWS Southern Alberta and our many colleagues and supporters. Thankfully this beautiful, natural, wilderness recreation area will be protected for future generations to enjoy.

# The Lougheed Legacy in Kananaskis

Kirsten Olson | Office & Fund Program Administrator, CPAWS Southern Alberta

The connection between the Lougheed family and the development of parks in Alberta is long and storied. James Alexander Lougheed, a young lawyer from Ontario, made his way west, offering his services to the Canadian Pacific Railway. Arriving in Medicine Hat in 1883, he set up a tent as his law office. He later moved to Calgary.

James represented two disappointed railwaymen who tried to lay claim to the hot springs near Banff when the railway first came through the Rocky Mountains. The Dominion government stepped in and declared the surrounding area a reserve, which later became the first national park in Canada.

In 1889, James became Senator Lougheed. In recognition of his service as head of the Military Hospitals Commission during the First World War, he became Sir James in 1917. After Sir James' death in 1925, Mount Lougheed in the Kananaskis Range was named in his honour.

In Calgary, the Lougheed Building/Grand Theatre and the Lougheed House still stand as legacies of this key figure in national politics and Calgary's legal and business circles.

The eastern slopes of the Rockies have continued to hold a special place in the Lougheed family's hearts. Generations of family members enjoyed the family cabin in Banff from 1897 until it was sold in 1993.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, more Calgarians began to look to the eastern slopes of the Rockies for recreation opportunities. In 1971, Sir James' grandson, Peter, became premier of Alberta. Of his many accomplishments, it is the establishment of Kananaskis Country in 1978 that often

stands out among conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts in Alberta.

Amid pressures for increased development in Kananaskis, Bill Milne, a Calgary architect and environmentalist, proposed a public consultation, through a survey, and Albertans overwhelmingly supported increased protection for the area. A helicopter ride over Kananaskis Lakes convinced the Premier that the area should be made into a park. Premier Lougheed envisioned a multi-use area that would be used primarily for recreation, but would also accommodate resource extraction and grazing leases.

Joe Lougheed, the premier's son, recently shared his thoughts on his father's motivation. "I think Dad believed that if people experience natural areas, they became more connected and more determined to protect it," he told CPAWS Southern Alberta. His father felt

that natural spaces had to be protected, while at the same time remain accessible to a wide range of Albertans and tourists. Jeanne Lougheed, the premier's wife, was instrumental in making sure that all people could enjoy a barrier-free mountain experience. Her idea for William Watson Lodge, designed to accommodate all ages, abilities, and cultures was made a reality in 1981.

In 1986, shortly after Premier Lougheed retired, Kananaskis Provincial Park was re-named Peter Lougheed Provincial Park.

Joe acknowledges the role that organizations such as CPAWS Southern Alberta have in pushing for further protection of our public lands. "We need more hardened voices to be heard," he told CPAWS Southern Alberta, "but we also need more collaboration between organizations so that reasonable solutions can be found."

**“ I think dad believed that if people experience natural areas, they become more connected and more determined to protect it. ”**

Joe Lougheed



Photo | The Lougheed Family

# The Bighorn: Banff and Jasper's Missing Link

**Katie Morrison** | Conservation Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta

**Chris Smith** | Parks Coordinator, CPAWS Northern Alberta

The next few years could be exciting ones for protected areas in Alberta if we continue on our path towards meeting our international commitments for protected areas. In 2010, under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity—part of a worldwide effort to stem the tide of biodiversity loss—Canada committed to protecting at least 17% of land and inland waters by 2020, and to more effectively conserve nature by improving the quality of their protected area systems. Alberta's Minister of Environment and Parks is co-chair of the national Pathway to Target One committee, suggesting that Alberta can be a leader in new protected areas, setting an example for other provinces in Canada. CPAWS supports the Government of Alberta's efforts, thus far, to achieve these commitments.

Parks and protected areas offer many ecological, social, and economic benefits and should be expanded across the province. The Government of Alberta recently announced the long-awaited creation of five new wildland provincial parks in northeast Alberta, based on areas identified in the 2012 Lower Athabasca Regional Plan and completed by a collaborative process between industry, First Nations, the provincial and federal governments, and conservation organizations. Together, with Wood Buffalo National Park and the Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park, these areas now make up the largest contiguous, legislated boreal protected area network in the world.

Combined with the recent designation of the Castle Wildland Provincial Parks, these are outstanding achievements for conservation in Alberta. However, more work is needed in other parts of the province that currently lack representation and are vulnerable to degradation, including the Upper and

Lower Foothills eco-regions. Perhaps the most pressing of these areas is the Bighorn Backcountry, which covers over 6,700 square kilometers of mountains, rolling forested foothills, and grassland plains in central Alberta. It is not only home to several at-risk species, but is an outdoor recreationist's paradise, and the primary source of water for more than 1.2 million Albertans who depend on the North Saskatchewan Watershed. This integral area is the missing piece linking Banff and Jasper National Parks. If protected, it would provide large-scale wildlife connectivity along Alberta's Eastern Slopes, as well as provide important habitat protection in the underrepresented foothills region of Alberta.

Nearly a century ago, much of the Bighorn Wildland was federally protected as part of the adjacent National Park, but the protection was rescinded during the First World War. In 1986, the provincial government promised to reinstate its protection but failed to follow through. Just over 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Bighorn are currently designated as a series of six Public Lands Use Zones (PLUZs), which are designed to enable industrial activity in a region but allow the province some ability to regulate recreational activity on public lands.

While this allows some increased management on the landscape, it does not offer the necessary long-term protection of wildlife, fish, water, and quiet recreation found in a wildland park.

A wildland park in the Bighorn region provides a unique opportunity to protect a large, relatively intact landscape, promote sustainable tourism opportunities, and fulfill international commitments. As shown with Kananaskis Country and other protected areas, people seek out backcountry opportunities for the authentic wilderness experiences and lack of development. The Bighorn is a prime opportunity to combine wilderness protection with sustainable backcountry recreation.

Help achieve protection of the Bighorn Backcountry as a wildland park by pledging your name in support of the campaign at [www.albertapreserves.ca](http://www.albertapreserves.ca)

**“I do love Writing-on-Stone provincial park—it's so stunning and unique. Besides the gorgeous rock formations of Milk River Valley, I love the history of the rock art and petroglyphs.”**

Julie Van Rosendaal,  
Food and Nutrition Writer



Photo | Chris Sargent

# K-Country: A Local Jewel



I grew up in Texas, but have been backpacking the Colorado Rockies with my father and brother since I was eleven. I have fond memories of 1-2 week trips that instilled a love for the outdoors, where I was taught to always leave the wilderness better than I found it. Through my adult life the love of the mountains has influenced where I've worked in

the Oil and Gas industry. I was fortunate enough to get my first engineering internship in Montana, where I explored Glacier National Park and had my first glimpse of Waterton, Banff, and Jasper National Parks. I have lived and played in the mountains of Alaska and Scotland, and taken every opportunity to witness the splendor of the Himalayas, Alps, Pyrenees, and Andes. Other memorable experiences include summiting the Grand Teton and Kilimanjaro with my father. I don't share these adventures to brag, but for perspective when I say that in Canada we live by some of the best back country beauty known to humankind.

Over the past ten years I have explored Calgary's nearby national parks, but over time I've found myself lured closer to home in Kananaskis Country. From XC skiing to hiking and mountain biking, the easy access and less tourist congestion make this my preferred area for day or weekend trips. A favourite weekend backpacking trip is the Northover Ridge, but don't tell anyone!!

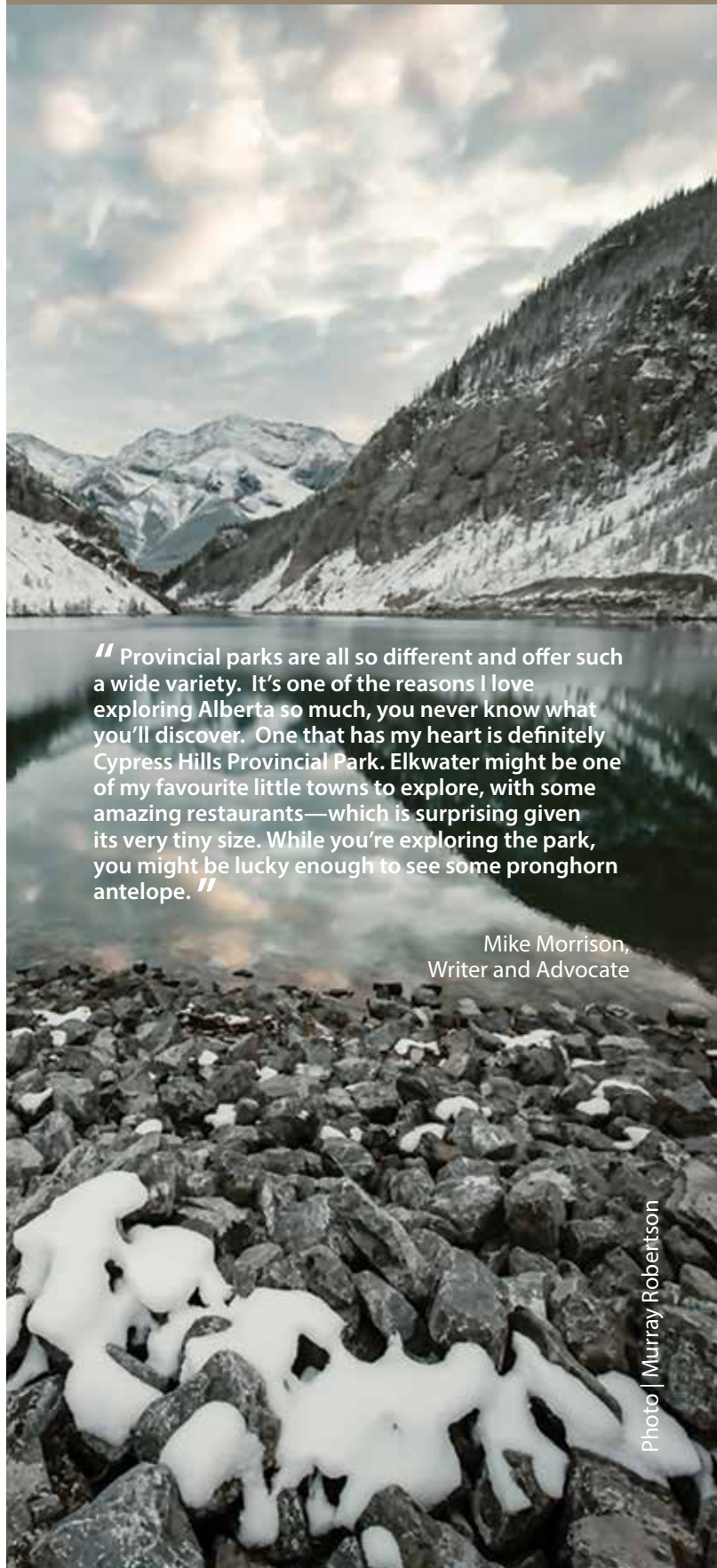
A book that I believe best describes the beauty of K Country is R.M. Patterson's Buffalo Head. It vividly describes his explorations of this area in the 1930s-1940s. His description of the Hill of Flowers, Lake of Horns, and Weary Creek Gap will entice you to explore them yourself.

Managing K-Country for future generations is critical. As I'm aware, it's not good enough to just enjoy the National and Provincial Parks, it's imperative that industry and environmental groups, like CPAWS, find common ground and work together.

I am not unique in my love of the mountains and the desire to protect them for future generations. Over the years, the people I've worked with in the oil & gas industry around the world share this common purpose. We all need to work together to preserve and protect and in the end leave all the lands better than we found them.

**Bio:** Jim Hand has 35 of years global oil & gas experience. Since 2015 he has been leading Repsol's Canada Business Unit.

**Jim Hand** | VP, Canadian Business Unit, Repsol



*“ Provincial parks are all so different and offer such a wide variety. It's one of the reasons I love exploring Alberta so much, you never know what you'll discover. One that has my heart is definitely Cypress Hills Provincial Park. Elkwater might be one of my favourite little towns to explore, with some amazing restaurants—which is surprising given its very tiny size. While you're exploring the park, you might be lucky enough to see some pronghorn antelope. ”*

Mike Morrison,  
Writer and Advocate

Photo | Murray Robertson



# Otipimisewak – The People Who Own Themselves

**Lawrence Gervais** | Regional Vice-President Métis  
Nation of Alberta – Region 3



**The Past** | The Métis have carried with them the responsibility, intelligence, and the decision making necessary for land stewardship along the Northwest homeland. Whether they were trapping furs for Hudson's Bay Company or North West Company, conservation methodology has always been in place.

When the buffalo hunts were providing sustenance for the Métis families, laws were then used and captains were put in place to better manage the buffalo herds and enforce the buffalo laws. Strategic innovations, such as the Red River carts, Montréal canoes, north canoes, dogsleds, carioles, scows, and York boats, were used without metals so Métis could easily fix broken parts and carry minimal impacts to the environments by not having to produce metals along the cart trails and waterways. Shaganappi (rawhide) was used to bound the entire transport vehicles. When dry it could support 450kg loads. Métis innovations provided these fur trading companies the most efficient use of our environment, without the use of coals and metals, to mitigate a massive environmental footprint.

"Traditionally the Métis lived a lifestyle that was harmonious with nature. The healing quality of plants, their roots, bark, flowers, fruits, leaves, oils, and seeds were known to the Métis and passed down through the families, usually from mother to daughter. Healing salves, poultices, liniments, and preparations were a natural part of daily living. Métis women taught something must always be given back when harvesting the medicines. Only take as much as needed and never harm the plants. Métis women supplied most of their family's own medicines. Métis women also performed important functions as healers and midwives. When, harvesting animals, Métis women examined the innards of an animal to determine the health of an animal killed prior to consumption" – Métis Legacy II, Gabriel Dumont Institute and Pemmican Publications, 2006

Here in Southern Alberta some of the well-known pioneer Métis women were Adelaide Belcourt, Jane Howse, Marie Rose Delorme-Smith and Lady Belle Isabella Hardisty Lougheed.

**The Present** | Since 1670, generations of Métis, who resulted from country marriages between European men and Indigenous women, were living off the land we now call Rupertsland. When the companies merged in 1821, the Métis began demanding to be acknowledged as a distinct community. In 1867 when Canada was initiating Confederation, agreements were made with the Métis. Some of those are still disputed to this day.

Since 2004 there have been three Supreme Court Decisions, Powley (2004), Manitoba Métis Federation (2013), and Harry Daniels (2016), that have instructed governments and institutions on what fiduciary responsibility, identification requirements, land acknowledgements, and policy redress means to the Métis.

Even though the Scrip Policy system had enacted control and redistribution of Métis controlled settlements, the Métis still have to be acknowledged through its land stewardship. The Métis people can and always assist in discussions around transmission of diseases from animals to animals, plants to animals, soil to plants to animals, and how we view land as a value.



# New Recreational Opportunities in the Castle Parks

**Lawrence White** | Executive Director, The Alpine Club Of Canada



Canada's mountains provide an incredible natural and cultural heritage. As the voice for Canada's mountaineering community, we believe The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) has an obligation to promote access to these mountains while balancing a commitment to conservation of our shared mountain environments.

In this vein, we'd like to thank CPAWS for their long-standing commitment to the efforts resulting in the creation of two provincial parks in the Castle wilderness of Southern Alberta. We are elated by the Government of Alberta's April announcement regarding their plans to build three new backcountry huts in the new Castle Wildland Provincial Park. This announcement is a meaningful part of a much larger effort from the province to help contain the impacts of ever-increasing human use in Alberta's backcountry.

The Government of Alberta describes the plans for these new huts as a continuation of the vision of the Castle Parks, prioritizing conservation and headwaters protection along with recreation.

These new huts, which the ACC will proudly operate and maintain, are an opportunity for us to teach the next generation about our club's core values of environmental protection and active lifestyle. We're happy to pursue this in partnership with the Government of Alberta, and in harmony with the best available science and environmental knowledge available through organizations like CPAWS. Together, we can ensure these huts are, and will always be, a place for people to get back to nature.

The ACC currently manages and maintains 33 backcountry huts—the largest hut network in North America, including everything from family-friendly huts in alpine meadows, to backcountry powder paradises, to remote climbers' refuges.

The ACC believes that by centralizing and managing human impacts in the backcountry, huts significantly reduce the environmental impact of backcountry travel in a number of ways. Backcountry camping—whether in developed or undeveloped sites—can be land intensive, leading to degradation of flora and fauna over time. Alternatively, huts are a lower-impact solution for providing backcountry access. Human waste is controlled, concentrated, and then removed from the backcountry; land use is reduced significantly, fossil fuel use is reduced, and the potential for human/wildlife conflicts is significantly lowered in comparison to a typical backcountry campsite.

Through ongoing research efforts, the ACC is always seeking ways to further reduce our environmental footprint in the backcountry through the use of appropriate technology and management. In some cases, acting as stewards through our hut system means allowing no access or development at all. An example of this our newer Louise and Richard Guy Hut on the Wapta Icefield, where we do not accept summer bookings in an effort to support healthy bear activity in Yoho National Park. In a similar effort, winter bookings at the Wates-Gibson Hut in Jasper are restricted to avoid stress on the local caribou population.

We are excited to partner with the province in bringing affordable backcountry accommodation to Southern Alberta. This new recreational offering in Castle Wildlands Provincial Park will be a draw for many Canadians who wish to experience the best of what Alberta's natural landscape provides.

Thank you for supporting this effort to conserve mountain environments and help us provide low-impact access to backcountry recreation.

Photo | Lawrence White

Ian Harker | Communications Coordinator, CPAWS Southern Alberta

# Listening to What Albertans Have to Say

Climate change. It is one of the world's most pressing issues, yet society as a whole seems somewhat uncomfortable discussing the issue. The polarizing nature of the topic makes it difficult to approach.

The truth is that we need to be talking about climate change to raise awareness of the threats and get everyone to be part of the solutions. Here at CPAWS Southern Alberta, we have incorporated climate literacy into all our education, conservation, and outreach programs. Climate change plays an important role in the work we do. The landscapes we protect will not only be affected by a changing climate, but can also act as a buffer to the consequences of environmental issues.

Recently, we have teamed up with over 50 other organizations, ranging from healthcare to industry, to facilitate better climate change conversations in Alberta. As part of the Alberta Narrative Project, participants ran workshops where we listen to what a wide range of Albertans had to say about this topic. Our goal was to discover better ways of communicating climate change in Alberta.

We held our workshop with some of Calgary's new immigrant population. Other groups listened to ranchers, teachers, oil and gas workers, and religious groups, to name a few.

The compiled results of these workshops will give us some insight into the values and language that resonate with Albertans. Understanding this will help to better facilitate conversations about climate change and increase climate literacy and resulting action.

Climate literacy plays a role in our work to protect the places that are central to Alberta's Outdoor Heritage.

**"Without question, my favourite Alberta Park is Kananaskis. I have encountered mountain goats on rock ledges, watched grizzly bears dig ground squirrels, a pine martin carrying her young, and even a pika licking the sweat off my backpack straps. My list of memories made there would easily fill volumes, and the storyline continues to be written."**

Brian Keating,  
Writer, Speaker, and Naturalist

Photo | Katie Morrison

# Speaking Up for Those Without a Voice

**Gord James** | Volunteer and Previous Board Chair for CPAWS Southern Alberta

**M**any issues in our world today affect a variety of people, landscapes, and creatures that may not have the ability to speak out. Fortunately, there are others that can speak up for those without a voice. Society is full of people and organizations who speak up through volunteering and making donations, and help give a voice to those in need.

For me, the Southern Alberta Chapter of CPAWS has been a voice that I have relied on to speak for our landscape and all who use it—both animals and humans.

We have all heard of the young Logan Boulet, from the Humboldt Broncos, who signed an organ donor card shortly before his tragic death. His voice lives on, and his actions spurred others to sign a donor card.

Charlie Russell is another example of speaking up. Through his work with

grizzly bears, he showed us another side of bears. He gave a voice to these animals that has changed our thinking about grizzly bears.

I decided years ago to leave a bequest in my will in order that my voice, through the CPAWS Southern Alberta Chapter, will live on. I specifically requested that my bequest be directed to the national CPAWS organization in Ottawa, with 100% of that bequest directed to the work done by CPAWS in southern Alberta. In that way I am assured that southern Alberta will continue to hear my voice on the issues that concern me.

We all have our individual issues and concerns—and there is a way to ensure that our voices will continue. I encourage everyone to give consideration to this option.



Photo | Howard Trofarenko



Photo | Gord James

**“ My favourite Alberta park is the White Goat Wilderness Area. I first visited on a solo backpacking adventure in 1994, and have been back twice since. I was instantly smitten with the wide-open alpine plateau, littered with tiny gorges and streams, framed magnificently by layered walls of jagged peaks. I found my own personal version of Shangri-La. The memories of those trips never stray far from my mind.”**

John E. Marriott,  
Nature Photographer

## Your Will, Your Legacy

Jonathan Ng | Lawyer, Underwood Gilholme

A recent poll by the Angus Reid Institute showed that only 45% of Albertans have a Will. The reasons why so many people do not make their final arrangements are broad—apathy, fear of death, cost of legal services—yet the average person would not be comfortable with the 'default will' provided by the government, officially known as the Wills and Succession Act in Alberta.

A Will allows a person to take matters into their own hands by creating legally-binding directions on how assets are to be divided, who shall administer those directions, and several other important matters. This provides the opportunity to provide continued financial support to loved ones and charitable organizations beyond the grave.

**Executor.** The first few months after a person dies can be grueling. In addition to the grief and emotion, surviving family members find themselves shuffling from meetings with banks, filling out a multitude of documents, and dealing with institution after institution. A Will simplifies this process by appointing an Executor to take charge of these matters. The average estate takes over one year to fully administer therefore it is imperative that the proper person is selected for the important role of Executor.

**Beneficiaries.** The Wills and Succession Act has a formula for Albertans who do not have a Will: everything goes to family. For many people, this formula is acceptable. However, not all families are the same. A Will would allow families with complex situations to carefully ensure that all sides are provided with proper support, thereby limiting the conflict that may follow.

**Charitable giving.** A will is a final chance to leave a legacy. According to Statistics Canada, 84% of Canadians aged 15 and over reported making at least one financial donation to a charitable and nonprofit organization, yet less than 10% leave a gift to charity in their Will. If charitable giving is a part of a person's life, they should consider making it part of their death. Making a gift to charity through a Will can provide significant tax benefits. A charitable receipt issued to the estate can serve to reduce the capital gains realized at death—in other words, a carefully planned Will allows a person to re-direct a large portion of taxes toward chosen charities.

Jonathan Ng is a lawyer at Underwood Gilholme Estate Lawyers. He specializes in Wills, Enduring Powers of Attorney, Personal Directives, Trusts, and Estate Administration.



Photo | Martin Male

# Sharing Canada's Wilderness with New Canadians

Vanessa Bilan | Environmental Educator, CPAWS Southern Alberta



Canada is a country blessed with wild, wonderful, wilderness areas. As a lifelong Canadian, I have always identified nature as an essential part of Canada, and exploring these spaces as being an inherent Canadian thing to do. This is why I was

so excited to start guiding the adult new immigrant hikes CPAWS Southern Alberta, which began in the summer of 2017. I was excited to share my passion for the outdoors and my knowledge about how we can protect it with new Canadians. Since this was new to me, I was curious and had many questions. Would new Canadians even be interested? Would language be a barrier? Could I help make them comfortable as we ventured into wild spaces?

Through leading these hikes, I learned a lot. The participants spoke English quite well, and they were very eager to practice and learn new words. Many women would ask questions about

the local medicinal and edible plants we saw on the hike. During our closing circles, where we shared impactful moments of the day, I was elated to hear not only how much the participants had learned from the day, but also to hear how they wanted to visit these protected spaces in Banff, Kananaskis, and the Castle. Whether it was learning about keeping wildlife wild, or learning that Calgary has some of the cleanest water in the world (you can drink it straight from the tap), each person learned a new appreciation for Canadian nature. One of my favorite things that participants shared in the closing circle was how they transformed from fearing bears to being curious about bears and confident about safe ways to deploy bear spray.

Sharing wilderness with new Canadians was an impactful experience for me. I learned about the stories of these people and gained insight into the struggles they face coming to Canada—the sorrow of leaving their families behind. I gained a deep and meaningful appreciation for how brave these new Canadians are, and how receptive they are to new ideas and ways of being. While connecting in nature and teaching about the environment, I was transformed.



Photo | CPAWS SAB

## Testimonials of the New Immigrant Hikers

"It was great to take a walk with my family and friends guided by experts of park creatures. It was interesting and refreshing. Thank you again for organizing the event!"

Soyoung

"Last year hiked in Fish Creek Park, it was a very good experience for me and I enjoyed it very much. We learned about Canadian nature, the kind of plants can grow up in mountains, also about the river, and the small fish can grow up there. Another thing we learned, it was about what we need to have when we go for hiking, shoes, hat, bottle of water etc. Last thing I want to mention is the lady which was getting directions of us she explained to us, how we can protect ourselves if we are in danger from a bear. It's very important to know about all this."

Anna

# CPAWS Southern Alberta Environmental Education Programs A Year of Growth

**Jaclyn Angotti** | Education Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta



CPAWS Southern Alberta is a leader in environmental education, and has won provincial and national awards for our unique programs. For 21 years we have successfully delivered in-class environmental education and outdoor interpretive

hiking programs to youth and adult groups in Alberta, focusing on local stewardship. To date, we have engaged over **128,000** participants in this region! Over the last year we connected with **10,838** Albertans during **464** programs. The accompanying infographic details these successes.

Our school based education program links local conservation issues with curriculum, and includes programs on species at risk, trees and forests, water conservation, grizzly bears, Alberta's parks and wilderness, and climate change. These programs follow a unique multi-visit formula of two in-class visits and a guided hike or snowshoe trek, fostering a connection to nature, and bringing deeper meaning to the learning experience.

Our adult education program is grounded in our expertise with school programming, and extends these learnings to an adult audience, including teachers, university classes, corporate groups, community groups, and new immigrants. Program topics include outdoor education, parks and protected areas,

water stewardship, grizzly bears, climate literacy, action learning projects, and more.

The 2017-2018 school year was a year of growth for our Education Department. We introduced several new programs:

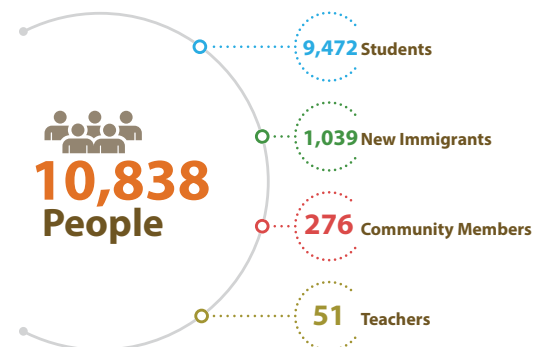
**Discovering Parks in Canada** – an interpretive hiking program to introduce new immigrants to parks, recreation and stewardship.

**Climate Connect** – a multi-visit classroom and hiking program to engage high school students in climate literacy and action. We also offer a corresponding workshop to new immigrants and other community members.

**YYC Citizen Science** – a joint project with Green Calgary that invites students to tackle water and wildlife conservation issues, collect data, and submit observations to citizen science research projects.

**Take the Action Challenge** – a planning session for students to learn how to effectively design and complete an environmental action project.

Our success 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.



Please consider showing your support for environmental education by **donating to CPAWS Southern Alberta** today.

Visit <http://cpaws-southernalberta.org/campaigns/education> for details.

# An Important Step in Preserving Our Outdoor Heritage

**Katie Morrison** | Conservation Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta



Some of the most amazing landscapes we have in Southern Alberta can be found in the southwest corner of the province in the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone regions. The forests, grasslands, and headwaters streams on the eastern slopes of Alberta's southern Rockies provide water, sustain fish and wildlife, and offer some of the province's best opportunities for recreation and tourism.

Over the past few decades, these areas have seen increasing pressure from forestry, industrial activity, and recreational use. Intact forests, native grasslands, and sensitive riparian areas have become increasingly damaged and fragmented by human uses, including a large number of roads and trails. In some areas, the densities of roads and trails are four to five times the limit needed to maintain clean water and safe, effective habitat for species like the grizzly bear, westslope cutthroat trout, and bull trout. While the value of these areas has long been recognized, it has not been reflected in the way we manage and use the area.

In 2014, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan authorized the development of a Land Footprint Management Plan (LFMP) and Recreation Management Plan (RMP) for the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone regions, encompassing the public lands between Kananaskis Country and the new Castle parks near Waterton.

For the past four years, CPAWS Southern Alberta has been working with the Porcupine Hills Coalition—which includes ranchers, grazing associations, landowners, local stewardship groups, outdoor recreationists, municipal governments, and ENGOs representing both private and public land—to communicate the ecological and social value of the Porcupine Hills, and the need for strong science-based planning. Our collective voice helped us find land-use solutions that work for a broad range of interests and include strong measures to protect headwaters and wildlife in southern Alberta.

CPAWS Southern Alberta was also invited to sit as the public lands conservation representative on the Southwest Alberta Recreation Advisory Group, a multi-stakeholder group led by the Government of Alberta land-use planners. This group represented a full range of interested stakeholders, including First Nations, rural municipalities, forestry, oil and gas, cattle ranchers, local residents, OHV users, snowmobilers, hunters and anglers, mountain bikers, backpackers, hikers, outfitters, equestrian groups, stewardship organizations, and nature enthusiasts. The group met regularly over six months to provide advice and input on the creation of the plans.

Finally, in May 2018 after years of literature review, ecological modeling, and stakeholder and public consultation, the Government of Alberta released the final LFMP and RMP. The LFMP manages the effects of roads and trails on headwaters and biodiversity values by mapping the key ecological values of the area and placing science-based limits on the number of roads and trails in order to protect wildlife, native fish, and headwaters health. These limits are based on scientific research that indicates levels at which sensitive species like grizzly bear and elk start to avoid

habitat and levels at which stream health and native fish starts to suffer. This would mean a big reduction in the vast number of existing roads and trails. Unfortunately, the limits outlined in the plans are still higher than required for some species; we will need to continue working to ensure actual road and trail densities stay well below specified thresholds.

The plans also outline detailed commitments to not only maintain but also improve habitat quality in the Livingstone and Porcupine Hills by restoring existing landscape damage.

The Recreation Management Plan (RMP) then uses the road and trail limits outlined in the LFMP to create recreational opportunities for all Albertans in appropriate places and at appropriate levels of use. This includes drastically reducing unregulated motorized trails, while still providing over 400 km of designated motorized trails in the region.

These trails should stay below thresholds and away from sensitive areas such as trout streams, important habitats, and private homes that border public land. This will reserve areas for Albertans who enjoy hiking, fishing, camping, birding, and hunting in quiet, undisturbed landscapes.

These new plans are an important step in preserving our outdoor heritage and protecting Alberta's headwaters now and for future generation. They will also set a precedent of public land management that could be applied to other key headwaters regions in Alberta.

Good land-use planning ensures that our public lands are properly managed with and for Albertans. While the plans aren't perfect, they were developed using science as a base, and with the



input of a wide-range of stakeholders, to ensure all users have sustainable recreation opportunities, while protecting our important headwaters region.

CPAWS Southern Alberta looks forward to continuing our work with our partners, stakeholders, and government to ensure the plans are effectively implemented on-the-ground and all future land-use decisions in the region protect the fish, wildlife, water, and quiet recreation value of these iconic Alberta landscapes.

## Common Solutions for the Common Good

**John Lawson** | Rancher and Porcupine Hills Coalition member



**A**s local residents, ranchers, and recreational users, my wife and I know well the peaceful serenity, natural beauty, clean water, diversity of wildlife, and native grasslands that still exist in the Livingstone and Porcupine Hills. We have also seen firsthand the degradation and damage that results from ever increasing use, lack of care, bigger toys, and a too common free-for-all mentality. The overuse and abuse of these lands and waters has displaced wildlife and quiet recreational pursuits, disturbed adjacent residents, interfered with disposition rights, and reduced the overall appeal and values of public

and adjoining private lands. Real changes are needed, and needed now; if they are avoided or postponed, we risk permanently losing some of the best qualities these areas have to offer.

The nonpartisan Porcupine Hills Coalition was formed in early 2015 to work with government and others towards effective plans addressing diversity, headwaters, and landscape needs; and to ensure responsible land use. The two plans before us are not perfect, but the Coalition supports both as an enormous step forward.

We all know our own homes have only so much space and can accommodate only so many people; we know that kids and adults alike have to take off their spurs and roller-blades on the hardwood floors; our gardens can only grow so much produce, and our springs or wells can only produce so much water. Public lands and headwaters are no different—they require respect and recognition of limits.

We need not all agree on the fine details, but let's be honest with ourselves and each other by seeing the problems, accepting our part in them, and getting behind common solutions for a common good.

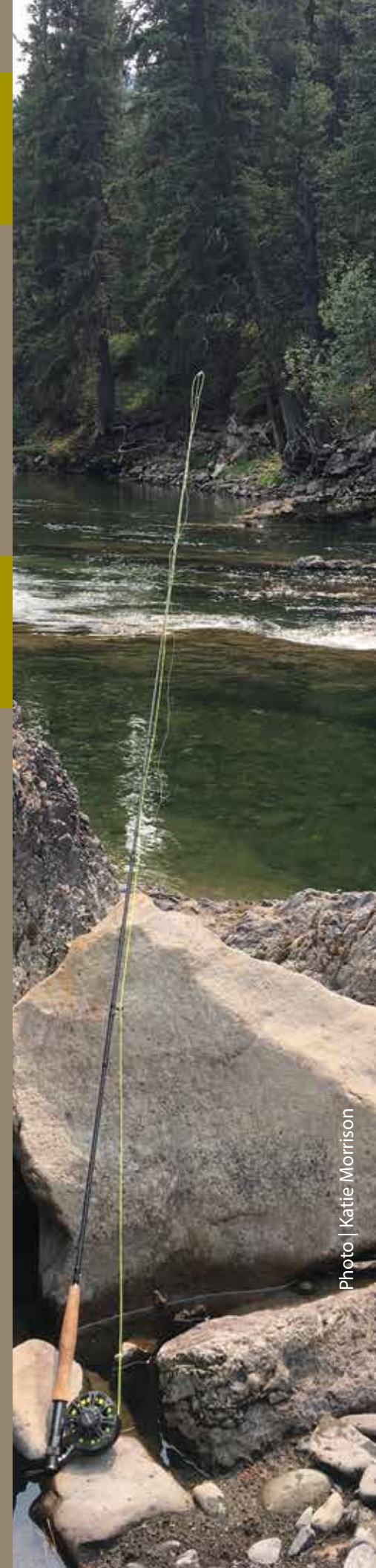


Photo | Katie Morrison

# What is “Appropriate Development”?

Peter Zimmerman | Parks Program Supervisor, CPAWS Southern Alberta



Many public positions CPAWS takes on proposed developments or activities in our parks, such as the Olympic games, hinges on what is “appropriate” or “inappropriate” development. Why is there often so much controversy about what should or should not be allowed to happen within our parks, and what criteria do we use to determine this?

While some may see this as simply a contest between recreational preferences; you like to golf and ski, I like to hike and snowshoe; the issue goes deeper. Government tries to balance the needs and interests

of different users, but there are considerations beyond simply trying to provide all things to all people.

To start with, parks are finite. Similar to your house, there are fixed boundaries that limit activities, the number of guests, and the range of renovations you can do. Appropriate household activities are limited by the room you have...the same is true with parks.

Secondly, is the legislative mandate or purpose of our parks. The National Parks Act stipulates the *“maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity, through the protection of natural resources and natural processes, shall be the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of the management of parks.”*

Our Provincial Parks Act states, *“Parks are established, and are to be maintained, (a) for the preservation of Alberta’s natural heritage, (b) for the conservation and management of flora and fauna, (c) for the preservation of specified areas, landscapes and natural features and objects in them... (d) to facilitate their use and enjoyment ... , and (e) to ensure their lasting protection for the benefit of present and future generations.”*

We often have a tendency to over emphasize the “enjoyment” and discount the “preservation” aspects of this act, but any development that works against this mandate, and erodes their value as a park, is tending toward the “inappropriate” column.

Thirdly, our desire to constantly embrace new forms of recreation within this protection/preservation objective is challenging. The growth in off highway vehicle use, lighter mountain bikes, ultralight pack gear, more RVs, even use of drones contribute to increased pressure on protected areas. Of course, no human activity is without impact, even a simple walk in fragile areas, such as high alpine, can have an effect.

This does not mean parks should be off limits to human use. To the contrary, Indigenous peoples have always seen humans as being a part of, not separate from nature. However, we must assess the level of use a park has the capacity to quickly recover from, and what pushes that boundary too far. Although it is tricky, we are getting pretty good at using science to determine this boundary; we often just lack the will to act on it.

Cumulative incremental change is another factor. Often small changes go unnoticed, but add up over time and easily reach a “threshold” past the point of no return. Preventing this “death from a thousand cuts” has been a part of parks management philosophy for decades. We need to look at development in the context of what else has happened, is happening, and is proposed to happen.

Related to this is the “induced development” factor. We must ask, not only what is the impact of an activity, but what associated events might this trigger? More parking areas may seem the logical solution to trailhead congestion, but if that increases use on an already overcrowded trail, is that a good thing?

Precedent is another important consideration. If we allow this one-off activity, why not another? The infamous “slippery slope” will invite more, and maybe this time a little bit larger?

Determining “appropriate development” can be black and white at times, but not so clear at others. It is easy to see why on-site condos in sensitive alpine areas at Sunshine Village would fail the appropriate test. Perhaps less clear is how a campground expansion might either increase impact or help mitigate existing ones.

At CPAWS, we look at these issues case-by-case, doing our utmost to look at the law and science to find solutions with a positive conservation outcome.

Recreational enjoyment is something we all need, and is part of a park’s purpose. But enjoyment that erodes our capacity to achieve the preservation objectives is something we must be vigilant about.

# Standing for Kananaskis Country

Becky Best-Bertwistle

Conservation Engagement Coordinator, CPAWS Southern Alberta



Community spaces, like parks and public lands, are important as they are places everyone can respectfully enjoy and steward collectively. Albertans have found such gathering places to hike, bike, climb, paddle, and ride all across our Eastern Slopes.

One much loved community space is Kananaskis, drawing locals and visitors alike; many consider it one of the best things about living in Calgary. The forests, slopes, and rivers of K-Country are a community hall to many of us; however, the management of these public lands do not always reflect community values.

Many assume Kananaskis is set aside for ecological protection and public recreation. However, due to the piecemeal nature of Kananaskis' parks, industry still has a significant impact on land management. In fact, 38% of Kananaskis is eligible for industrial timber harvesting, and 25% is also open for oil and gas extraction. Communities have been surprised to find their favourite view or their luckiest fishing hole will be logged. Once forest plans are set and the flagging tape is up, little can be done other than to haggle over a few operational allowances.

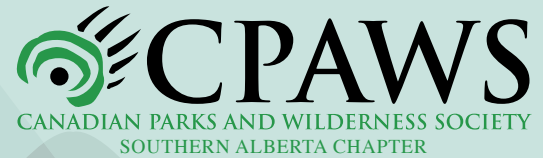
Communities across the Eastern Slopes have raised their concerns. Take a Stand for Kananaskis and the Upper Highwood, for example, has spent the last year addressing the consequences of logging in the Upper Highwood watershed, a place with high ecological and tourism values that small business owners rely on.

In the Upper Elbow, a similar story is unfolding. A new group, called Stand for the Upper Elbow, is concerned with two cut blocks between Highway 66 and the banks of the Elbow river, another area with high ecological and recreational values.

Both groups have spent endless hours planning, strategizing, letter writing, and tracking down and pouring over harvest maps, in an attempt to improve forest management practices in southern Alberta. Their community values shine through in all their actions, and they are inspired by bright spring snowshoe trips or Friday afternoon scrambles.

The seemingly tireless efforts community members donate in their free time is valuable and spent in service of what makes the eastern slopes of the Rockies so special.

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