



Canadian
WILDERNESS

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PASSION.
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Safeguarding
nature today,
for tomorrow.

 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

A Legacy of Hope – Nature Always and Nature for All

LAURA COLELLA

Beyond the heartbreak of goodbye is the joy of looking back. The adage is a comfort as I write my last *Canadian Wilderness* column as president of the CPAWS National Board of Trustees. After nine years on the board and three as president, my mandate is coming to an end. As I reflect on the close of this wonderful chapter, my pride for all that we – our CPAWS team and our wonderfully committed supporters – have achieved is tremendous. In a world wracked by troubling news, we've helped build hope for nature.

This magazine, for example, is filled with it. After years of CPAWS efforts making the science-based case for more protected areas to save Canadian nature, the federal government is now fully committed to protecting 25% of Canada's land and ocean by 2025 and 30% by 2030. With support from organizations like ours, Indigenous leadership, and participation by provinces and territories, these targets are now within sight.

Today, the number of already-identified opportunities for new protected areas can – if realized soon – get us to the 2025 goal. In the past six years alone, Canada has created almost 29 million hectares of new protected and conserved areas. Altogether, that's more than four times the size of New Brunswick. Many gains – such as the Yukon's Peel River Watershed – were long-championed by CPAWS, along with First Nations, local communities and others.

We helped to urge the government to make historic conservation investments. Last year's Federal Budget 2021, for example, committed an unprecedented \$3.2 billion in land and ocean conservation. CPAWS efforts have also kept the focus on species and ecosystems within our existing national parks, and we're providing guidance for a new network of national urban parks.

These are just some of the promising changes during my time in this seat. They're successes that owe much to an inclusive CPAWS vision. It's a vision I will continue to share with pride: nature always, but also nature for all.

Laura Colella is President of the National Board of Trustees for CPAWS.



Howe Sound, Squamish, BC
Photo: Alpegot/AdobeStock



CPAWS is Canada's voice for wilderness. Since 1963, we've played a lead role in creating over two-thirds of Canada's protected areas.

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PASSION. PURPOSE. PROGRESS.

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*COVER: Adolescent caribou and caribou calf on mountain rocky terrain.
Photo: Ghost Bear*

*ABOVE: Canoes on the shore of Tadoule Lake in the Seal River Watershed.
Photo: Chris Paetkau*

'Save Owls Head' Campaign Scores a Victory

CPAWS Nova Scotia has good news to share. The secret land deal that threatened Owls Head has been called off and this ecologically-significant site is now one step closer to receiving legal protection from the Nova Scotia government – a major victory for the Save Owls Head campaign.

As a coastal headland on the Eastern Shore, Owls Head contains globally-rare plant communities, temperate rainforests, and habitat for migratory birds, and had been managed as a provincial park for nearly 50 years.

However, in 2019, the Nova Scotia government secretly delisted Owls Head to sell the public lands for a golf course development, sparking a grassroots campaign to save these parklands.

Volunteers built a Facebook group of 10,000 members, organized protests at Province House, and distributed lawn signs across Nova Scotia calling on the province to halt the sale. CPAWS-NS undertook biodiversity surveys and set up an



CPAWS-NS exploring Owls Head on a sea kayak expedition in July 2021

online action centre to help thousands of Nova Scotians submit letters to the provincial government to protect Owls Head.

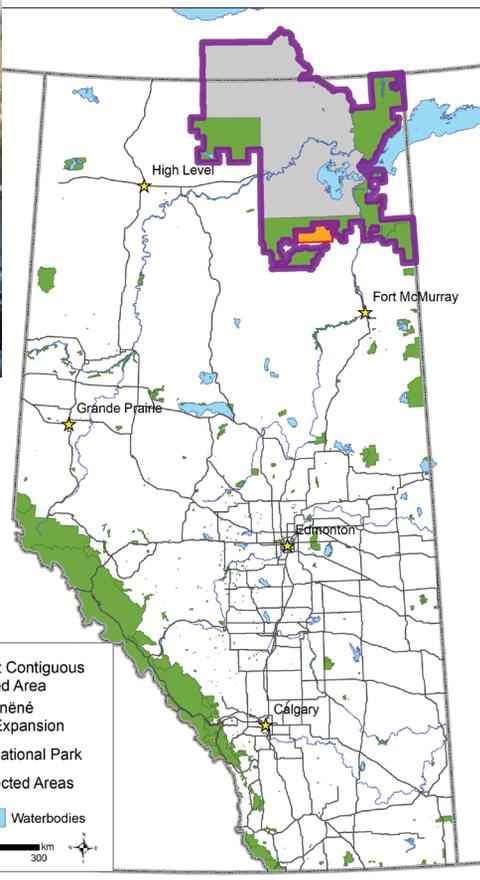
After two years of sustained pressure, the developer withdrew from the agreement and the Nova Scotia government committed publicly to legally protect Owls Head. CPAWS Nova Scotia is committed to ensuring Owls Head receives protection under the *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*, to prevent delisting without a public consultation or notification process of a protected area.

Caitlin Grady, Conservation Campaigner, CPAWS NS



Above: Frosted Athabasca River, northern Alberta. Photo: Gillian Chow-Fraser

World's Largest Protection of Boreal Forest Grows Through Indigenous Leadership



The expansion of the largest contiguous protection of boreal forest in the world was officially announced in February 2022 by the Alberta government. The Kitaskino Nuwenëné Wildland Provincial Park in northern Alberta now totals 314,000 hectares following the addition of almost 152,000 hectares of newly protected boreal forest, wetlands, and critical habitat for at-risk woodland caribou and wood bison.

The Mikisew Cree First Nation has been a leader in identifying the area for conservation and collaborating with industry to secure voluntary lease relinquishments. Kitaskino Nuwenëné is Cree and Dene for "our land". The area is meant to safeguard Indigenous People's ways of life. It borders Wood Buffalo National Park, which faces its own suite of environmental challenges that place it on the verge of being listed as a World Heritage Site in Danger.

With the added protection in Kitaskino, the total size of this protected area network now stands at nearly seven million hectares! This brings Canada closer to reaching its international protected areas target of 30% by 2030, with a milestone of protecting 25% by 2025 along the way. CPAWS looks forward to the next step of determining a strong co-governance management plan for the park.

Gillian Chow-Fraser, Boreal Program Manager, CPAWS NAB

Protecting BC's Favourite Donut Hole

In January 2022, British Columbia announced that the Skagit donut hole is free from the threat of mining, and on its way to being protected. The area – a 5,800-hectare wedge between Skagit and EC Manning Provincial Parks – is beloved by recreationists and provides key habitat for species like grizzly bears, spotted owl, and over 200 bird species.

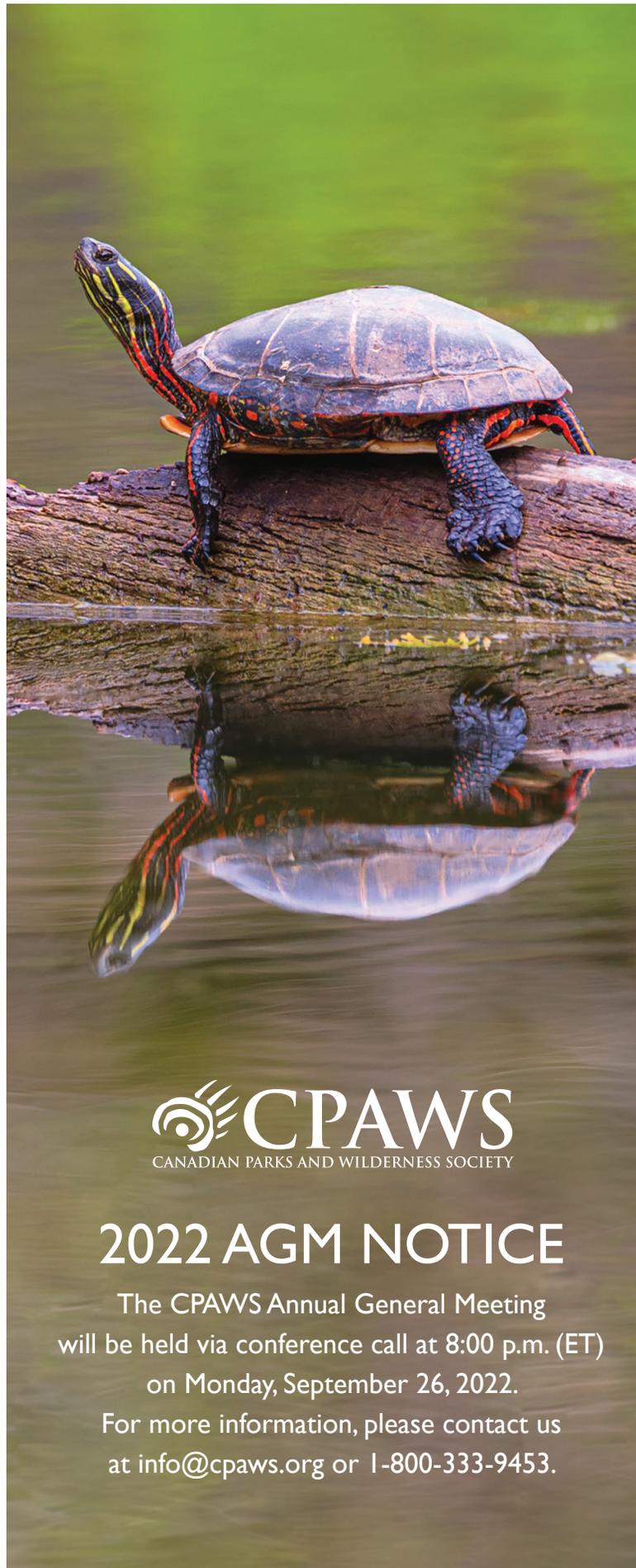
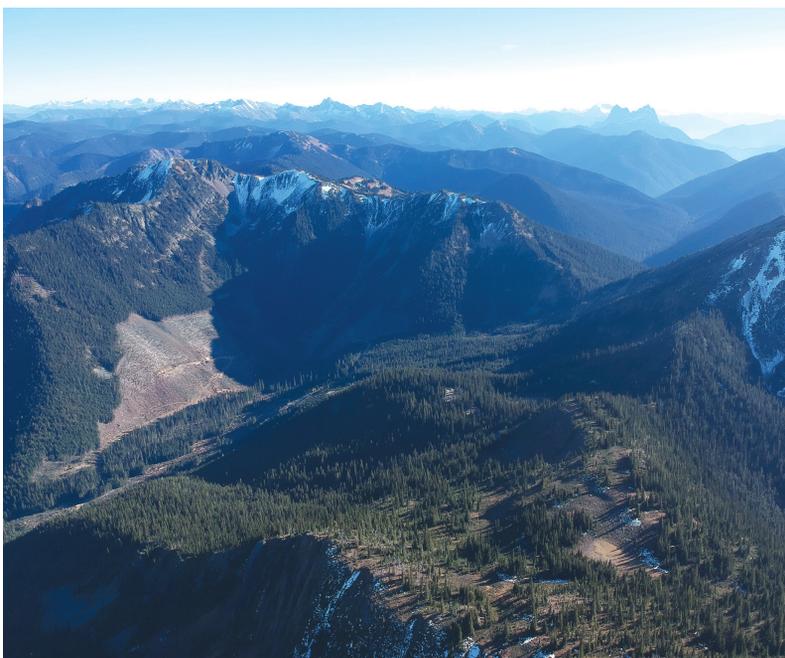
This success story is rooted in strong collaboration, particularly through decades-long campaigning by a Canada/U.S. coalition of more than 300 organizations, Indigenous Nations, politicians, and businesses. Financially, a \$24-million mining rights buyout was made possible by the BC and Washington governments, Skagit Environmental Endowment Commission, and Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Nullifying mineral stakes in the Skagit donut hole showcases an outcome that simultaneously furthers conservation, reconciliation, and species protection. However, it also exemplifies how high buyout costs are a continual barrier to conservation in BC.

Now, it's time for the BC government to work with local First Nations to fully protect the province's favourite donut hole, as Canada pushes to protect 30% of land and ocean by 2030, with an intervening target of 25% by 2025.

Kristina Charania, Conservation Coordinator, CPAWS BC

Skagit Donut Hole in Stó:lō, Okanagan, and Nlaka'pamux Nation territory. Photo: Wilderness Committee



2022 AGM NOTICE

The CPAWS Annual General Meeting will be held via conference call at 8:00 p.m. (ET) on Monday, September 26, 2022.

For more information, please contact us at info@cpaws.org or 1-800-333-9453.



Clockwise from top: Southern Alberta CWSP participants climb a ridge overlooking Castle Wildland Provincial Park as part of their 3-day backpacking wilderness trip. Photo: Heather Davies; CWSP participants from New Brunswick explore the Bay of Fundy as part of a sea kayaking tour. Photo: Marcel LeBlanc; CWSP participants from Manitoba learn how to prepare geese for cooking at their excursion in Fisher River Cree Nation last summer. Photo: Trevor Gill; Ottawa Valley CWSP participants pulls out Japanese Knotweed, an invasive plant species, as part of a community service project. Photo: Susie Shapiro.

INSPIRING TOMORROW'S NATURE DEFENDERS

Youth across Canada learn about environmental stewardship **CHLOÉ McMILLAN**

It may not be familiar to you, but many conservationists have heard Baba Dioum's 1968 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) statement: *"In the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."* This basic idea is a major guide for me as an environmental educator.

My goal is to build education programs that support the efforts of my conservation colleagues by finding those experiences that move people in a way that sparks a passion to protect our natural world.

At CPAWS Ottawa Valley, we are working to create a protected area around the Noire, Coulonge, and Dumoine rivers, so we bring people out to the rivers to see the magic for themselves. The pitch-black night sky. The respect the rivers demand as their waters carry you over jagged rocks, waters that have transported people for thousands of years. Waters that transported the timber that built our Nation's capital. The shores and forests between that hold a tremendous amount of plant and animal life. Habitats that provide resources and experiences to support local communities. We bring people out on the land in hopes that they fall in love and ignite a desire to take care of it.

Thankfully, I'm not the only person at CPAWS connecting people to nature.

The Canadian Wilderness Stewardship Program (CWSP) is a National CPAWS program, co-organized by the Ottawa Valley, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Southern Alberta chapters. It is an experiential educational program designed to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards by connecting youth to nature and their local communities. Broken down into three core components it includes: an expedition of a regional watershed in need of protection; participant-led volunteer projects; and a youth summit.

The program is in its third year, with a new set of participants each year. They are a diverse group coming to us from English, French and Indigenous communities across the country. Many are students, some have started their careers, and some have been new Canadians eager to learn about Canada's heritage.

For CPAWS, the Stewardship program strengthens relationships with community stakeholders across

participating regions. Ecotourism guides teach participants to canoe over rapids while sharing stories about the river and best practices for exploring the wild. Politicians come out to welcome the group to their community and share the economic potential of the region. Indigenous community members, the original stewards of the land, instill participants with passion and open their minds to different ways of approaching conservation. In turn, these strengthened relationships enhance communication channels and provide different perspectives and tools for our conservation staff.

For these young people, the expeditions make for a memorable start to the program, provide an opportunity to bond with each other, learn about conservation issues in the region and discuss ideas for different activities they could organize for their community service projects.

They then develop their projects on topics connecting back to the watersheds they live in. They join walks, webinars, and presentations to learn about different elements that come together in protected areas management.

The program ends with a summit, where youth share the projects they've created, learn from each other and guest speakers, and celebrate their accomplishments.

To date, we have seen a wide range of youth projects, including interpretive hikes, snowshoe, and ski tours; elementary classroom presentations; trivia contests; social media campaigns; podcasts; awareness concerts; and habitat clean-ups. Sometimes participants join forces to work on a big project, other times they choose to help CPAWS with smaller "grab and go" projects. Regardless of the size of their project, every action these young people take adds up to something big: stewardship of Canada's public lands and waters for their communities and future generations.

Imagine the potential for change that youth motivated by new love, empowered with skills in community engagement, reconciliation, advocacy, and wilderness stewardship can accomplish... feels pretty powerful to me.

Chloé McMillan is the Education Director at CPAWS Ottawa Valley. She coordinates the Ottawa Valley Canadian Wilderness Stewardship Program, and in 2021 expanded her participation to also lead the program at the National level. For more information about the CWSP, visit cpaws.org/CWSP.



CONSERVATION SUCCESS IN QUÉBEC

Modelling a pathway for Canada

View of the Chic Choc mountains
from the summit of Mount Xalibu.
Photo: Jean-Philippe Caron, CC BY-SA 4.0

By the time he was meeting with Québec's tourism minister earlier this year, Alain Branchaud understood the key to the province's conservation success. The Executive Director of the CPAWS Québec chapter, SNAP Québec, discovered the minister, Caroline Proulx, was eager to hear how protected areas can generate ecotourism and remain compatible with conservation. He spoke with other cabinet ministers as well – environment, health and others – and each was keen to hear how saving nature could help with their portfolios.

"They were all talking about it," recalls Branchaud, who joined the organization's Québec chapter in 2015. "That's the difference – it's a whole-of-government approach. And protected areas aren't simply seen as places where everything is restricted; they're seen as opportunities."

Québec is Canada's conservation champion. In 2010, the country joined other nations in pledging to safeguard 17% of its territory by 2020 as one of several promises made under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) – the international agreement to stop the loss of biodiversity around the planet. When the deadline arrived, only Québec among all of Canada's provinces and territories had adopted the 17% target and then succeeded in reaching the goal.

Now, the stakes are even higher. Ottawa has promised Canadians – and the world – that 30% of the country's land and ocean will be protected from development and exploitation by 2030, with a milestone target of protecting 25% by 2025. The new target is based on science that shows 30% protection is the absolute minimum needed to conserve nature. With today's nationwide total just over halfway to the 2025 target, many are taking notice of Québec's extraordinary past success – and its lessons for meeting protected area milestones in the future.

"Québec is an example," says Alison Woodley, CPAWS National Senior Strategic Advisor. "As we look forward to the more ambitious, longer-term targets, Québec is basically showcasing that this can be done. It points to a hopeful future of what could be done if other jurisdictions took a similar approach."

That approach, says Branchaud, began with political willingness. When the current Québec government came to power in 2018, an environmental agenda wasn't much talked about. That vacuum opened the door to discussions with SNAP Québec and others about conservation and, in particular, the protected areas targets.

The group advised the province, which began the previous decade with about 8.6% of its land protected, that there were enough new protected area proposals already under review to meet and even surpass the 2020 goal of 17%. All that was needed was sustained effort to remove roadblocks. "We were saying the target was achievable," Branchaud recalls, "and they listened."

Very quickly, the Québec government also recognized the political value of a protected areas push. Thanks to the pandemic, more people were realizing the importance of



Left: View over Mount Sainte-Anne from route 14 in the Chic-Chocs wildlife reserve. Photo: Félix Mathieu-Bégin, CC BY-SA 4.0
Right: James Bay in Eeyou Itschee. Photo: Jérôme Spaggari

nature for their mental and physical health. Local communities began to see the potential of protected areas to encourage 'green' tourism and regional development. Indigenous groups, meanwhile, saw the opportunity to finally save some of the landscapes vital to their livelihoods and culture.

Importantly, protecting natural areas has also been increasingly touted by scientists as a powerful tool both for fighting climate change – by preserving, for example, northern Québec's vast carbon-storing peatlands – and for tackling the extinction crisis. Safeguarding habitat such as the barren-ground range of caribou, for example, is critical. "The biodiversity crisis happens to be important in Québec, in part because we host the international secretariat of the UNCBD in Montreal," Branchaud explains.

Spelling out the advantages was easy, says Branchaud. Most within the government were eager to hear them. "They saw that area protection was something they could point to," he says. "It was a win." Objections to particular protected area proposals began to look small by comparison. Financial support from private foundations led the way, and support from the new federal Nature Fund, announced in 2018 in response to a campaign led by CPAWS, will continue to help in the years to come.

The province moved quickly to adopt the 2020 targets for itself, and, with changes to its *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, ensured international standards for new protected areas and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), as well as recognition of Indigenous-led protected areas.

Success was swift. By 2020, Québec and Inuit governments and communities announced 30,000 km² of new protected areas in Nunavik, sparing a fifth of the province's northern region from mining and other development. Not long after, several other protected sites, amounting to 39,000 km², were announced by Québec and the Cree Nation Government in traditional Cree territory known as Eeyou Itschee. Many

other, smaller sites were announced in southern Québec, including in the Chic-Choc Mountains in the province's Lower St. Lawrence region.

"The Chic-Choc Mountains refuge is a really good example of local support for a protected area," Branchaud explains. "It was the work of a local group – the Comité de protection des Monts Chic-Chocs – working along with us, here at SNAP Québec, that brought it along."

Québec met the 17% mark by 2020. The province found itself with bragging rights and with a new well of political capital. It quickly pledged to go further, promising to protect 30% of the province by 2030 in line with national and emerging international targets.

Earlier this year, it announced 10 new additional protected areas, and, says Branchaud, another 10 are expected before the Québec government faces an anticipated election in the fall. "They are proud of these successes," he says. "The fact that they are working hard to get more announcements ready before the next election shows it."

In its 2021 Report Card on protected areas, CPAWS celebrated Québec's nation-leading achievements with an A- grade for its progress. In the wake of the report, some lower-scoring provinces and territories have stepped up their own protected areas efforts. The Yukon, for example, recently reported more than 35,000 km² of conservation zones in the spectacular Peel River Watershed to substantially up its protected areas total.

"Those were our Report Card key messages," says Jessie Corey, CPAWS National Senior Manager of the Terrestrial Conservation Program, describing the elements of Québec's success. "The political will was there. They started the work to identify new protected areas early in the decade and worked in full partnership with Indigenous Peoples. They accessed available funding. They were proactive and really made an effort to get everybody onboard. They did all the things that we've said are important in terms of making conservation happen."

INDIGENOUS LENS NEEDED TO GUIDE CONSERVATION

An interview with Lorraine Netro

If Lorraine Netro were to write a how-to guide for protecting Canada's land and water, step one in her instructions would be simple: "The first thing," explains the celebrated Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation elder, "is to make sure you speak first to the First People of the land."

Netro is a Canadian conservation icon who is perhaps best-known for her decades-long efforts to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge on the other side of the border, in Alaska. The refuge – which has seen its protections from energy development come and go with successive U.S. governments – is home to the calving grounds of the porcupine caribou.

Often considered the largest barren-ground caribou herd in North America, the approximately 218,000 porcupine caribou migrate up to 2,400 kilometres into Canada each year. Their route has passed Netro's home in Old Crow, Yukon, for generations. "The porcupine caribou has sustained our people for thousands of years," she says. "We have depended on caribou for every aspect of our traditional way of life."

Netro, who was awarded the Glen Davis Conservation Leadership Prize by CPAWS and WWF-Canada in 2021, says work to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge holds important lessons for Canada's plans to protect 30% of its land and ocean by 2030. "We all need to be sitting at the same table," she says, "and we need to make sure that our Indigenous voices are first and foremost at that table, because we are the people who have protected our land, our waters and our animals since time immemorial."

Netro and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation – with help from CPAWS and others – have spent years successfully keeping the eyes of Ottawa, the territorial government, and others, focused on issues that matter to Gwitchin communities in

the Yukon and – by extension – on issues central to northern conservation.

"We need to take into consideration an Indigenous lens for how to conserve these traditional lands. That's first," she says. "First Nations people are the experts in their traditional territories all across Canada. Our elders have guided us through all these years... It is our responsibility to make sure that our sacred lands are protected for all time and for all future generations."



"We are the people who have protected our land, our waters and our animals since time immemorial."
Photo: Lorraine Netro

THE WILD THING ABOUT NATIONAL URBAN PARKS

Working to conserve
and restore urban ecosystems

A federal government plan to protect nature in cities where most Canadians live could make millions of us wild about conservation. It might be a game-changer – as long as wildlife and ecosystems come first.

In August 2021, Ottawa announced \$130 million to create a network of national urban parks in cities from one side of Canada to the other. The project will see Parks Canada collaborate with municipalities, provinces, Indigenous partners, and conservation groups to locate and establish 15 national urban parks areas across the country by 2030.

CPAWS is currently making recommendations to inform government guidelines for creating and managing these parks into the future, as well as engaging in specific national urban park projects across the country.

Almost three out of every four Canadians live in cities, and many are affected by our growing disconnection from nature. Research shows that our increasingly urban lives and alienation from natural surroundings can add to stress and to the likelihood of physical and mental illnesses. It may also affect our appreciation of nature and our desire to protect it.

Importantly, most Canadian cities exist along the country's southern border, where our biodiversity is highest and where most of Canada's almost 700 species at risk are struggling to survive. Many scientists and conservationists agree that protecting city wildlife and habitat corridors through urban areas could help stem the tide of vanishing species. More urban green spaces could also help in the fight against climate change.

That's why CPAWS worked with partners over the past decade to help create and protect Canada's first national urban park in Toronto's Rouge Valley, an important urban natural area that is home to more than 1700 species of plants and animals.

These efforts also helped secure federal legislation to ensure the park is managed in a way that will protect and restore these ecosystems in perpetuity and provide ready access to nature for millions of city dwellers. We are now encouraging the federal government to further expand the park by adding adjacent federally-owned lands.

A NEW NATIONAL URBAN PARK COMING NEAR YOU

As part of this new program, Parks Canada and local partners are already studying the feasibility of a national urban park in Saskatoon's Meewasin Valley. Statements of collaboration for other possible national urban parks in Winnipeg, Halifax and Windsor have been signed, while Edmonton, Montreal and Colwood, British Columbia are discussing possible park sites. Eight other city homes for new national urban parks have yet to be identified.

The planned national urban parks network is part of the federal government's promise to protect 25% of land and ocean by 2025 and 30% by 2030. The targets are among Canada's ambitious national and international conservation pledges made to the G7 Nature Compact, the Leader's Pledge for Nature, the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

In addition to new national urban parks, Parks Canada plans to create 10 new national parks and 10 national marine conservation areas within the next five years. Support for these efforts comes from Federal Budget 2021's historic \$3.2 billion investment in land and ocean conservation.

CPAWS applauds this commitment to create a Canada-wide national urban parks system and is working to ensure that these new parks will effectively conserve and restore urban ecosystems while making nature more accessible to Canadians. Ensuring early and on-going engagement with Indigenous Nations in whose traditional territories these areas are located, and developing strategies to ensure these areas are welcoming, inclusive, and accessible spaces, will be critically important.

Unlike national parks like Banff or Fundy, national urban parks will not necessarily be owned and operated by Parks Canada.



Canada's first national urban park in Toronto's Rouge Valley. Photos: CPAWS Wildlands League

They could include areas owned and managed by other levels of government, First Nations, NGOs, or other partners.

Given this flexibility, CPAWS recently submitted policy recommendations to Parks Canada, encouraging them to

set clear expectations for what is required to be part of the national urban parks system, including by putting in place federal legislation. The recommendations are intended to make each national urban park a point of pride for city dwellers across the country.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS ARE HELPFUL, MPA NETWORKS ARE EVEN BETTER!



An update on MPA network planning in Canada
CPAWS OCEAN PROGRAM TEAM

A trio of humpback whales in the Bay of Fundy.
Photo: Nick Hawkins/CPAWS NS

For decades, scientists have tracked the decline in ocean health, calling for strong action to protect and recover marine life and ocean ecosystems. Here in Canada, we are bearing witness to these changes in the collapse of Newfoundland cod and some Pacific salmon stocks, the plight of endangered whales, and disappearance of sea ice and kelp.

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are widely recognized as one of the most effective tools to stop this decline. Presently, almost 14% of Canada's ocean is protected and the country is committed to protecting 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2030 to address the impacts of the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change on ocean ecosystems.

To get the most conservation value out of these protected areas, it helps to connect MPAs in MPA networks.

The best MPA networks include these fundamental features:

- **REPRESENTATIVENESS OF SPECIES:** the network should protect a broad spectrum of species, ecosystems, and biodiversity representative of the area.

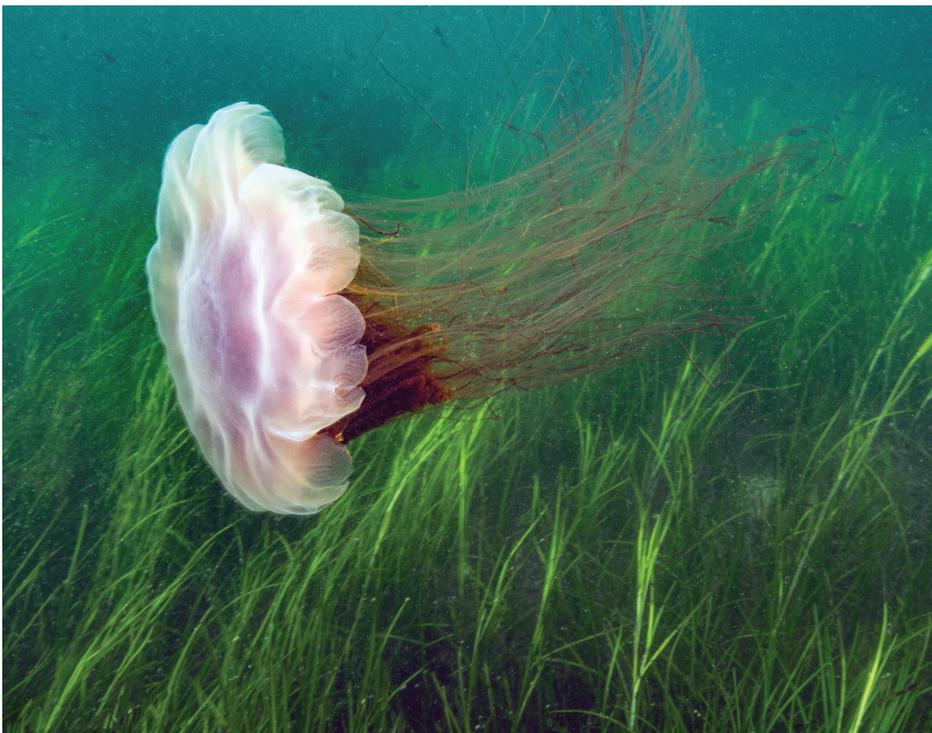
- **REPLICATION:** the network should include more than one example of each habitat type or ecosystem.
- **VIABILITY:** each MPA in the network should be large enough and designed to properly protect the target species or ecosystem.
- **CONNECTIVITY:** the network should protect ecological linkages between areas and species, for example, habitats of juveniles and adults.

MPA networks that meet these four design criteria are more resilient and adaptable to the impacts of climate change. They ensure that if a particular habitat is impacted in one area, there are other areas that are protected as an ecological insurance policy. They help to maintain and support biodiversity and ecological integrity. These connected spaces provide safe "landing zones" for species that are forced to migrate due to climatic change.

By planning multiple protected sites over a large area, MPA networks provide flexibility in size and spacing of protected



Left: A young blue shark off the coast of Nova Scotia. Bottom: Jelly fish in the sea grass in the Eastern Shore region of Nova Scotia. Photos: Nick Hawkins/CPAWS NS



central coasts of BC. This spectacular region includes the co-managed Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site, Scott Islands marine National Wildlife Area, and Hecate Strait/Queen Charlotte Sound Glass Sponge Reefs MPA.

The Northern Shelf Bioregion MPA network planning process is setting a global precedent as it is being co-developed and will be co-governed with coastal First Nations who have stewarded these waters for thousands of years.

This process was on track to be Canada's first MPA network, however, there have been significant delays along the way. The next key step in the process is the release of the action plan for public consultation, which was expected in the fall of 2021, but has yet to happen.

SCOTIAN SHELF AND BAY OF FUNDY NETWORK

The Scotian Shelf and Bay of Fundy Network Plan will lay out a roadmap for a well-designed network of

areas and allowing activities like fishing and shipping to continue in adjacent areas while ensuring MPAs are strongly protected. In doing so, network planning can help to reduce conflicts and minimize costs to manage and monitor MPAs while maximizing benefits. Successful MPA network planning processes are informed by science alongside local and traditional knowledge, working with many stakeholders to ensure ecological, social, and economic benefits are maximised.

Canada committed to complete MPA networks in five priority areas and these networks are currently in various stages of consultation and planning. Two of the most advanced MPA Network planning processes in Canada are in the Northern Shelf Bioregion in British Columbia and the Scotian Shelf and Bay of Fundy in the Maritimes.

NORTHERN SHELF BIOREGION MPA NETWORK

The planned Northern Shelf Bioregion MPA Network – also known as the Great Bear Sea – extends along the north and

protected areas that provide long-term protection for marine and coastal ecosystems and support the livelihood of East Coast communities.

A dedicated team has been working on the plan for almost a decade. After being put on hold in 2017, work resumed in 2021 with renewed vigor. There have been recent indications that the Eastern Canyons Marine Refuge and Fundian Channel-Brown's Bank are now close to receiving legal protection.

ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS NATIONS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES KEY TO SUCCESS

MPAs networks amplify the benefits of individual MPAs. As Canada strives to meet its commitment to implement MPA networks in five regions, it is critical that the federal government works closely with Indigenous Nations, provinces and territories, and coastal communities to ensure that MPA networks are well supported, strongly protected, and truly effective.



YUKON

Land use planning is underway in the Dawson Region, a landscape that covers 10% of the Yukon. While the Klondike gold rush and modern mining activity have transformed parts of the region, it still hosts vast landscapes of intact boreal forest, ancient peatlands, and mountains etched with caribou hoofprints. While the draft plan is a good start, CPAWS Yukon is urging the Planning Commission to take bolder action. Learn more at cpawsyukon.org/dawson-region.

Fortymile caribou herd, a barren-ground caribou whose home range falls within the Dawson Region. Photo: Malkolm Boothroyd

BRITISH COLUMBIA

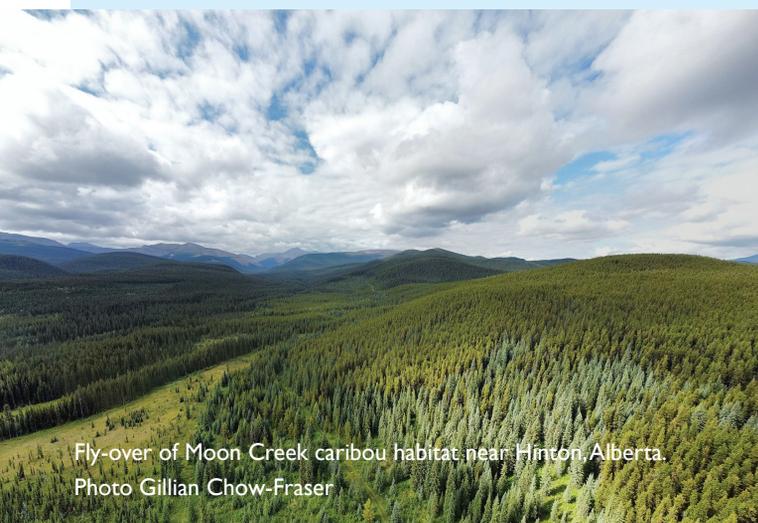
With five new protections, CPAWS BC reports that all of Átl'ka7sem/Howe Sound's glass sponge reefs are now safeguarded by fishing closures. These fishing closures prohibit bottom contact fishing such as trawling and prawn trapping from destroying these rare and ancient ecosystems. The closures extend 150 metres from the reefs to prevent sediment kicked up from nearby trawls and traps from choking the sponges. Consultations are ongoing regarding First Nations Food, Social and Ceremonial bottom contact fishing in the five new closures.

Sponge Reefs and Corals in the Georgia Basin, May 2009. Photo: Kim Conway



ALBERTA

CPAWS Northern Alberta is celebrating good news for the À La Pêche caribou herd. In the summer of 2021, local trappers alerted CPAWS of proposed cut blocks planned for undisturbed caribou habitat. Conserving woodland caribou habitat is key to prevent further biodiversity loss. In 2022, thanks to immense public pressure, collaborating organizations, and discussions with government, and the forestry company, the area was designated as a 'No Harvest Zone'. Learn more at cpawsnab.org/caribou/#MoonCreek.



Fly-over of Moon Creek caribou habitat near Hinton, Alberta.
Photo Gillian Chow-Fraser

In partnership with Alberta Ecotrust and Chawkers Foundations, CPAWS Southern Alberta launched bioDIVERSITY – a multi-faceted campaign seeking to reduce barriers faced by racialized communities and immigrant groups in accessing the wealth and wellness of nature spaces.

BioDIVERSITY and its initiatives – including Indigenous-led nature walks and ChangeMakers, an open-to-all, online eco-community launching Fall 2022 – are already shifting perspectives on what is inclusive environmentalism and who is an environmentalist. Learn more at cpaws-southernalberta.org/about/biodiversity.



Api'soomaahka (Running Coyote) – William Singer III – of the Kainai Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy shares grasslands teachings during an Indigenous-led nature walk in Calgary. Photo: Sheri Tarrington



Air boat travels on the waters of the Saskatchewan River Delta.
Photo: Prairie Rising

SASKATCHEWAN

After more than a decade, CPAWS Saskatchewan celebrates the protection of Lobstick Lake as a step towards broader conservation and stewardship of the Saskatchewan River Delta, led by the First Nations and Métis people who call this special place home. As of November 2021, this 98,580-hectare ecological reserve is protected in the southern part of the Delta. Learn more at cpaws-sask.org/what-we-do/sask-river/delta.

ONTARIO

In August 2021, CPAWS Wildlands League travelled to Moose Factory in northern Ontario to celebrate the next big step in creating a National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) in Hudson Bay & James Bay which is home to 20% of Canada's belugas, millions of migratory birds and more. This proposed NMCA reflects a new form of preservation that conserves biological diversity, harnesses the power of nature in mitigating climate change, and emphasizes the importance of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous sovereignty.

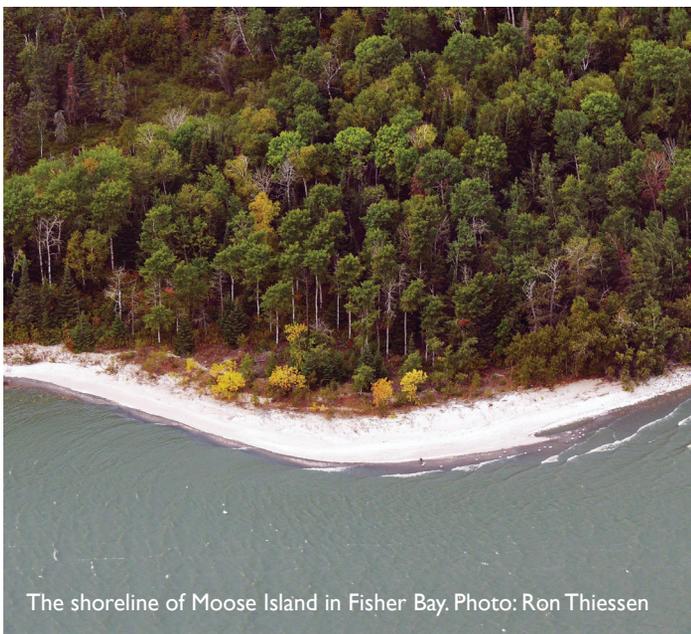
CPAWS Ottawa Valley is working to protect Mer Bleue, a 7,700-year-old internationally recognized bog within the National Capital's Greenbelt. The City of Ottawa is prioritizing development and habitat fragmentation over protection of this sensitive ecosystem, which is home to countless species at risk. Learn more at: cpaws-ov-vo.org/parks-and-protected-areas.

Boardwalk at the Mer Bleue Bog. Photo: Ottawa Tourism



MANITOBA

The Fisher River Cree Nation (FRCN) Conservation Areas Initiative is developing a conservation plan for Manitoba's Southeastern Interlake region. This initiative is in partnership with Peguis First Nation and CPAWS Manitoba. Input from Indigenous knowledge keepers, regional people, and local groups is being analyzed and a draft conservation proposal is being published. Learn more at frcnconservation.ca.



The shoreline of Moose Island in Fisher Bay. Photo: Ron Thiessen

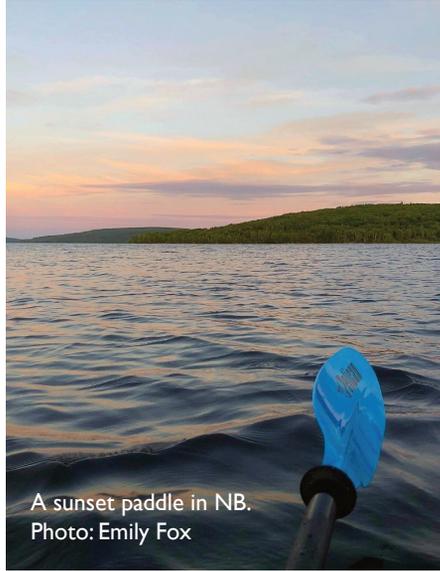
QUÉBEC

SNAP Québec went before court against federal and provincial governments to require the protection of critical habitats of the chorus frog in Longueuil. After months of mobilization, the federal government has finally issued a protection decree for the Chorus Frog in Longueuil under the *Species at Risk Act*.

In the Fall of 2021, SNAP Québec celebrated its 20th anniversary and its victories through the years for the protection of nature, such as the protection of the Moisie River, Tursujuq National Park, the Chic-Chocs Mountains, the Groulx-Uapishka Mountains, the critical habitat of the Chorus Frog, the Banc-des-Américains and many more. In total, SNAP Québec has helped protect more than 120,000 km² in Québec, or nearly half of the current protected areas network.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Oracle Research conducted a survey of 300 New Brunswickers on behalf CPAWS NB, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, and the Conservation Council of New Brunswick which shows overwhelming support for new protected areas in the province. Even as leaders lag on increasing protected areas, the survey shows 90% of residents want their provincial leaders to fulfill their commitment to increase protection from 4.5% to 10% and then go further! Learn more at cpawnsb.org/nbers-want-province-to-follow-through-on-protected-area-promise.



A sunset paddle in NB.
Photo: Emily Fox



Paddling Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes. Photo: CPAWS NS

of Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes and accelerate the required land purchases for the park. CPAWS NS is pleased that Parks Canada and Halifax Regional Municipality are collaborating on this important initiative.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

CPAWS NL continues to advocate for further action on the long-awaited Protected Areas Plan for the Island of Newfoundland, entitled *A Home for Nature*, released in May 2020. Currently, less than 7% of the province is protected. The plan would increase protection to just below the provincial average of 10%, helping safeguard biodiversity and combat climate change. In October 2021, public feedback was collected, but since then action has once again stalled. CPAWS NL is calling on the provincial government to implement the plan. Learn more at cpawnsnl.org/protectionplan.



Pebbled Newfoundland coast.
Photo: Sean Brake

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