



ANNUAL REPORT for the year ended 30 April 2017



WILDERNESS
COMMITTEE

Protecting Canada's wilderness and wildlife for over 35 years



Photo cover: **Polar bears near Churchill, MB.** Photo above: **Burrowing owls** (Don Johnston).

Thank You!

Dear Wilderness Committee supporters,

This past year, you inspired us once again with your commitment. As individual donors, you continue to stand with us by giving what you can, when you can. Your gifts make up 95 per cent of our funding to more effectively defend Canada's wildest and most threatened spaces and species.

And this year your commitment increased. With revenue rising by 22 per cent from the previous year, you showed us that when it is critical and when your support is needed, you are there to ensure we can remain independent, nimble and on the ground as urgent environmental issues arise.

Your support this past year also meant we increased the actions taken to make positive change for wilderness and wildlife. We delivered 40,000 signatures to the BC Legislature calling for endangered species legislation. We led more than 20 trips with volunteers and supporters to threatened wilderness areas in Manitoba and BC. And we had over 12,000 people phone, write a letter, sign a petition or action card in defence of Canada's wildest areas.

Shortly after our fiscal year end (30 April 2017), long-time friend and colleague of more than 15 years, our National Policy Director Gwen Barlee passed away.

Gwen led the organization and many of our hard-fought campaigns. She stood up for public parks, wild rivers, endangered meadows and all creatures big and small including western toads, mountain caribou, sage grouse, killer whales, spotted owls and bees.

With your support, we will carry on her legacy and take our memories of Gwen with us as we fight environmental battles across the country. Together we can – and will – defend Canada's biodiversity and ensure a wild future for generations to come.

For the wild,



Joe Foy
National
Campaign Director



Beth Clarke
Development and
Program Director

Thanks to our 25 passionate and dedicated staff members in Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Victoria and Vancouver for making a positive difference everyday! And special thanks to the many photographers who we work with every year.



Joe Foy, Gwen Barlee and Beth Clarke
Executive Team

Board of Directors

Sage Aaron
Don Bain
John Calvert
Shannon Daub (Chair)
Elaine Golds
Catherine Ludgate
Karen Palmer
Rodrigo Samayoa



Photo: **Proposed South Okanagan Similkameen National Park** (Gwen Barlee).

Our Wild Vision

The Wilderness Committee is Canada's people-powered, citizen-funded wilderness protection group. Founded 37 years ago in 1980, the organization evolved out of a desire to increase awareness about threatened Canadian wilderness and wildlife in an effort to build broad public support for preservation.

Today, our original purpose stands. We value wilderness, with all its natural biodiversity, as absolutely vital to the health of people, communities and the planet. We act with integrity and courage to mobilize citizens to take lawful, democratic action to defend Canada's wilderness and wildlife. We reach out to 12 million people each year in local communities through face-to-face engagement at public meetings, rallies, events, door-to-door canvassing and regular expeditions into threatened wilderness areas. Because we believe that when people learn about Canada's threatened wilderness and wildlife, they will act too.

The Wilderness Committee currently has 25 active campaigns in our five priority program areas.

Preserving Wilderness:

We defend Canada's most threatened wild lands through on the ground expeditions, trail-

building trips, mapping, sharing stunning photos and producing video and print materials for our grassroots public education.

Protecting Wildlife:

We stand up for Canada's most at-risk species by demanding strong, effective legislation provincially and federally to defend their habitat and ensure they survive and thrive.

Defending Parks:

We advocate for parks that are accessible to all people regardless of their income level. We ensure parks are defended from industrial development, properly funded and managed to protect wild nature.

Safeguarding Public Resources:

We protect public lands from destructive development and partner with First Nations in defence of their rights and title.

Fighting for a Safe and Stable Climate:

We mobilize opposition to fossil fuel export projects that drive climate chaos and advocate for a just transition to a zero-carbon economy.



Wins for Nature



Our supporters, volunteers and other concerned citizens worked hard this past year to help secure some spectacular wild wins for nature.

Huge Support for National Park

May 2016 – The public consultation process on the proposed South Okanagan National Park Reserve by the BC government revealed overwhelming local and provincial support for the designation of a large national park reserve. The process generated 3,460 comments and our Freedom of Information request later in the year revealed that 80 to 90 per cent of these were in favour of the park.

Greater Sage-Grouse Numbers Climb

June 2016 – For the second year in a row, endangered sage-grouse populations in Alberta and Saskatchewan were on the rise, with at least 200 now in Canada. Added protections resulted from a court challenge in 2013 by the Wilderness Committee and allies, represented by Ecojustice. The federal government was required to step up protections after nearly 90 per cent of sage-grouse died off between 1988 and 2006. We're seeing promising growth once again.

Vancouver Bans Bee-Killing Pesticides

July 2016 – Vancouver city council voted unanimously to ban neonicotinoids, a group of pesticides believed to contribute to bee mortality. Vancouver's decision came a week after the Wilderness Committee and three other environmental groups filed a lawsuit in federal court, lead by Ecojustice, alleging that Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency improperly allowed the use of neonicotinoid pesticides without adequate scientific evaluation of their environmental risks, especially to bees and other pollinators.

UBCM Opposes Old-Growth Logging

September 2016 – Mayors and councillors from across BC passed a motion to formally oppose old-growth logging on Vancouver Island, with more than 80 per cent of delegates in favour. We rallied outside the Union of BC Municipalities convention to highlight the desire by residents and Indigenous communities to protect old-growth. A similar motion was passed by the BC Chamber of Commerce, which coupled with this motion, highlights community and business opposition to destructive old-growth logging in threatened areas like the Walbran Valley, East Creek and Mt. Elphinstone.

Ahousaht Protects Forests

January 2017 – When the Ahousaht Hawiih (hereditary chiefs) publicly announced their Nation's new comprehensive Land Use Vision for their territory in the heart of Clayoquot Sound, we were present along with other representatives of the Clayoquot Sound Conservation Alliance to support and congratulate them for this initiative. Under this vision, about 80 per cent of Ahousaht territory will be set aside as cultural and natural areas to conserve biological diversity, natural landscapes and wilderness, and to provide for Ahousaht continued spiritual, cultural and sustenance use. The vision follows their moratorium on old-growth logging in Ahousaht territory, declared by the Hawiih in 2015.

40,000 Signatures for BC Species Law

February 2017 – We delivered 40,090 petition signatures to the BC legislature, calling for provincial endangered species legislation. BC has the most biodiversity in Canada – including 76 per cent of Canada's bird species, 70 per cent of its freshwater fish species and 66 per cent of its butterfly species. Although BC is home to over 1,900 species at risk, it is one of only two provinces in Canada with no endangered species law. In the same week as the petition delivery, both the Green Party and

the NDP tabled private member's bills calling for a BC endangered species law.

Ajax Mine Rejected by First Nation

March 2017 – The Stk'emlúpsenc te Secwépemc Nation rejected the proposed Ajax open-pit copper and gold mine located south west of Kamloops, BC, after a months-long review of the project. We were honoured to be invited to witness this historic event as the decision was announced at a ceremony in Kamloops with about 200 people in attendance. The land around Pipsell (Jacko Lake) where the mine is proposed is considered a sacred site, holding great spiritual and cultural value for the First Nation.



Be a Trailblazer!

Trailblazers are our heart and soul. Become a monthly donor and help the Wilderness Committee plan and win critical fights for Canada's wild.

Why give monthly? It's...

- **Easier!** Spread your donation across the entire year. Then see it totaled up for a tax benefit when your receipt arrives in February.
- **Powerful!** Your gift provides predictable revenue to build effective campaigns, hire staff and invest more confidently in winning strategies for Canada's wild.
- **Fun!** As one of Wilderness Committee's most valued supporters, Trailblazers receive perks, rewards and communications tailored just for you!

For as little as \$10 per month you can support wilderness preservation and wildlife protection year-round.

WildernessCommittee.org/Trailblazers



Independent and Grassroots



The Wilderness Committee's commitment to grassroots organizing, community engagement and citizen-based support allows us to remain independent while we support urgent, critical environmental work as it arises and carry it out over the long-term.

Paddling the Peace to Stop Site C

July 2016 – Hundreds of people paddled down the Peace River with one goal in mind – to stop the proposed Site C dam. Our National Campaign Director was the Master of Ceremonies for the day-long event which brought together First Nations, farmers and conservationists to voice their objection to this unneeded energy project that conflicts with human rights, destroys farmland and wastes ratepayers money.

KM Panel Participation

July 2016 – A federal panel appointed to patch holes in the review process on Kinder Morgan's proposed tar sands pipeline heard a resounding NO to the expansion from local residents and Indigenous communities at open house events all along the route. We raised concerns along with local residents about risks to their health, their land and their water from toxic tar sands spills that would destroy their way of life.



Nopiming Off-Road Trails

October 2016 – An expedition to Manitoba's Nopiming Provincial Park revealed extensive impacts from off-road vehicles, including huge mud holes that make hiking difficult and multiple trails braiding all over the park from unregulated ATV use. The government needs to properly manage this park so that trails are sited, designed, built and managed to prevent damage.

Toad People World Premiere

November 2016 – We launched the world premiere of *Toad People*, a powerful documentary about communities across BC fighting to protect species at risk such as the western toad and barn owl. After the premiere, the film toured across the province to build support for a strong BC endangered species law.

March to End Pipe Dream

November 2016 – Thousands of protesters poured into Vancouver streets to voice their opposition to Kinder Morgan's proposed tar sands pipeline expansion. Organized by us and our allies, people holding banners and chanting against the pipeline made their way from Vancouver city hall to a downtown rally calling for an end to this foolish pipe dream to move tar sands heavy

oil from Alberta to their Burnaby tanker terminal, for export in tankers through the Salish Sea.

Northern Vancouver Island Forest Tour

March 2017 – We joined Sierra Club BC to put on a series of public events in forest-dependent communities on northern Vancouver Island about the future of remaining old-growth forests. Packed meetings heard heated discussions on how to best manage the little that remains of these original forests. This tour is part of our campaign for a ban on logging of the Island's remaining ancient forests.

Backing the 'Bou

April 2017 – Residents of Clearwater Valley, BC reached out to us to support their legal application to the federal government for an emergency order in defence of southern mountain caribou. The application sought to stop clearcut logging in their habitat outside Wells Gray Provincial Park. The BC government approved Canadian Forest Products Ltd.'s logging even though they admit the caribou are "critically imperiled". The Wells Gray herd numbers have plunged from over 300 to less than 150 over the past 20 years.



How would you like to
be remembered?



Be a celebrated guardian of
Canadian wildlife.

We have a special title for those who
name us in their will or estate plans:
Wilderness Guardians.

But we can only give benefits if you
let us know your intent.

Join today. Notify us. See the benefits.*

*Benefits: personalized updates, guided field trips
and more...



WildernessCommittee.org/Legacy

On the Ground



The Wilderness Committee's work is rooted in getting out on the ground to research, map, photograph and experience first-hand the wilderness areas and wildlife habitats we work to protect. This allows us to provide you with the latest details about the state of Canada's environment.

Spotted Owl Expedition

May 2016 – Acting on a tip, we headed out to Lillooet Valley, BC to film an area of prime spotted owl habitat that had been logged. The spotted owl is one of Canada's most endangered species, with an estimated 12 individuals remaining in the wild. Photos and videos gathered are being used to advocate for a BC endangered species law.

Bike for the 'Bou

June 2016 – We took supporters on a 60 km bike tour to witness the beautiful boreal home of the threatened boreal caribou in eastern Manitoba, while biking along old gravel and sand logging roads and camping in the gorgeous surrounding forest. The trip was part of our Wilderness Witness Tour series.



Western Toad Habitat

June 2016 – After significant opposition, logging started in the core habitat of one of BC's largest populations of western toads. The provincial government spent \$750,000 on a tunnel protecting these toads from highway deaths as they migrate from Summit Lake to the surrounding forest but then allowed some of the habitat to be destroyed by logging. We gathered photos and video to highlight the need for BC endangered species legislation.

Logging in Walbran Valley

June 2016 – Vancouver Island staff traveled to the Walbran Valley on Vancouver Island to photo-document old-growth forest that was clearcut logged over the winter by logging company Teal Jones. Since the previous year, thousands have called on the BC government to protect the Central Walbran Valley, yet Teal Jones and government officials have refused.

Clayoquot Trail-building

Summer 2016 – We led several volunteer trail-building trips with the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Tribal Park's team to repair and build boardwalk, and clear trails on the Wah-Nuh-Jus—Hilthoos (Meares Island)

Big Tree Trail. These trips are part of our work supporting a First Nations-led economic plan for Clayoquot Sound that protects these spectacular old-growth forests.

Climate Change Tour

September 2016 – We hit the road with filmmaker David Lavallee to bring *To the Ends of the Earth* – a film about extreme petro energy production – to nothern BC communities. Along the way, we met with activists battling fracking, LNG and the Site C dam project, and filmed video clips of communities fighting back.

Paddle for Protection

September 2016 – On World Rivers Day we held our 3rd Annual Paddle for Protection canoeing and kayaking day trip on the lower Bird River to ramp up our campaign to preserve this endangered Manitoba waterway. These increasingly popular trips showcase this wild area and motivate those who participate to take action to see it protected.

Opposition to Park Logging

April 2017 – An expedition to Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario to look for industrial development revealed road building and new ATV activity. We took

photos and videos to raise awareness on why logging in parks must be banned. We headed to Toronto to deliver 3,500 signed letters to the legislature demanding an end to logging in Algonquin. Algonquin is one of only two provincial parks in Canada where logging is still allowed.



Join us!

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

We welcome your participation.

- **Volunteer:** Contact your local WC office to volunteer.
- **Sign up:** Our action e-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 citizens working together to defend Canada's environment.

WildernessCommittee.org/
TakeAction



Wild Friends



The Wilderness Committee knows we can't do it alone, so we form alliances with diverse groups to create positive change for the environment.

Defending Bees

July 2016 – We joined David Suzuki Foundation, Friends of the Earth Canada and Ontario Nature in court, represented by Ecojustice, to protect pollinators from harmful neonicotinoid pesticides linked to mass bee die-offs and declining pollinator populations. We argue that two of these pesticides – clothianidin and thiamethoxam – are unlawfully registered in Canada. The federal government and pesticide companies are attempting to have the case dismissed.



Charges Filed

October 2016 – We supported MiningWatch Canada's private prosecution against the BC government and the Mount Polley Mining Corporation, owned by Imperial Metals, for violations of the federal Fisheries Act in connection with the largest mine waste disaster in Canadian history. Along with First Nations, local, provincial and national groups, we claimed the massive 2014 spill was caused by the negligence of both of these parties.

#EAReview

November 2016 – We joined West Coast Environmental Law, the University of Winnipeg and an elder from the Sagkeeng First Nation on a town hall panel discussing Canada's environmental laws and how important strong federal environmental protection is for Manitobans. The event coincided with the federal government's review of cuts to federal laws with the aim of restoring lost protection. With pipelines, hydro dams and climate change dominating our national dialogue, increasing public participation in the review process was critical. The event was supported by local allies the Green Action Centre, Social Planning Council of

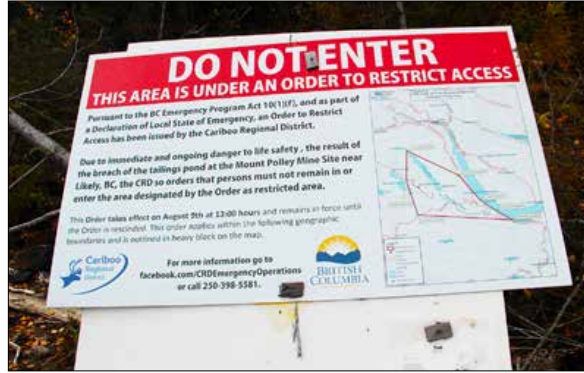
Winnipeg, Manitoba Eco-Network and the Public Interest Law Centre (Manitoba).

Funds for Fish Lake

January 2017 – We co-organized fundraising efforts for the Tsilhqot'in Nation's court costs defending their territory from a mining proposal at Fish Lake. Together with Raven Trust, Sierra Club BC, Council of Canadians, Amnesty International Vancouver and Friends of the Nemaiah Valley, successful fundraising events in Vancouver and Victoria ensured the Tsilhqot'in Nation was able to fully participate in a judicial review brought on by the mining company.

Rallying for Forests

April 2017 – Together with our allies the Public and Private Workers of Canada – representing some of BC's forestry workers – and Ancient Forest Alliance, we held a rally at the BC legislature along with First Nations' representatives and citizens to call for a ban on raw log exports and a transition to sustainable second-growth forestry. Low elevation, high-productivity original rainforest has been removed from between 80 to 90 per cent of its former range on Vancouver Island and the government needs to set aside all remaining old-growth while ensuring sustainable livelihoods in forestry communities.



Thank you!

We appreciate the foundations and funders who play an important role in our continued success:

- Glasswaters Foundation
- Hope Social Justice Fund via the Victoria Foundation
- HSABC
- James Lindfield Fund
- Laura L. Tiberti Charitable Foundation
- Meakin Family Fund
- Mountain Equipment Co-op
- Patagonia Environmental Fund
- Peter & Chloe O'Loughlin Charitable Fund
- Philip & Claire Daykin Fund
- Tides Canada Foundation
- Willow Grove Foundation
- Sharp Family



Financial Statement

Dear WC supporters,

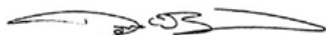
This fiscal year was the third year of our renewed revenue generation strategies and strengthened financial management to bolster our budget so that we can better defend Canada's wild places.

The results show a 22 percent increase in our revenue – with 94 percent of this coming from individual supporters like you in the form of donations, membership dues and sales of our environmentally friendly products!

The major shift from a membership-based structure to a supporter-based one resulted in year-end revenues above budget and expenses below budget. We are proud that the bottom line comes in very close to a balanced budget.

We are optimistic that, thanks to our supporters, the next fiscal year will show sustained revenue growth to effectively cover expenses related to protecting Canada's wilderness heritage for all future generations.

With heartfelt gratitude, thank you.



Don Bain
Board Treasurer

2016-2017 Auditor

Loewen Kruse
Chartered Professional Accountants

REVENUE	2017	2016
Contributions and donations	2,000,861	1,500,643
Membership dues	143,519	277,529
Grant revenue	127,318	73,595
Sales of educational materials	51,189	42,812
Miscellaneous	11,862	14,754
	2,334,749	1,909,333

EXPENSES	2017	2016
Projects and education	1,304,899	1,204,576
Canvass and fundraising costs	545,689	471,373
Administration costs	331,611	232,171
Membership costs	132,725	221,378
Sales costs	37,222	76,769
Amortization	18,257	22,990
	2,370,403	2,229,257

Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses for the year	(35,654)	(319,924)
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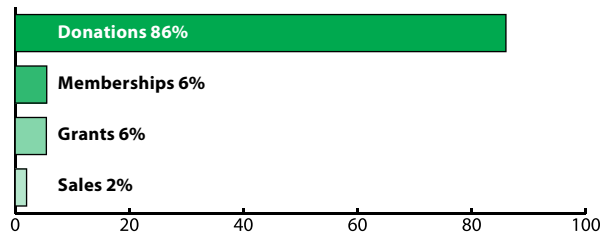
Fund balances, beginning of year	435,226	755,150
Fund balances, end of year	399,572	435,226

ASSETS	2017	2016
CURRENT		
Cash	62,083	80,312
Accounts receivable	11,183	57
Interest receivable	2,039	2,960
Recoverable from government (GST)	23,565	34,993
Inventory	17,603	11,878
Prepaid expenses	21,231	39,954
	137,704	170,154
CAPITAL ASSETS	17,397	33,602
RESTRICTED INVESTMENT	318,075	315,073
	473,176	518,829

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

CURRENT	2017	2016
Accounts payable + accrued liabilities	73,604	83,603
	73,604	83,603

FUND BALANCES	399,572	435,226
	473,176	518,829



Auditors' Report for the year ended 30 April 2017

To the Members of Western Canada Wilderness Committee

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Western Canada Wilderness Committee, which comprise the statement of financial position as at April 30, 2017 and the statements of operations, changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified audit opinion.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

In common with many charitable organizations, Committee derives most of its revenue from donations and various fundraising programs, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our work in respect of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the accounts of the organization, and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to donation revenue, excess of revenues over expenses for the year, assets and fund balances.

Qualified Opinion

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Western Canada Wilderness Committee as at April 30, 2017, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

As required by the Societies Act of British Columbia, we report that, in our opinion, these standards have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Loewen Kruse Chartered Professional Accountants
Burnaby, BC





The Wilderness Committee is Canada's people-powered, citizen-funded wilderness preservation group with 60,000 supporters and volunteers from coast to coast to coast. Founded in 1980, we've helped gain protection for over 60 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 Canada's natural heritage!

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

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