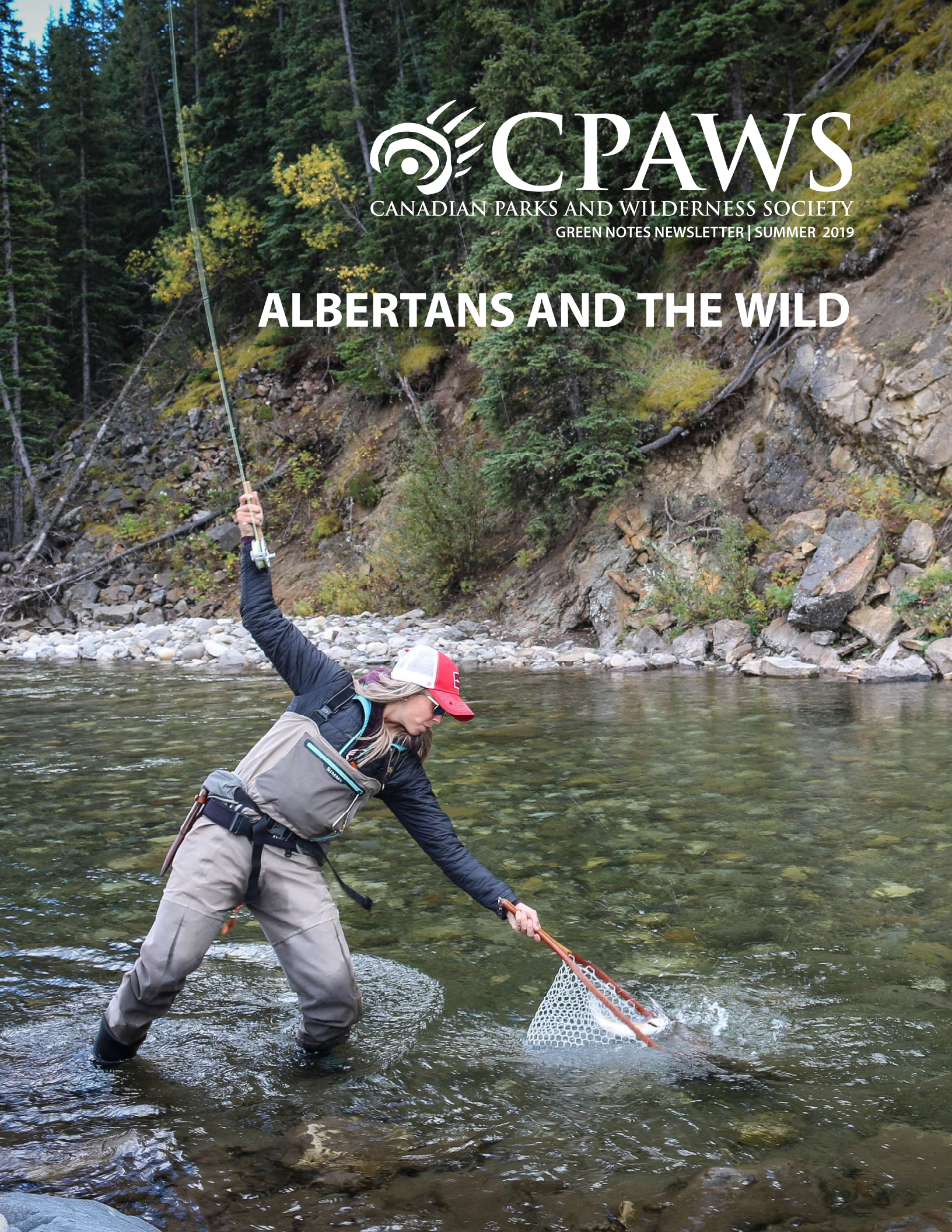




CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
GREEN NOTES NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2019

ALBERTANS AND THE WILD



The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) is Canada's voice for wilderness. We are a non-profit environmental organization working to protect half of Canada's public land and water. Since 1967, CPAWS Southern Alberta has led conservation efforts to protect areas in Banff National Park, Kananaskis, the Whaleback and the Castle. Our chapter is a leader in environmental education, offering award-winning programs to help build the next generation of environmental stewards.

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

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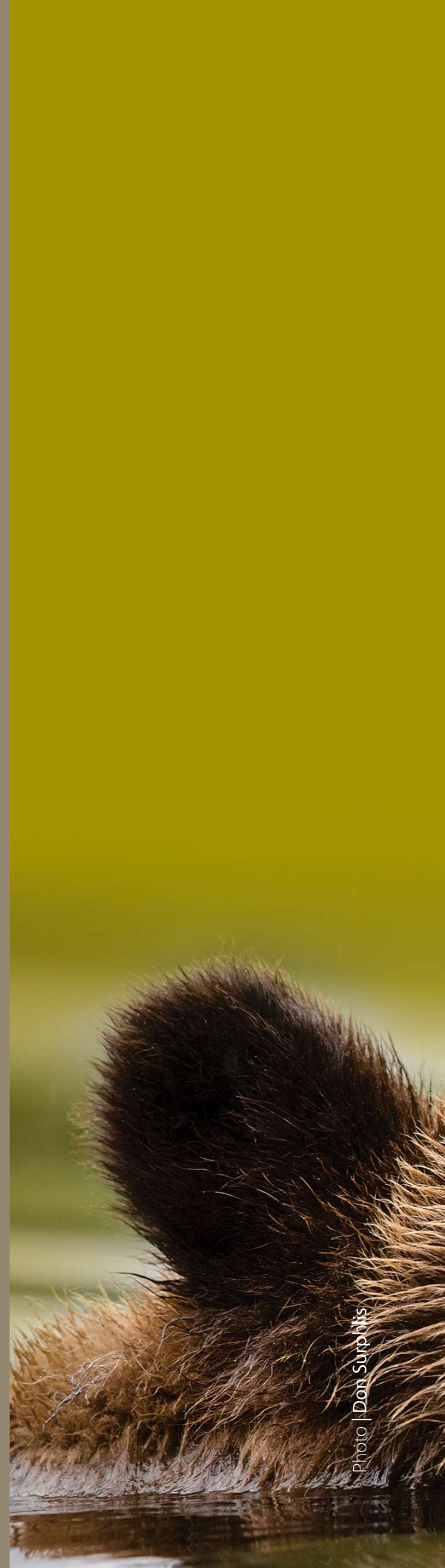


Photo | Don Surpals

Table of Contents

| | |
|----|--|
| 04 | A Passion for Alberta's Wild Spaces |
| 05 | Alberta's Diversity: In Lands and People |
| 06 | Alberta's Wild Character |
| 08 | A Big Step Forward in Protecting the Bighorn |
| 10 | Cultivating Alberta's Environmental Leaders |
| 12 | Fly Fisher Paula Shearer is Hooked on Alberta's Pristine Waterways |
| 14 | Grasslands: An Ecological and Cultural Treasure |
| 16 | Cochrane Artist Aims to Nurture What Nurtures Us |
| 18 | SkiUphill Brings Sustainability to the Backcountry |
| 19 | Thanking Our Supporters |



A Passion for Alberta's Wild Spaces

Anne-Marie Syslak | Executive Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta



In my early 20s, I left the golden fields of Manitoba in search of mountains and adventure. My spark for the wild and rugged Rocky Mountains had been ignited by annual family ski trips to this area. My passion for the outdoors was well-established through school and work experiences—camping, canoeing, biking and hiking in the Manitoba Escarpment and on the Canadian Shield. But when I arrived in Canmore to take a three-month course in mountaineering and outdoor leadership at Yamnuska Mountain Adventures, it changed me forever. Yamnuska's Mountain Skills Semester, offered each spring and fall, is geared to those who want to work in outdoor tourism. Many who complete the program end up working with the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides.

I didn't exactly fit the mould. I was a university graduate and nature enthusiast from the flatlands of the Prairies. The course teaches practical skills like wilderness first aid, navigation, avalanche training and trip planning, and involves extensive canoeing, hiking, mountaineering, glacier travel, ski touring, and rock and ice climbing. Living outdoors for extended periods is a unique experience—you can't just go to the tap for a glass of water, or inside to warm up or sleep on a comfy bed. At first, it's about survival.

But as you adapt, you begin to relish your new home, and all that solitude and time spent looking inward. In the vastness of the remote mountain wilderness, you are small and humbled. The surrounding beauty fills your senses and, as you fall into a rhythm with the ecosystem, you connect in a profound way. It becomes your home. In that cold and often harsh simplicity, life's complexities fall away, and you find strength and empowerment. For me, this formative experience brought me back to Alberta and shaped my career, and in many ways, my life.

It's cliché to say that the Rockies are my church, but that is truly what these mountains are to me. They are where I go to find peace and solitude; where I go to re-centre myself, reconnect and find inner strength; and where I feel most healthy, happy and alive. That's what Alberta's wild places mean to me, and why I am so committed to protecting them.

In this newsletter, we hear from diverse Albertans. They may have distinct backgrounds and interests, but they share the same love and deep respect for the wilderness that makes this province unique. We hope you enjoy reading their perspectives, and also reading about our collaborative work throughout CPAWS Southern Alberta.

I also want to thank you, our closest friends and supporters, for making this work possible. Together, we are protecting Alberta's wild spaces for all future generations.

"It's cliché to say that the Rockies are my church, but that is truly what these mountains are to me."

Photo | Wayne B. Neal

Alberta's Diversity: In Lands and People

Philip Nykyforuk | Board Chair, CPAWS Southern Alberta

Our population in Alberta is growing and changing. For many years, we have welcomed newcomers from across Canada and, indeed, around the world. It is wonderful to see these newcomers exploring and learning to enjoy what our natural environment has to offer. CPAWS SAB plays a vital role in teaching new Albertans about nature and encouraging them to explore our amazing province.

As Alberta's population grows, it is important that we expand our network of parks and protected areas. This has been our priority for many years. We played a lead role in helping to create many of the protected areas in Kananaskis, and more recently, we played a key role in advocating for the creation of Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park in the southwest corner of Alberta.

Our most recent effort to expand our network of protected areas has focused on the Bighorn in west-central Alberta, an area of critical importance for our watersheds and wild species (see pages 8-9).

Unfortunately, the government's proposal to create Bighorn Country was interrupted by the provincial election, but we will continue these efforts with the new government.

The creation of any protected area requires collaboration and cooperation with groups and individuals with different voices, backgrounds and perspectives, including Indigenous communities. The common thread among these diverse groups is that they, like a huge majority of Albertans, treasure our province's natural beauty, fresh air and clean water. They all share a desire for conservation.

A broad coalition has come together to drive the creation of new protected areas in the Bighorn. The voices speaking out in favour of the Bighorn proposal include conservation groups, hiking groups, anglers and hunters, as well as long-time Albertans, new Albertans, youths, seniors, Indigenous people, rural Albertans, city dwellers and others.

Conservation is not a partisan issue nor a political issue. It is part of the fabric of our province and part of who we are as Albertans.

We are all defined by the land that we share as our home and the majesty that's just beyond our doorsteps. It is in our common interest to come together to ensure that the most special places are preserved, protected and carefully managed. This is, and always will be, at the very core of the mission of CPAWS SAB.

"Conservation is not a partisan issue nor a political issue. It is part of the fabric of our province and part of who we are as Albertans."



Alberta's Wild Character

Aritha van Herk

This conversation occurs again and again, especially in Europe.

"Where are you from?" "Canada."

"Ah—Canada." Pause. "You have nature."



It is hopeless to dispute this breathless assertion, to declare that we do not "have" nature, but that nature in fact, has us—and has to put up with us, although humans too are part of nature. But the notion of "scenery" or backdrop, out there somewhere, equates our wild with a vista, vast but separate from us. The unique character of southern Alberta's weather and sky, flora and fauna, resists those sweeping images; it is more complicated than the advertisements for "seeing" the Rockies or camping beside a mountain lake. If we are

conscious and attentive, we know and understand that we are

occupied by a wild more subtle and stealthy than theatrical, and that the wild shapes our history and culture far more than the mirage of an unspoiled "great outdoors."

This wild place is both where we live, and how. From outside, Albertans are considered wild characters, slightly off-kilter, mercurial. There's suspicion about the unpredictable Alberta temperament, as if we might bite or sting, a human echo of our unruly climate. This changeability is part of Alberta's mystique and rendition, but more important, a measure of both the great diversity of our natural spaces, and the diversity of people who encounter and cherish the wilder sides of our province—from the farmer who plows away from the edge of a slough to give space to waterfowl, to the backcountry hiker who understands that she is invading another being's territory.

Most striking is how close the wild is, and how suddenly it stumbles against this world we live in; this world that insists on speed, as if to outstrip what geography and time have accomplished. We occupy a time remote and technological, more virtual than real. But that is where the wild refuses to cooperate. While some would deem "wilderness" retrospective, a part of Alberta that persists as history, the wild can ambush us anytime and although some expect that wilderness should emulate fireworks, in truth, it is far more mysterious.

We know the language of wildlife and ecological integrity, we remark on the presence of fescue and glaciers, but it is personal encounter that etches experience. That encounter is possible anywhere, in the growth behind the leaves of a Saskatoon bush waiting to purple into taste, in the rising wind of a chinook, in the interruption of a coyote trotting across an inner-city park.

The wild is language, not ferocious but precise, a resistance to cultivation, a sudden breakout of wolf willow on the lip of a traffic interchange. The wild is not a study or a description, but an effect outside of time, more complicated than computers, and completely disinterested in humans, unless we disrupt its integrity. The wild nudges

the old porcupine that slowly lumbers through the underbrush beneath the steep cliff of Head-Smashed-In. The wild edges the reeds along the banks of the Bow River, from its origin in Bow Glacier to the rustling water that winds eastward to join the South Saskatchewan, and eventually Hudson Bay. The wild echoes in the sound of coyotes howling from the long dark of a winter night.

And yes, the wild encompasses the impressive sight of ten mountains after that hard stretch of hike into the Valley of the Ten Peaks. But it is also present in the heart of a blizzard that whips the breath out of our bones, snow so intense it almost seems warm.

What do wild places mean? They mean we have kept faith with our inheritance, and they remind us not to squander that enormous gift.

Grouse live in my garden. They hide there, and we quietly ignore one another. That is the nature of wildness, to understand that space is shared, that privacy is integral, that respect is stealthy and quiet. And on a clear morning, when the moon sets, remember.

Aritha van Herk is the author of five novels, and five works of non-fiction which explore place and history, especially overlooked aspects of Western Canada.

Her most recent work, Stampede and the Westness of West, melds poetry and place-writing. She has published hundreds of articles, reviews and essays, and is a Member of the Order of Canada.

“ What do wild places mean?

They mean we have kept faith with our inheritance, and they remind us not to squander that enormous gift. ”

Photo | Vincent Varga



A Big Step Forward in Protecting the Bighorn

Katie Morrison | Conservation Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta



The flurry of activity during public consultations for the Bighorn Country proposal made it seem like those crucial few months were the whole campaign. Some rhetoric wanted you to believe just that.

In reality, that was just the tip of the iceberg; the final push after years of effort from many groups and individuals. And while I admit to being disappointed that plans have been changed by a new government, great progress was made toward ensuring protection for this important area, while engaging a broad range of Albertans in conservation.

While attempts to protect the Bighorn backcountry are not new, the most recent efforts arose after Alberta recommitted to meeting the Convention on Biological Diversity target to protect 17 per cent of our lands and waters by 2020. This reignited our collective aspirations—conservation organizations, recreation groups, local businesses and community members saw it as an opportunity to finally get legal protection for the Bighorn.

A diverse range of people and groups lent their voices and expertise in calling for protection of the Bighorn: people who rely on it for clean water; who use the backcountry to hike, hunt, fish and ski; local businesses that rely on recreation and tourism; and people who care about wildlife and wilderness.

CPAWS Northern and Southern Alberta chapters worked collaboratively with other conservation groups on initiatives, such as Love Your Headwaters and Alberta Preserves, that collected tens of thousands of signatures in support of a new protected area in the Bighorn. Recreation groups and local businesses wrote letters and op-eds on what the area means to them and how protection would benefit their wilderness experiences. When the government released its proposal in November 2018, these groups and individuals once again showed their collective support.

A poll commissioned by CPAWS Alberta chapters found that 73 per cent of Albertans across the political spectrum supported the proposal.

Thousands of people sent emails through our action page alone and we suspect that thousands more took the government survey. More than 70 organizations and businesses expressed public support through op-eds, public letters, social media posts, emails to members and advertisements.

Albertans care about conservation; the Bighorn campaign made that obvious. There were, of course, detractors; there will always be critics who see things differently. But the positive support was loud and clear. And it's not over yet. While the government's Bighorn proposal didn't go forward before the April election, conservation has never been about a particular proposal or government. It's about coming together to care for our most special wild places.

We encourage government to build on this momentum; to continue conversations with Indigenous communities and other local groups, and build new relationships to complete the decades long work that so many Albertans have fought for.



Our Conservation Successes

Over the past year, we made significant progress on a number of conservation projects throughout southern Alberta. Below are some highlights of what we've accomplished with your support.

🌿 **Co-led Southern Eastern Slopes Collaborative** (southeasternslopes.ca), a group of 15 organizations working to develop evidence-based conservation priorities for the region.

🌿 **Provided** recommendations on how to **reduce human-wildlife conflict** in the Bow Valley, as part of the Bow Valley Human-Wildlife Coexistence Technical Advisory Committee.

🌿 **Worked** with local community groups in efforts to **improve forestry practices** in the Upper Highwood, Upper Elbow and Ghost watersheds.

🌿 **Collaborated** with local stakeholders through the Porcupine Hills Coalition to ensure balanced land-use and recreation plans for the Livingstone and Porcupine Hills regions.

🌿 **Raised** awareness about threats to Alberta's fish species, including westslope cutthroat trout.

🌿 **Helped** protect Jasper National Park by stopping the Icefield trail project—a proposed paved trail through wilderness habitat for four federally listed species at risk.

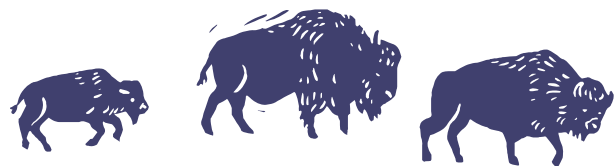


Get Involved !

To support or learn more about our Conservation efforts, please contact

Katie Morrison | (403) 232-6686 | kmorrison@cpaws.org

Photo | Stephen Legault



Cultivating Alberta's Environmental Leaders

Jaclyn Angotti | Education Director, CPAWS Southern Alberta

For 22 years, CPAWS Southern Alberta's award-winning environmental education programs have engaged Albertans, young and old, through learning in nature with a focus on local stewardship.

We have reached more than **140,000 participants** in this region, and last year alone delivered **457 programs** to more than **11,000 participants**.

Linking local conservation with curriculum, our youth education programs—focused on climate literacy, species at risk, watersheds and forest and park ecosystems—include a unique mix of two in-class visits, plus a guided hike or snowshoe that fosters a strong connection to nature. We have also extended these learnings to an adult audience, including teachers, corporate and community groups, and new immigrants.

The CPAWS Action Challenge Initiative takes learning beyond the classroom by empowering students to take action on local conservation issues, and enables them to engage in active stewardship and create a positive impact on their environment.

As we look forward to another successful year providing outstanding educational programming throughout southern Alberta, we want to thank our funders and partners—none of this would be possible without your support.

" 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 " Teacher, Sir John A. Macdonald School, Calgary

" ... 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. " Grade 7 student, Manachaban Middle School, Cochrane



Photo: | Kate Logan



Get Involved !






To support or learn more about our Education program, please contact us at (403) 232-6686 | education@cpaws.org

Photos | Erika Jensen Mann; Lauren Bally; Sheri Tarrington







Our Successes

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.
-  **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.

Looking Ahead

We are excited to bring these new programs and initiatives to Albertans very soon!

-  **Why 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—including energy efficiency action projects with students.
-  **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.

Our Impact

AB's
Parks &
Protected
Areas

184
Hike treks

42
Snowshoe treks

 **320**
Class Visits
179 Class Programs

 **52** Adult workshops
& public programs

 **65%** Programs delivered
to high needs and rural populations

95%  Participants
committed to or engaged in
positive environmental stewardship

Fly Fisher Paula Shearer is Hooked on Alberta's Pristine Waterways

Lisa Monforton | CPAWS Southern Alberta Volunteer

By the time Paula Shearer was 11 years old, she was taking a rowboat out on her own to fish and scout hatches the way her father and uncles taught her.

It certainly wasn't what her friends were doing. But Shearer, who grew up in Calgary, didn't care, often stealing away in a boat with her grandfather's old rod by her side for a fishing day. "My group of friends weren't as outdoorsy, so on the weekends I'd cancel my plans with them and went out and fished," she says. "Nobody in high school knew I fished because it wasn't the cool thing to do."

Decades later, fly fishing is having a moment in Alberta and elsewhere, especially among young women. That's the "100 per cent influence of social media," says Shearer. People get captivated by idyllic images of crystal clear, sun-dappled waters as anglers leisurely cast their lines against a stunning mountain backdrop.

Shearer's pastime evolved into a passion. She now runs Calgary-based PS on the Fly, a member of the Angling Outfitter & Guiding Association of Alberta, which advocates for managing fish habitat and protecting Alberta's waterways. Shearer

offers lessons and custom fishing trips for Albertans and people from as far away as New Zealand.

"We are so lucky here in Alberta," says Shearer. "We have great fishing and beautiful scenery. It's the whole package."

Though she has fished around the world, she says it's hard to beat the Bow River for trout fishing: "I'm enthralled by what we have, and the Bow is one of my favourite rivers in the world."

From its source at Bow Glacier, a few kilometres north of Lake Louise in the Rockies, the 587-kilometre long Bow River winds its way through the million-people-plus city of Calgary, and is famous for its abundant rainbow and brown trout. But Alberta's waterways have dozens of other types of fish, too.

Shearer's favourite fishing spots include the Sheep, Highwood and Old Man rivers, and dozens of other tributaries and streams. "It's more about exploring the places that I love," she says.

Shearer is strictly catch and release, and a huge advocate for proper fish handling. "We may catch these fish,

but we do everything to treat them with the utmost respect," she says. That means limiting stress and injury — even if she may take a photo of her catch. "It's never out of the water for more than three seconds," she says. "I do everything to limit impact on the fish." When she takes anglers out for a day on the water, she drives home the message: "I want people to have respect for the fish and love for the river as I do."

Alberta's prime fishing season is on the short side, from the end of June until the end of September, with a short window in April and May, depending on the weather. But Shearer, who never travels without her hip waders in the car, fishes about 250 times a year. You might call it a bit of an addiction.

Her perfect day is away from the city, usually in the mountains with her dog, Willow, and a friend.

"You feed off the people you're with," she says. "It doesn't have to be a numbers day for how many fish I get. It's just being outdoors... thinking about the beautiful scenery. You take in everything."

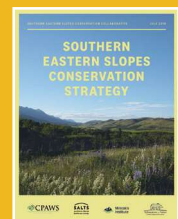
"We are so lucky in Alberta... We have great fishing and beautiful scenery. It's the whole package."







"...the best hope for preserving grasslands and other ecosystems, and the endangered species that depend on them, is to live in harmony with nature, and to fully understand that everything is connected."



Grasslands: An Ecological and Cultural Treasure

The grasslands of southern Alberta may be much smaller than they once were, but for Harley Bastien they will never lose their ecological and cultural importance for the region.

Bastien has lived and worked on these landscapes for nearly 60 years, and in that time, he's seen the full gamut of negative impacts—habitat loss and fragmentation, the resulting loss of biodiversity, and highly compromised watersheds. Relentless pressure from agriculture, oil and gas drilling, residential development, water use and recreational activities has taken a major toll on these ecosystems.

“Grasslands and the species that depend them have been greatly diminished over the years,” says Bastien, who spent 30 years drawing on his Blackfoot background and teachings, providing environmental and other consulting expertise to non-profits, governments and industry. Over that time, he has made major contributions not only to grassland conservation, but in building awareness of the need for sustainability. One of the biggest impacts on grasslands today is ever-expanding urban sprawl, he says, and all the new acreages going up. “People often treat the landscape out here the same way they do in the city,” he says, “which in most cases strips it of any ecological value.”

Although semi-retired since 2017, Bastien still finds time to run the Buffalo Rock Tipi Camp, where visitors learn about Blackfoot traditional ways and culture, and he offers his time and knowledge to anyone he believes can make a positive difference. “It's so important to protect these grasslands,” he says, especially the forested rivers and streams that snake through them, providing habitat and shelter for fish and wildlife. “Riparian areas are like arteries for grasslands,” he says. “They're the lifelines that make these ecosystems livable.”

Ask Bastien how Blackfoot beliefs and traditions relate to grassland protection and sustainable management, and he'll tell you it's quite simple. “In Blackfoot teachings, when we say ‘all my relatives,’ we're not just talking about our cousins,” he explains. “We're talking about everything—every blade of grass and bit of soil. In our view, everything has a spirit, and we respect and honour them all.”

Bastien says a different attitude, based on greed and a lack of respect, got us to where we are today. We've extracted far too much from the landscape, he says, and added excessive amounts of pesticides, herbicides and “all the other ‘ides,’” as he puts it. He says the best hope for preserving grasslands and other ecosystems, and the endangered species that depend on them, is to live in harmony with nature, and to fully understand that everything is connected. “It all comes down to respect,” he says. “That's what Blackfoot teachings say. We need to have a spiritual connection to the land.”

When asked whether he is indeed hopeful for the future of grasslands, he says that groups like CPAWS Southern Alberta and others can make a difference. “I also believe in the next generation,” he adds. “I think they might have the spirit of the land in them.”

Last year, with support from the **Calgary Foundation**, **CPAWS Southern Alberta** and other groups formed the **Southern Eastern Slopes Conservation Collaborative**, which developed strategies for grasslands conservation, and a final report that identified key ways for keeping these regions healthy and functioning ecologically.

Learn more:

cpaws-southernalberta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SESCC_Report_SinglePages.pdf

Photo: | Jan Guthrie

Cochrane Artist Aims to 'Nurture What Nurtures Us'

Interviewed and compiled by **Doug Firby** | CPAWS Southern Alberta Board

Michael Sydoryk is a self-taught wildlife artist who creates unique pieces with both an emotional and financial impact. He amplifies that impact through his website (wildformart.com) by directing a portion of each purchased piece toward efforts to preserve endangered or threatened species. His works have been featured at local art galleries and at the Calgary Stampede Western Showcase.

The 28-year-old lives just north of Cochrane with his wife Jordyn and three dogs. The couple lead busy lives: Michael is a chiropractor and Jordyn is a professional barrel racer, who also works on her family's ranch and maintains a wellness practice. In this interview, Michael talks about where he finds his inspiration and how he maintains a work/life balance.

How long have you been painting? I started painting at a higher volume or consistency seven years ago now, and it was solely out of curiosity. Turns out I instantly fell in love with the process and it became an obsession.

What are the themes that drive your work? What are you trying to convey about the wildlife and the environment? I'm trying to drive an intimate connection with something you don't always get to connect with on that level. Create space for an interaction that is not likely to occur in real life. Making you think a little bit more about the majesty of how that animal just simply is.

Does solitude play a role in your work? Do you need to be alone in nature? I don't necessarily need to be alone, but I do like to experience nature as solely an observer. The concept of conquering a trail or mountain has never been the goal of getting outdoors, but to view things without interference. To see our reality without the influence of society.

How do you find time to do all the things you need to do, and also time for your art? I'm sure we would love to pretend we have it all in balance, but it seems we both just function best in chaos. Luckily all the things we choose to do allow us to be present in the given moment. Forcing that calm in the chaos, and making it all worth it. My wife does it far better than I, and she has even more on her plate!

What does conserving our wild spaces mean to you? As I dive deeper into nature and the world around us, it becomes clear how removed we are from the concept of nurturing what nurtures us. We find anything sensational to keep our minds and devotions busy. Creating controversy or a stance to side with. The reality is, if you just suspend that for a moment, you recognize the absolute necessity to start respecting our world. It goes far beyond this artificial bubble we function in. It dictates our very existence. So, starting with conserving our wild spaces will shift that focus back onto what matters.

Can you talk about an interesting encounter you have had with an animal? What was the experience like? The only real scare I've had is with bison. Ranched bison at that, as it's easier to get comfortable with the notion they are livestock. If you don't respect the animal, the disrespect you will get in return is far more than you'll ever bargain for. They lumber around as if it's laborious to move, until they do start moving.





SkiUphill Brings Sustainability to the Backcountry



Step into SkiUphill, a popular new backcountry skiing and trail running store in Canmore, and you'll never be "upsold" by some pushy salesperson.

Business partners Gavin Harmacy and Joel Desgreniers, along with the rest of their dedicated team of backcountry experts at this full-service company, are far more likely to share their favourite skiing spots, or even whip you up a creamy latte on the house. They certainly won't try and push you into buying new skis.

"We just love getting out in the backcountry and we want to help others do the same," says Gavin, adding they're less concerned about margins and the bottom line, and more about doing what they love. "If you're attached to backcountry skis that still work great, why buy something new?"

Long before the nature-conscious duo opened up shop in September 2017, they were committed to sustainability. Gavin says they built the store themselves, using all recycled and non-toxic materials, and they power it using 100% renewable energy. "We wanted to start this company, but we didn't want to make a negative impact on the environment," says Joel, who's considered the resident gear expert. "We do lots of repairs as well and are involved in gear swaps throughout the community."

Their sustainable business is also committed to "giving back" to the community, and actively engaged with the 1% for the Planet movement. Just last year, they raised \$16,540 for CPAWS Southern Alberta as part of a local movie night—a screening of the highly popular film, *This Mountain Life*. Gavin says they chose to donate to CPAWS because of a shared "love and appreciation of the wild spaces all around us."

Asked what drives their interest in conservation, Joel says it's an ethic that's hard-wired into the backcountry community. "The skiing and trail running community is always very respectful," he says. "You never see litter left on the landscape, and they'll always pack everything out and leave the place as pristine as when they accessed it."

For both Joel and Gavin, that conservation ethic comes from how closely they interact with nature.

"It makes a huge difference when you see a glacier or a beautiful backcountry spot up close," says Joel. "The more you experience it first-hand, the more you want to protect it."

"It makes a huge difference when you see a glacier or a beautiful backcountry spot up close. The more you experience it first-hand, the more you want to protect it."



Be a Voice for Nature


Our vision for southern Alberta includes abundant parks, protected areas and wilderness, where nature thrives because of the conservation efforts of and for all Albertans.


We believe that nature, wilderness and wild places have intrinsic value, and that healthy ecosystems ensure healthy communities.


Our approach to conservation is proactive and collaborative. We recognize that people and communities are an integral part of the natural world, and we believe that Albertans want to protect our cherished wild spaces.


Please join us in making our shared vision a reality!

With your support, we will...

 **Provide** science-based advice to decision-makers about how and why we should protect nature;

 **Ensure** ecological integrity is a top priority when managing our wildlands and species at risk;

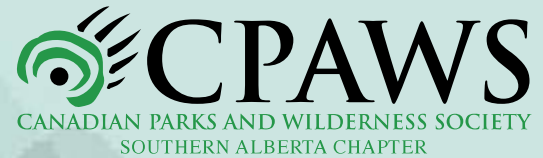
 **Collaborate** with other conservation groups, First Nations, businesses and individuals; and

 **Educate** others about the health and economic benefits of protecting nature.

Together, we can be a voice for nature and wildlife in southern Alberta.



HELP KEEP ALBERTA WILD WITH A GIFT TO



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c/o Canada Olympic Park
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Calgary, AB T3B 5R5

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Photo | Stephen Legault



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