

# ANNUAL REPORT

May 2022 — April 2023



**WILDERNESS**  
COMMITTEE



## Our Wild Vision

**F**or more than 40 years, the Wilderness Committee has stayed true to our vision of people powered wilderness preservation for a wild future.

Strategic research, community mobilizing and grassroots education are the pillars of our efforts to build broad-based support for actions to preserve nature, protect wildlife, defend parks, and fight for a safe and stable climate while standing in defence of Indigenous rights and title and public good.

Our independent, on-the-ground, grassroots approach reaches 12 million people a year through events, rallies, door-to-door and phone canvassing, online actions, media and social media coverage, and regular expeditions to threatened wilderness areas.

Like you, we believe when people learn about threats to biodiversity and the climate, they will join together and defend them.



# Thank You

Dear friend,

This year was one we won't forget. After more than two years, we finally got to see some of you again in person. On the ground, in the field, and on the streets, we were able to gather to do the nature protection work you and I care about so much.

### And gather we did.

We attended the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Montreal in full force. Staff from BC and Ontario ensured our presence was felt — we spoke on panels, asked key questions of decision-makers at meetings and led a creative demonstration against CropLife for promotion and use of dangerous pesticides.

**We held one of the largest old-growth marches and rallies to the BC legislature in history.** Thousands marched through the downtown core of the province's capital, led by Indigenous Peoples and drummers. Together, we advanced with banners, 3D art pieces and mobile murals. Speakers included Indigenous leaders and land defenders, scientists, and a surprise musical appearance from Neil Young.

**We held a full field program once again.** Research expeditions took us from the old-growth forests of northern Vancouver Island to the interior of British Columbia, and from provincial parks in Manitoba and Ontario, threatened by industrial development, to Catchacoma old-growth forest. We witnessed firsthand the threats to wilderness and brought these experiences into your home through stories, maps, photos, and videos. Trail-building on Vancouver Island, the Paddle for Protection in Manitoba and a research project in Algonquin allowed us to take groups of volunteers into the field to do critical work that allows your advocacy to be informed and intentional.

**We didn't stop producing trailblazing reports for those of you who do your nature protection work from home.** This year's highlights include the *Duck Mountain Audit*, an independent report of logging and provincial park operations showing evidence the regulations that exist to manage this region are outdated and not being enforced or followed. And *Species at Risk Recovery in BC*, an independent audit produced with our allies and biologist Jared Hobbs, highlighting the huge legal gaps driving species to extinction and extirpation in BC.

**Hybrid work environments were matched by hybrid activist strategies.** Online take-actions and webinars continued to thrive. Nearly 70,000 emails were sent to decision-makers by activists like you. The spotted owl draft recovery strategy was released for public comment, and within no time, more than 1,000 people wrote in. **When the situation is urgent, you refuse to compromise.**

Thank you for sticking with us, for doing and giving what you can when you can. That is what grassroots people powered activism looks like — it takes all of us.

For the wild,



*B Clarke*  
**Beth Clarke**  
Executive Director



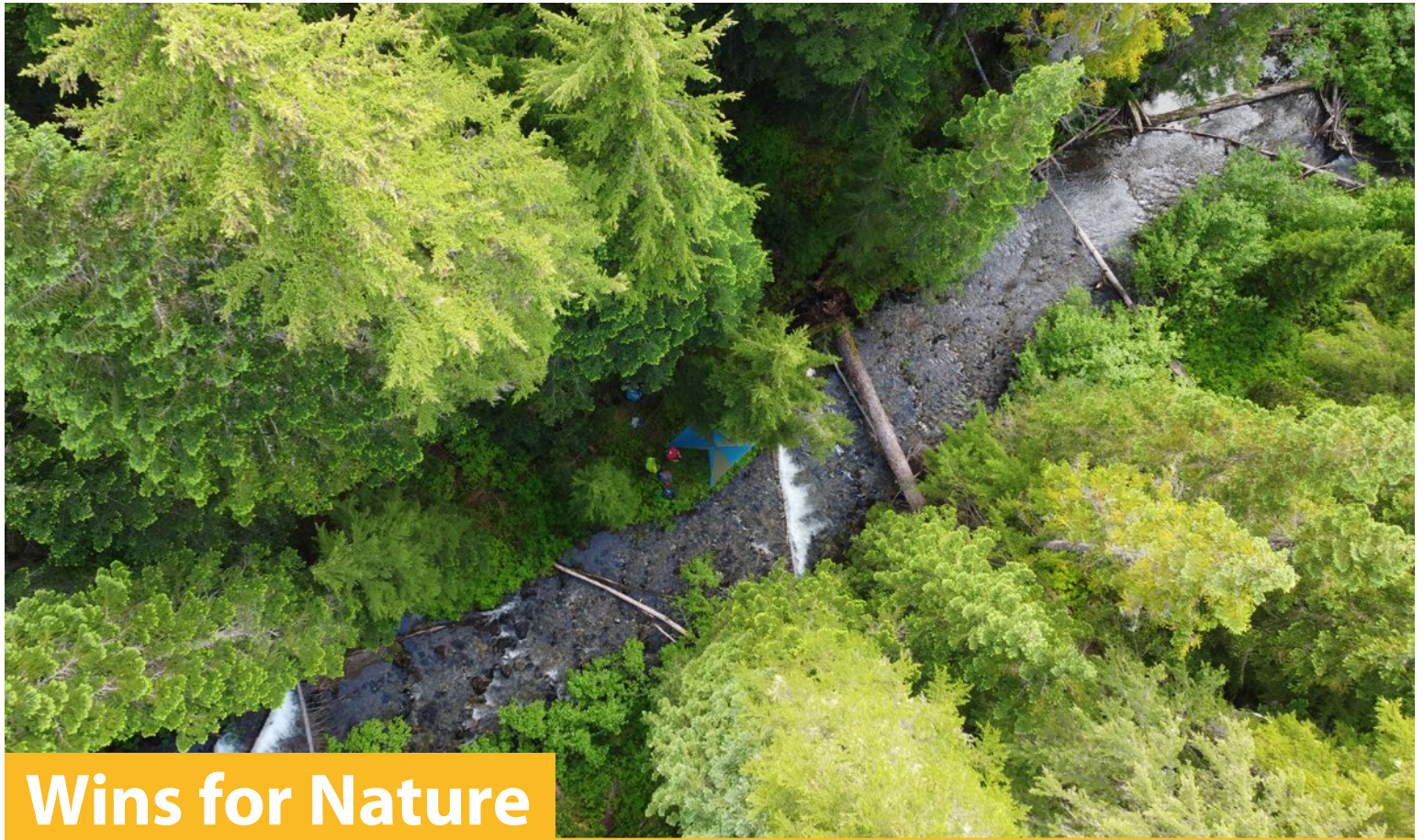
*Emet Davis*  
**Emet Davis**  
Board of Directors Chair

### Board of Directors

- Bryan Joe-Yeso
- Emet Davis (Chair)
- Kegan Pepper-Smith
- Kevin Millsip
- Mariwan Jaaf
- Nayeli Jimenez
- Ryann Miller
- Susan Howatt

Special thanks to our many photographers whose images remind us what we're working to protect.





## Wins for Nature

Some years, there aren't enough success stories for nature. So when there is one, even small or incremental, we have to stop and appreciate it, and you, for making it possible. These are the stories that motivate us to continue advocating for wild spaces and species.

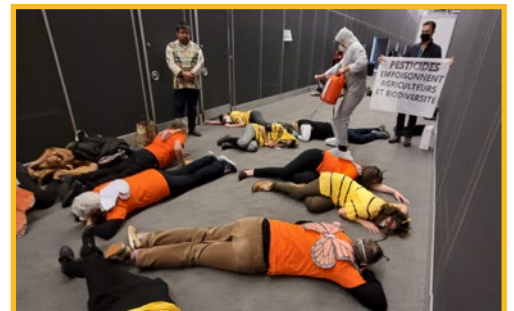
### Spotted owl court petition ignites federal action

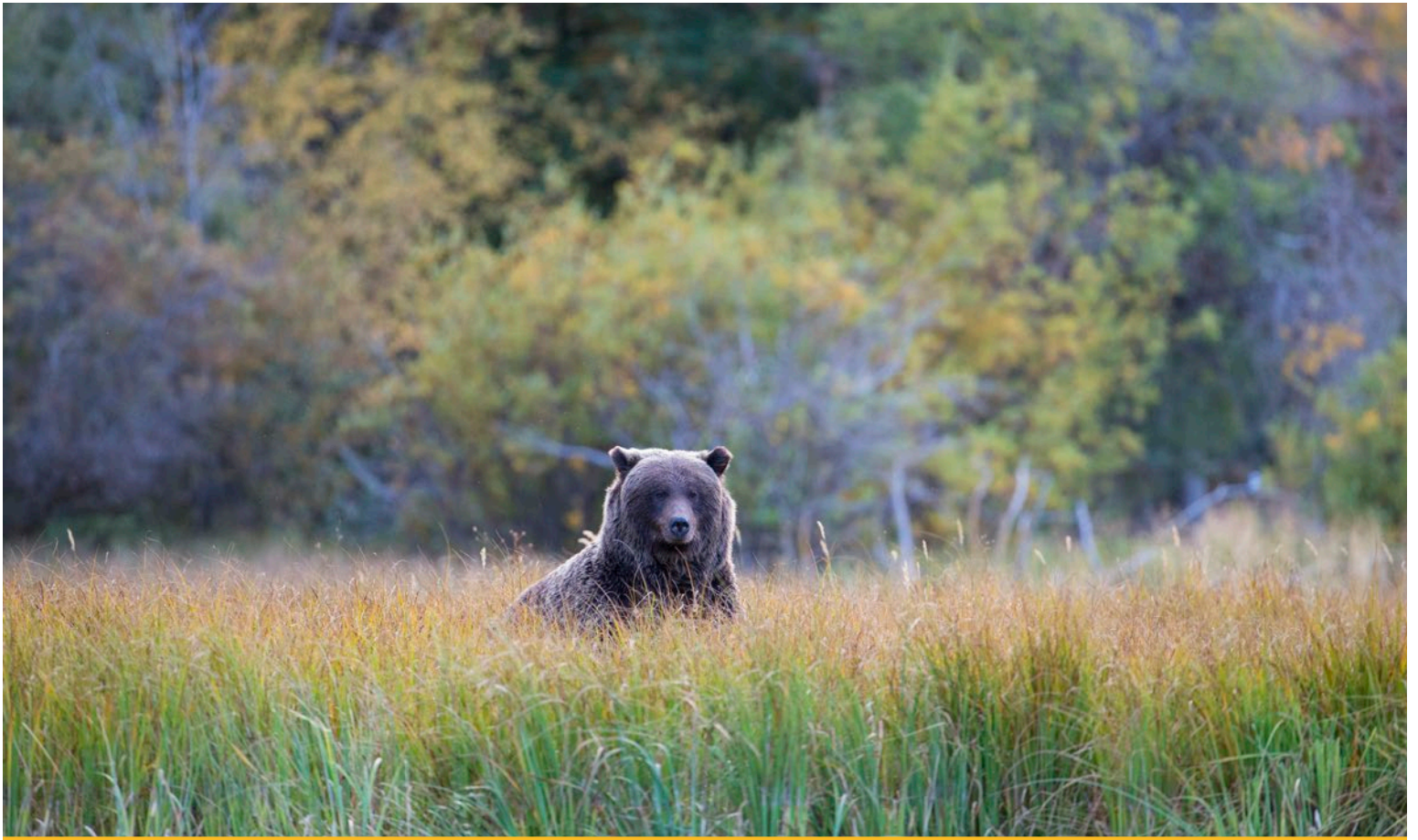
Represented by a crack team of lawyers from the environmental law charity Ecojustice, we put the government of Canada on notice. We threatened to take them to court over their continued failure to live up to their legal responsibility and protect the endangered spotted owl and its habitat in BC. In an October 2022 petition to Minister of Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault, we asserted the spotted owl's survival and recovery in Canada is in imminent danger due to logging permits issued by the BC government in the owl's critical habitat. Thanks to more than 1,000 letters from supporters like you and your decades of advocacy, in February 2023 the minister issued a statement that essentially agreed with our assertion and concurred a federal emergency order is warranted to stop habitat destruction in the owls' home.



### Pressure at COP15 leads to promises on nature protection

For the first time, in December 2022, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) was held in Canada and we didn't let the opportunity pass us by. Face to face with decision makers who need to make serious commitments to nature protection, the companies that threaten biodiversity, and alongside Indigenous Nations and environmental allies fighting for the same goals, three members of our team made sure our presence was felt. We presented on panels, spoke truth to power at workshops, and hosted a demonstration dressed as bees and butterflies to raise concerns about the presence of the pesticide industry at a CropLife sponsored event. In the end, the federal environment minister made commitments to protect 30 per cent of land and oceans by 2030, prioritize Indigenous knowledge and conservation, and redirect or eliminate subsidies that harm nature, and develop a new federal biodiversity accountability law to halt and reverse nature loss in Canada. Pressure from you and our friends in the environment movement share in this success story.





### Spectacular inland rainforest protected

The Incomappleux Valley, home to massive ancient trees and lush inland rainforest, has been championed for conservation over decades by us and our allies. The January 2023 announcement of the Incomappleux Conservancy, established by the province of BC with the partnership of First Nations is certainly cause for wild celebration! The new protected area is located at the confluence of the territories of the sn̓íckstx tmx̓úlaʔx̓w (Sinixt), Syilx (Okanagan), Secwepemcúl'ecw (Secwépemc) and ʔamakʔis (Ktunaxa) Nations, southeast of Revelstoke. The new conservancy is the size of 150 Vancouver Stanley Parks or 58,654 hectares. It is habitat for an impressive catalogue of species from grizzlies to endangered bats, and from threatened southern mountain caribou to diverse fungi — over 200 lichen and at-risk plant species surround monumental red cedar trees more than 1,000 years old.



### Thousands rally for old-growth

In February 2023, growing public concern over the continued logging of old-growth forests headlined news reports across Canada and beyond as thousands marched through downtown Victoria, culminating in a huge rally we organized with our allies in front of the BC legislature. Giant banners, mobile murals and 3D art pieces adorned the streets in a march led by Indigenous elders and drummers. Speakers included Indigenous leaders and land defenders, scientists, and a surprise musical appearance by Neil Young. More than 220 organizations have signed onto the United for Old Growth Declaration, including the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), Elders for Ancient Trees, Sierra Club BC, Stand.earth and Wilderness Committee. This joint mobilization was one of the largest in history — together we'll win for old-growth.



# Independent and Grassroots

**B**eing independently funded by supporters like you, we are able to pivot our skills and resources to work with a diversity of activists and communities across the country on urgent environmental battles that matter. Thanks to you, we stay true to our grassroots.

## Expanded Manitoba office = more nature protection

In July 2022, we opened our new storefront office in Winnipeg. You and I know urgency is needed to counter the lagging environmental protections after years of provincial government neglect. The need for a watchdog on environmental policies is now greater than ever, and your increased support allowed us to grow our grassroots advocacy to tackle the biodiversity and climate crises in Manitoba. We want and need to grow parks and protection for water and wildlife. This expanded presence allows us to do that.

## Mapping BC's broken promises to caribou

In September 2022, we created a map to overlay caribou habitat maps with logging plans. We discovered 72 recently approved logging cutblocks by the province totaling 2,153 hectares in federally mapped critical habitat for the endangered Wells Gray and Groundhog caribou herds, located along the Thompson River between Clearwater and Valemount, BC. By making this information public, we shone a light on BC's continued failure to live up to their promises to protect at-risk wildlife.

## Flying over fracking country

In September 2022, two members of our team visited northeastern BC to gather drone images and meet with communities affected by fracking. Using up-to-date data from our mapping specialist, we were able to locate a dozen or so sites with active fracking and take some incredible shots for our campaign. Together, we produced a video with locals discussing their experiences living in the shadow of the gas industry and uncovered government collusion to prevent landowners from asserting their rights.

## Manitoba canoe stories

In September 2022 on World Rivers Day, our Manitoba team held the 9th annual Paddle for Protection canoe trip down the lower Bird River, featured stories of the risks this wild waterway faces while experiencing its natural allure. The lower Bird River in Sagkeeng First Nation territory has been targeted by mining and mineral exploration schemes for years. We are calling for the preservation of the lower Bird River according to the wishes of the Nation.

## BC's Dirty 30

In November 2022, we released our "Dirty 30" Report naming individuals who, in our opinion and based on our experience, are holding back climate action in BC. A who's who list of lobbyists, politicians and corporate interests, the Dirty 30 are people we believe work to prolong the province's reliance on industries that damage the climate like fracking and old-growth logging. They regularly meet with government officials or otherwise undermine climate action. The full list is available at [BCsDirtyThirty.ca](https://BCsDirtyThirty.ca)





Sometimes when we develop a strategy for nature protection, we need a little help from our friends. From environmental groups to social justice activists and Indigenous Nations to union leaders, we are honoured to work together with our wild friends.

### Shining a light on the truth about LNG

In the wee hours of a May 2022 morning, we joined forces with climate activist friends and allies to light up Canada Place with a projected message, “CLEAN LNG IS A DIRTY LIE.” We used a high-power projector just ahead of a speech from Bruce Ralston, BC’s energy minister, at the Canada Gas & LNG Exhibition in Vancouver — Canada’s largest conference for fracking and liquefied natural gas (LNG) companies.



### A fail on old-growth preservation

In September 2022, on the two-year anniversary of BC’s release of the Old-Growth Strategic Review (OGSR) panel recommendations, we joined with our friends and allies at Ancient Forest Alliance, Sierra Club BC and Stand. earth, to publish a report card giving BC failing grades for its lack of progress in protecting threatened old-growth forests. Grades for four of five key issues have actually fallen since the last report card we issued in 2021.



### BC driving species to extinction

In November 2022, we joined with the UBCIC and Sierra Club BC to publish an independent audit outlining the legal gaps that drive species in the province toward extinction. BC is the most biodiverse province and is also home to the most species and ecosystems at risk of extinction. The report finds the federal species at risk law alone is not enough to protect species at risk and the province isn’t filling in the gaps.

### Going frack free

On a Monday morning in March 2023, people in BC woke up to dozens of handmade banners hung in communities across the province calling for an end to fracking. This project was organized by Frack Free BC — a broad-based alliance we are part of. Frack Free BC is calling on the premier to stop issuing new permits for fracked gas wells, set a date to phase out existing LNG production, and develop a plan to support workers.



### Another road to destruction

In November 2022, we joined environmental and community groups as we headed to the Federal Court, seeking a judicial review of Guilbeault’s failure to consider designating Ontario’s Bradford Bypass highway project for a federal impact assessment. Ecojustice represented us and our allies Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, Ontario Nature, Forbid Roads Over Green Spaces, Environmental Defence, Wildlands League and Earthroots in the lawsuit.



**G**etting out on-the-ground and in the field to collect the latest research, mapping, visual media and stories and bring them to you helps inspire us all to take action and direct our passion in the fight for nature protection.

### **Clearing a path to old-growth protection**

Throughout the spring and summer 2022, our unstoppable team of intrepid trail building volunteers worked tirelessly. Guided by seasoned staff guides, and in partnership with Indigenous Nations and community groups, they built and repaired trails. This time-tested tactic provides access to threatened old-growth forests and builds support for preservation. The teams worked at Hiladi in Ma'amtagila territory, in the Central Walbran Valley in Pacheedaht territory, and in Clayoquot Sound on Meares Island (Tla-o-qui-aht territory) and Flores Island (Ahouasht territory). Volunteers participate in a life-changing experience, connecting with the land and people in these unique ecosystems, and return home inspired to take further action to protect ancient forests.

### **Eye in the sky over Argenta Face**

In June 2022, we headed up to Kootenay Lake Provincial Park and set up camp at Lost Ledge Campground. We hiked into the endangered forests of Argenta Face, on the unceded territory of the Ktunaxa, Secwepemc, Sinixt and Sylix Nations. Surrounded by the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park, it remains open to destructive logging. Some of the expanding clearcut can be seen from across the lake at the campground. We took photos and videos of ongoing logging in the forest, to provide to local media and to produce a video aimed at building support for preservation of the Argenta Face forests.



### **Old-growth research in Algonquin**

In September 2022, we organized a research expedition crewed by volunteers and led by ecologist Mike Henry to investigate old-growth stands in Algonquin Provincial Park, on the land of the Algonquins of Ontario. The survey teams scouted for locations still unprotected from logging to raise public awareness of what's at risk as long as the park remains open to industrial activity. The sixty-five per cent of Algonquin open to commercial logging doesn't meet federal and international definitions of 'protected' nature. Over 5,000 km of logging roads dissect and degrade these ecosystems and impact wildlife, along with the gravel mining used to build them — all unacceptable in a provincial park.



### **Audit of Duck Mountain destruction**

In October 2022, we launched a series of fact-finding photo and video expeditions into Duck Mountain Provincial Park. We gathered on-the-ground information for our upcoming report on industrial destruction in the Duck Mountain region of western Manitoba. These lands are used by the Minegoziibe Anishinabe, Wuskwi Sipiik, Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation and others. A unique intersection of ecosystems unlike any other on the planet, the combination of species in this unusual topography at this elevation and latitude create biological diversity that must be protected. The region is currently managed for short-term logging, rather than for park values. Our new report provides government with a long to-do list to recover the region.







## Join Us

We're all needed in the work of protecting wilderness in Canada. It's concerned people like you who've strengthened our voice with gifts of time, talent and action! We welcome your participation.

- **Volunteer:** contact your local Wilderness Committee office to volunteer.
- **Sign up:** our action alerts keep you up-to-date on our campaigns.
- **Take action:** write letters, make phone calls and show up to support critical causes in your community.
- **Spread the word:** distribute our educational papers in your community. Join the Grassroots Distribution Team.

Add your voice to the growing number of people working together to defend the environment in Canada.

[WildernessCommittee.org/Take-Action](http://WildernessCommittee.org/Take-Action)

## Thank You!

Special thanks to charitable foundations and funders whose generous support of \$1,000 or more play an important role both during and after their lifetimes in our continued success. Standing up for the wild this year:

- Andre & Trudel Kroecher Fund @ Nicola Wealth Privat Giving Foundation
- David Charitable Trust
- Collumbin Family Fund @ Toronto Foundation
- Diane Spivak & Laurence Goldberg @ Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto
- Dr. Hinda Avery Foundation @ Aqueduct Foundation
- Energy Transition Fund @ Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
- Fitzhenry Family Foundation
- Funke-Furber Fund @ Victoria Foundation
- Geoffrey, Maurice & Edythe Hodgson Fund @ Victoria Foundation
- Glynnne Evans Private Giving Fund @ Nicola Wealth Private Giving Foundation
- Grayross Foundation @ Vancouver Foundation
- Hilliard Family Fund @ Vancouver Foundation
- Laura Tiberti Charitable Foundation
- Lewis Jackson and Dale Gardiner Fund @ Private Giving Foundation
- Peter & Laurie Thompson Fund @ Private Giving Foundation
- Philip & Claire Daykin Charitable Fund @ Vancity Community Foundation
- Seed Fund @ St. Louis Community Foundation
- Solas Fund @ Victoria Foundation
- Thanks Vegan Foundation @ Aqueduct Foundation
- The Lewis Jackson and Dale Gardiner Fund @ Private Giving Foundation
- The McAllister Foundation @ Gift Funds Canada
- Viveka Foundation @ Victoria Foundation
- Weston Family Foundation

## Support Us

Your generosity inspires us to do more. There are many ways to make a difference:

- **Be a Trailblazer!** The heart and soul of the Wilderness Committee, monthly donors help us plan more effectively to win critical fights for the wild.



- **Be a Wilderness Defender!** With every donation, you strengthen our campaigns to protect ancient forests, wild waterways and at-risk species and the spaces they call home.
- **Be a Wilderness Guardian!** A special group who make future gifts in their estate plans known to us, Wilderness Guardians enjoy exclusive benefits.



- **Be a wild fundraiser.** Organize a unique event to raise funds and support the Wilderness Committee's work.

[WildernessCommittee.org/Support](http://WildernessCommittee.org/Support)



# Financial Summary

REVENUE	2023	2022
Contributions and donations	2,994,942	2,605,433
Grant revenue	279,419	300,000
Sales of educational materials	44,059	56,631
Miscellaneous	7,582	13,175
	<b>3,326,002</b>	<b>2,975,239</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Projects and education	1,796,156	1,529,435
Canvass and fundraising costs	859,493	728,172
Administration costs	465,947	396,373
Sales costs	144,417	109,409
Amortization of intangible assets	–	10,250
Amortization	11,287	16,224
	<b>3,277,300</b>	<b>2,789,863</b>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	48,702	185,376
<b>Fund balances, beginning of year</b>	<b>974,341</b>	<b>788,365</b>
<b>Fund balances, end of year</b>	<b>1,023,043</b>	<b>974,341</b>

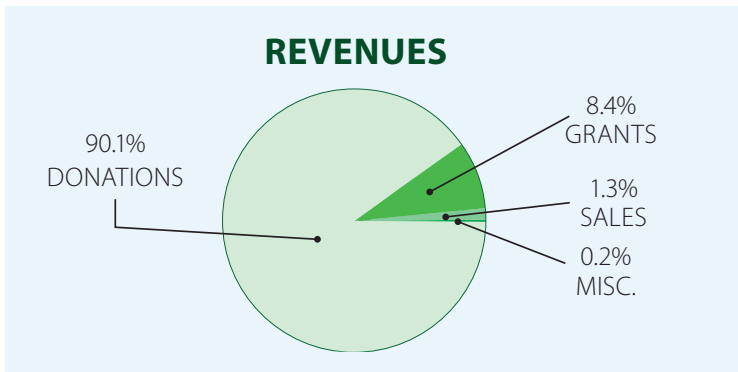
ASSETS	2023	2022
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	765,150	699,971
Accounts receivable	8,545	2,373
Interest receivable	2,066	2,066
Recoverable from government (GST)	19,760	30,939
Prepaid expenses	28,783	34,338
Inventory	8,125	12,551
	<b>832,429</b>	<b>782,238</b>
Restricted investment	300,000	300,000
Security deposits	12,703	10,385
Capital assets	19,377	18,128
	<b>1,164,509</b>	<b>1,110,751</b>

## LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

CURRENT	2023	2022
Accounts payable + accrued liabilities	141,466	136,410

## FUND BALANCES

Unrestricted	372,918	447,946
Internally restricted	319,377	318,127
Externally restricted	330,748	208,266
	<b>1,023,043</b>	<b>974,341</b>



Audited financial statements are available upon request.





## Wilderness Areas You've Helped Save

Akamina-Kishinena Provincial Park, BC	Mkwál'ts Conservancy, BC
Atikaki Provincial Park, MB	Nasparti Valley (M <sup>u</sup> q <sup>w</sup> in/Brooks Peninsula Provincial Park), BC
Birch Island Provincial Park, MB	Niagara Valley (Cariboo Mountains Provincial Park), BC
Boundary Bay Regional Park, BC	Northern Rocky Mountains Provincial Park, BC
Burns Bog Ecological Conservancy Area, BC	Nueltin Lake and Colvin Lake Provincial Parks, MB
Caribou Mountains Wildland Provincial Park, AB	Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage Site, MB/ON
Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park, BC	Pinecone Burke Provincial Park, BC
Chitek Lake Anishinaabe Provincial Park, MB	Qat'muk Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, BC
Clayoquot Arm, Clayoquot Plateau and Flores Island Provincial Parks, BC	Say Nuth Khaw Yum Provincial Park (Indian Arm), BC
Clendinning Provincial Park, BC	Sea to Sea Green Blue Belt, BC
Cummins Lakes Provincial Park and Cummins River Protected Area, BC	Skagit Valley Provincial Park, BC
Duu Guusd Heritage Site/Conservancy and nine other	Snowy Protected Area, BC
Haida Gwaii Conservancies, BC	Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park, BC
Fisher Bay Provincial Park, MB	South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park, BC
Goose Island and Grand Island Provincial Parks, MB	Spipiyus Provincial Park (Caren Range), BC
Graystokes Protected Area, BC	Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park, BC
Great Bear Rainforest, BC	Stikine River Provincial Park, BC
Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, BC	Sturgeon Bay Park Reserve (protection extended), MB
Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site, BC	Surrey Bend Regional Park, BC
Hecla/Grindstone Provincial Park, MB	Sxótsaqel/Chilliwack Lake Provincial Park, BC
Huchsduwachsu Nuyem Jeas/Kitlope Heritage Conservancy, BC	Tahsish-Kwois Provincial Park, BC
Jedediah Island Marine Provincial Park, BC	T'akú Téix/ Taku River (10 new conservancies), BC
Kakwa Provincial Park, BC	Tatshenshini-Alsek Park, BC
Kaskatmagan WMA and Sipi WMA Protected Areas, MB	Tetrahedron Provincial Park, BC
Khutzeymateen/K'tzim-a-deen Grizzly Sanctuary Provincial Park, BC	Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Meares Island Tribal Park, BC
Kitasoo Spirit Bear Conservancy, BC	Ts'il?os Provincial Park, BC
Koeye Conservancy, BC	Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, MB
Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, BC	Upper Elaho Valley, Callaghan and Upper Soo Conservancies, BC
Lower Tsitika River Provincial Park, BC	Upper Lillooet Provincial Park, BC
Manigotagan River Provincial Park, MB	Valhalla Provincial Park, BC
Maplewood Flats Conservation Area, BC	West Arm Provincial Park, BC
Megin/Talbot Valley (Strathcona Provincial Park), BC	



## PEOPLE POWERED WILDERNESS PRESERVATION FOR A WILD FUTURE

Founded in 1980, the Wilderness Committee has around 60,000 supporters and volunteers from coast to coast to coast. We've helped gain protection for over 65 major wilderness areas in Canada, including millions of hectares of critical wildlife habitats and some of the world's last large tracts of old-growth temperate rainforest and boreal forest.

But much remains to be done.

**Join us.** Your gift defends natural heritage in Canada!

[WildernessCommittee.org/Support](https://www.wildernesscommittee.org/Support)

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**WILDERNESS  
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