

wildsight

ANNUAL REPORT

2014 CONNECTION COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I first arrived in this region in 1969, I realized that this was a very special place. Since then I have had the pleasure of working with a passionate community of people committed to protecting its wildness. After 10 years as Wildsight's Executive Director, I am happily passing the baton to Robyn Duncan, whose energy and vision are leading Wildsight forward. My continuing role as Conservation Director allows me to focus fully on Wildsight's conservation programs.

Wildsight continues to be deeply engaged in active relationships to bring about change. I repeatedly hear from people across British Columbia that our grassroots work is unique in the province because we directly engage with industry and change decisions on the ground.

But while I can point to many areas that remain intact because of Wildsight, I can point to many others that no longer provide wildlife habitat or pure water. Climate change continues to move ahead at an ever increasing rate and the human population continues to soar. Humans are impacting more and more of the planet daily by the ways we provide for ourselves—fitting perfectly the definition of a weed species.

Yet, we continue to enjoy one of the most intact wild ecosystems in the world here in Canada's Rocky and Columbia Mountains. International climate experts repeatedly point to this region as having one of the best opportunities on the globe to retain healthy wildlife and plant communities in the face of climate change. This opportunity challenges us to take effective action.

Though as humans we have an enormous impact on the global environment, because of our social nature, we have the ability to affect change—working together for the benefit of all beings with whom we share the planet.

We have the opportunity and responsibility to care for this very special place, to pass its wild nature to future generations. Wildsight provides a path to meet this challenge together.

For the wild,

John Bergenske
Executive Director, 2014



wildsight



CONSERVATION

BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR INCREASED PROTECTION

In collaboration with our partners, communities and supporters, we are working to achieve our vision of healthy, fully functioning connected ecosystems in the Columbia Mountain and Southern Rocky Mountain regions that support the full richness of native animal and plant communities. Together we made some big strides in 2014. Here are some of the highlights:

SET LAND ASIDE FOR THE WILD

Played a key role in advising Teck on a 7,150 hectare conservation land purchase in the Flathead and Elk Valleys.

WORKED WITH INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT, FIRST NATIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Helped create a long-term water plan for the Elk Valley that addresses serious water quality issues in the Elk River and its tributaries.

INFLUENCED FORESTRY PLANNING AND PRACTICES

Met with industry leaders and operators on the ground, helping to maintain FSC standards, create old growth management areas and expand important riparian buffers.

INCREASED SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIQUE ECOLOGY OF THE FLATHEAD VALLEY

Organized the first-ever Bat Bioblitz in the region.

FOUGHT FOR PROTECTION OF THE JUMBO VALLEY

Worked with the Ktunaxa First Nation, the Jumbo Wild coalition, MLAs, municipal government and our dedicated group of incredible volunteers.

SPOKE OUT FOR SPECIES AT RISK IN THE FEDERAL COURTS

Forced the Canadian government to publish a recovery plan for Southern Mountain Caribou that expands the recovery actions and critical habitat protection currently provided by British Columbia. The court declared that the Canadian government cannot continue to delay recovery strategies for Species at Risk.

OUR VISION

Wildsight envisions a landscape with free-running streams and rivers of pure water, extensive and connected wild spaces, and natural habitat that maintains the full complement of indigenous plants and wildlife. We see healthy human communities thriving with sustainable livelihoods and lifestyles based on a conservation ethic.



EDUCATION

INSPIRING LOVE

It's no secret that change and education go hand in hand. Our children are the future stewards of this planet. The goals of our school-based education programs are simple yet powerful: get children outside into their wild backyards in order to instill a sense of connection and place and to give them tools to face the challenges of sustainability with knowledge and inspiration.

DELIVERED LOCALLY-DEVELOPED SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Beyond Recycling, Classroom with Outdoors, Winter Wonder and Know Your Watershed engaged teachers, students, community water groups and municipal staff throughout the Columbia Basin on environmental issues facing our communities and inspired a love of this magical place we call home.

LAUNCHED THE BRAND NEW ECOSTEWARDS PROGRAM

Deepened our Education in the Wild field trips by supporting teachers and students in initiating, planning and implementing their own extension projects. Ecostewards embraces inquiry, action and place-based learning.

GO WILD!

Wildsight Kimberley/Cranbrook took Grade 9 students on a guided five-day backpacking trip into the wilderness, teaching them backcountry skills, self-reliance and team-work, and instilling in each of them a life-long love of the mountains.

WATER

CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT WATER

When it comes to water and healthy watersheds that sustain all life, we have to think big. That is why we are working together to shift an entire paradigm—empowering local communities with knowledge and resources to take matters into their own hands. Our work in the region is our starting point, but we are taking this “made in the Columbia Basin” model and using it to connect with water groups Canada-wide, helping them cherish and protect their own watersheds.



LAUNCHED RAPID RESPONSE

A new initiative that provides training and support for communities to respond to large-scale pollution events like the Obed Mine spill or the tailings pond breach at Mount Polley.

INITIATED CITIZEN GROUNDWATER MONITORING

For the first time in the region, we trained community volunteers from Invermere to collect groundwater data over time and created a report to guide the town of Invermere in future land-use and water planning.

EMPOWERED, TRAINED AND SUPPORTED STEWARDSHIP GROUPS

We brought people together to take care of their freshwater resources: Friends of Kootenay Lake, Keepers of the Athabasca, Stewards of Lac la Biche, and others.

OUR MISSION

Wildsight works locally, regionally and globally to protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable communities in Canada's Columbia and Rocky Mountain regions.



COMMUNITIES

LOCAL STEPS FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

Wildsight works collaboratively with five autonomous branches: Creston, Elk Valley, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley/Cranbrook. These branches work at the local level to create communities in which both humans and nature can thrive.

LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Worked on projects like climate change solutions, provided education and outreach on compost and waste reduction and organized the Kimberley Green Building Conference.

FOOD SECURITY

Held community and school-based workshops on gardening and food preservation, opened the gates of local produce gardens, launched the very first Kimberley Farmers' Market and provided apple harvest and preservation equipment free of charge.

CONNECTING LOCALS AND TOURISTS WITH THE LANDSCAPE

Inspiring love to promote protection, our local branches held film festivals, hosted the incomparable Creston Bird Festival, launched Look Outside—a photo contest showcasing the Purcell Mountains—and guided locals and tourists on Wild Nature tours through our wild and magical landscapes.

RESTORATION

Organized countless invasive weed pulls, built boardwalks and wildlife viewing areas on lakes and wetland areas ravaged by irresponsible motorized recreation, launched the first-ever citizen science survey on waterbirds in the Columbia Wetlands and worked on creating wildlife connectivity corridors on Highway 3.

OUR VALUES

COMMUNITY Working together to create a future in which both nature and humans can thrive.

EDUCATION Connecting students and local communities with their wild ecosystems, nurturing knowledge & stewardship.

WILDERNESS Protecting wildlife, water and wild spaces.

LOOKING FORWARD: 2015

CONSERVATION

Make significant progress on completing the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park by protecting the Flathead River Valley and implementing a Wildlife Management Area connecting the Flathead Valley north to the Banff and Kootenay National Parks

Protect internationally-significant grizzly bear habitat by putting an end to the Jumbo Glacier Resort

Continue recovery efforts and habitat protection for North America's most endangered mammal, the Southern Mountain Caribou

WATER

Launch a nationwide blue-green algae mapping project

Expand our Rapid Response Initiative across the country

EDUCATION

Connect even more students with nature by reaching more schools and grade levels throughout the Columbia Basin with our education programs

COMMUNITIES

Promote sustainable practices and conservation ethics within our local communities

“If you know wilderness in the way that you know love, you would be unwilling to let it go... This is the story of our past and it will be the story of our future.” - Terry Tempest Williams

2014

BY THE NUMBERS



8000
VOICES SPOKE OUT
 ON ISSUES LIKE THE ALR, BC PARKS,
 BEES & JUMBO



5336
KIDS GOT OUTSIDE
 CONNECTING TO THE WILD THROUGH
 OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMS



24 WILD YEARS
 OF KEEPING JUMBO WILD!



4 NEW GROUPS
 DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY-BASED
 WATER MONITORING LAUNCHED



7150 HECTARES
 OF LAND SET ASIDE IN
 THE FLATHEAD AND ELK VALLEYS

x We the People

6000 SIGNATURES
 CALLING FOR THE PROTECTION OF
 THE FLATHEAD VALLEY



800 PHOTOS
 OF THE PURCELL MOUNTAIN REGION
 SUBMITTED TO LOOK OUTSIDE



200 BOOKINGS
 OF OUR FREE FRUIT HARVEST
 EQUIPMENT, KEEPING WILDLIFE SAFE



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Juri Peepre | Chair |
| Margie Jamieson | Vice Chair |
| Marion Stotts | Secretary |
| Morgan Blakely | Treasurer |
| Ayla Bennett | Director |
| Baiba Morrow | Director |
| Brian Conrad | Director |
| Annette Lutterman | Director |

PROGRAM TEAM AND MANAGEMENT

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Robyn Duncan | ED, Purcells Manager |
| John Bergenske | ED 2014, Conservation Director |
| Kat Hartwig | Water and Climate Director |
| Ryland Nelson | Southern Rockies Manager |
| Heather Leschied | Water Stewardship Manager |
| Raegan Mallinson | Water Stewardship Coordinator |
| Ryan Van der Marel | Water Stewardship Coordinator |
| Monica Nissen | Education Manager |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Dawn Deydey | Beyond Recycling Coordinator |
| Lee-Anne Walker | Know Your Watershed Coordinator |
| Tamara Eidsness | Administrator |
| Stephanie Hirn | Office Manager |
| Lindsay Cuff | Comms & Development Manager |
| Lars Sander-Green | IT & Communications |
| Mandi McRobbie | Design |
| 20 Environmental Educators across the Columbia Basin | |

WHERE WE WORK

Wildsight is based in the Columbia and Southern Rocky Mountain region of British Columbia. Our home contains North America's longest intact wetland, the headwaters of the mighty Columbia River and the majestic peaks of the Columbia and Rocky Mountains. Our education programs cover the entire Columbia Basin and our water programs empower and connect community-based initiatives throughout Canada.

OUR MEMBERS

815 MEMBERS STRONG | 189 NEW MEMBERS IN 2014

Our members are an important part of our team. They are an amazing group of people who value wilderness, wildlife and healthy communities, who believe that by taking care of the things we love, collectively, we can change the world.

2014 FINANCIALS

Please visit our website in the new year for our complete 2014 audited financials.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



444S | Brainerd | LaSalle Adams | Wilburforce | Patagonia
West Coast Environmental Law | Conservation Alliance | Y2Y
Osprey Foundation | BC Gaming | RDCK | Hamber Foundation
Columbia Power | Waste Management | North Face Explore Fund
NSERC | RBC | BC Real Estate Fdn | Vancouver Foundation
Eco Action | Walter & Duncan Gordon Fdn | ECO Canada | WWF
Tides Canada | Alberta Eco Trust | Alberta Real Estate Fdn
Fish and Wildlife Comp | Columbia Basin Trust | Fortis BC
Small Change Fund | Canada Freshwater Alliance | BC Hydro
Land Stewardship Centre | Mountain Equipment Co-op | Teck
Leon Judah Blackmore Fdn | TD Friends of the Environment
Sitka Foundation | McLean Foundation | Lush

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Wildsight is so much more than the people who work for us. It's a community working together to protect the things we love. Your support will help ensure that we can continue speaking out on behalf wilderness, wildlife and clean water, now and for future generations. Support our work by:

MAKING A DONATION | BECOMING A MONTHLY DONOR | JOINING OUR COMMUNITY AS A MEMBER | VOLUNTEERING



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2-495 Wallinger Avenue, Kimberley, British Columbia V1A 1Z6 Canada
250.427.9325 office@wildsight.ca wildsight.ca