



2022 B.C. Wildlife Federation Committee Reports

Access Committee

Respectfully submitted by David Oliver

An email was sent out to Regions for an update on who their access person or persons are, so the access committee can be updated.

Resolutions

The Access Committee worked on resolutions 10, 11, 12 and 13 that were passed at the 2021 AGM.

Public Comment Period Notifications

- Location: Port Neville Area, Commercial recreation for guided nature viewing
- Location: Tofino, Licence of Occupation for Adventure Tourism- Surf School
- Location: Tofino, Licence of Occupation for Adventure Tourism- Guided Saltwater Recreation (Surf School)
- Location: SE Golden, Commercial Recreation/Miscellaneous
- Location: Powell River, Guided Mountaineering/Rock Climbing

Access

- Gates on Norrish Creek FSR.
- There are several roads which remain closed to public access following the Lytton Creek wildfire.
- First Nations continue to restrict access into the Fountain Valley. They have signs on both ends of the valley stating that the road is private and not to be used.... This seems odd when there is a provincial Recreation Site at Fountain Lake, and the road has always been open to the public. The Fountain Band has appointed (hired?) “monitors” who do their best to run off anyone who tries to access the valley. Even innocent bird watchers are ordered to leave.
- FN signs in Region 5
- FSR closures in Region 4E do to pipeline work
- Cougar Creek campground closure Region 1 Gold River area



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CORE Committee

Respectfully submitted by Darlene Clark

The CORE Committee has been working diligently since being reestablished in June 2022, to provide corrections to the CORE annual and exams to bring them into line with today's regulations and outdoor activities. This has proven to be a slow process but it will enhance the program and exams.

There have been very positive results from those that are participating in the committee and we would welcome input from CORE instructors and examiners. We can only submit our suggestions for the updates, but ultimately it is up to the Government which if any of the suggested changes will be incorporated into the manual and exams.

It was discussed by the committee members and it was decided rather than try to squeeze in a short meeting with CORE examiners at the BCWF AGM. With our small budget, the committee is hoping to meet with instructors and examiners in each region. By doing this we hope to reach out to more and garner your thoughts and suggestions, as well as keep you updated on the committee's progress.

If any of the examiners would like to sit on the committee, we would like to hear from you! Any and all comments will be considered and given the time to review them to make sure that they fit into the curriculum.

Please direct any questions or comments to the CORE Committee Chair, Darlene Clark at COREchair@bcwf.bc.ca.



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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Respectfully submitted by Charla Gaudet

The second half of 2022 brought forward the development of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. In 2020, this was a staff-only committee that focused on educational outreach to staff, as well as completed the first 2020 staff diversity and inclusion survey. In early 2022, the committee was paused in order to allow the Board of Directors to proceed with a DEI committee that has now successfully merged with staff since September 2022. This collaboration between staff and board members will establish DEI values within the organization internally, as well as externally to our growing membership. Note that there is significant and important overlap with the Indigenous Relations (IR) committee that will allow for future partnerships.

The DEI committee spent the remaining months of 2022 outlining the Terms of Reference, collecting valuable information through a second staff survey, and gaining budget approval to bring in an experienced DEI consultant.

The staff survey was created to conceptualize the diversity of staff and gain current perceptions of the BCWF's inclusion and equity. From a quick comparison of data from 2020 to 2022, positive growth occurred on topics such as importance of diversity to staff & leadership, respect among colleagues, ability to have free expression at work, diverse hiring practices and fair promotions. However, there were also areas of decline for topics such as lack of leadership training on DEI, no Human Resources, inability for staff to personally connect, and lack of cultural awareness and intercultural communication.

This valuable information will be given to the selected consultant from INclusion Incorporated who has experience in both DEI and IR. The strategy moving forward in 2023, is to work with our consultant to embed DEI & IR into the organizations written policies and procedures. This will be a year of learning the foundations of DEI & IR, determining the organizations DEI & IR goals and objectives, and designing a plan to bring this work into action.

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Firearms Committee

Respectfully submitted by Gary Mauser

Throughout 2022 the Firearms Committee worked closely with Doug Bancroft and Jesse Zeman in a variety of projects to stand up for BCWF members.

1. In advising the office about updates and articles in BC Outdoors. Informative blurbs about Committee Activities published in BC Outdoors/Hunting August Issue.
2. In developing BCWF's response to an SFU research project requesting our cooperation with identifying illegal firearm acquisition.
3. In developing BCWF's response urging BC to refuse to enforce Ottawa's so-called 'gun buy-back' program and join several provinces who have refused to participate.
4. In cooperating with Randy Shore concerning publishing Committee information in BC Outdoors and media releases in response to Bill C-21 and gun buy-back.

The Firearms committee worked directly with BCWF members:

1. In assisting Rod Wiebe, at his request, on his submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. His submission was translated and distributed to members of SECU. It's now available on the SECU website.
2. In assisting Ed Fitch, Fred Hoenisch, and other activists at North Saanich Rod and Gun, at their request, by providing information and reference material.
3. In directly responding to questions from BCWF members about bills C-21, C-71, and the nefarious amendment to C-21 in committee.
4. To update members of the Mission and District Rod and Gun Club, Firearms Committee Chair, Gary Mauser, gave an invited talk on September 12 on recent federal and provincial firearms laws. I strongly urged them to do more than write letters; urging them to personally contact their local MP to explain their opposition to the new firearm restrictions.

The Firearms Committee was involved in public outreach throughout 2022. Working directly with the public is an important part of the mandate of the BCWF Firearms Committee.

In March, I attended the 2022 HACS show at Heritage Park in Chilliwack, and we were successful in getting 52 attendees to sign letters protesting the federal government's so-called "buy back" that will cost taxpayers billions of dollars even though the government refuses to crack down on violent criminals. Copies were then sent to each signer's MP as well as to Trudeau and the leaders of the opposition.

In May, the Firearms Committee cooperated with Ridgedale Rod and Gun Club to host an introduction to firearms for 24 SFU students. About one-third of the new shooters were women.

In June, I attended the 2022 Lumby gun show in Lumby, BC, where we were successful in getting 33 attendees to sign letters protesting the federal government's Bills C-21 and C-71. Copies were then sent to each signer's MP as well as to Trudeau and the leaders of the opposition.

In November, I had a table at the annual show of the Historical Arms Collectors Society. In addition to answering questions about bill C-21, acting as Chair, BCWF Firearms Committee, I urged participants to sign letters to Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Mendicino on firearm issues.

At the show, participants signed 76 letters which were then sent to Trudeau or Mendicino. Copies were sent to the Official Leader of the Opposition, Pierre Poilievre, MP, as well as to the MP for each individual signatory. (26 MPs: 11 Liberals, 7 NDPs, 8 Conservatives).

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The firearms committee managed to have a few letters published in local papers protesting Ottawa's handgun ban and semiautomatic rifle ban. We routinely send our letters to local papers across the province. Pete Aussem is a great help to the Firearms Committee.

Our letters were published in both The Lumby Valley Times and in The Bridge River Lillooet News, and possibly others. A letter to the editor was published in the July 6 and October 19 issues of The Bridge River Lillooet News

Wearing my prof Gary hat, acting as an individual, I wrote a letter to Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, urging BC to refuse the RCMP services to confiscate newly prohibited firearms with copies to Premier John Horgan, the Premier then in waiting The Honourable David Eby, and The Honourable Kevin Falcon, KC, Leader of the Opposition.

A copy of my open letter to Minister Farnworth was submitted as a letter to the editor to both the Lumby Valley Times and to The Lillooet News and was published in The Lillooet News, October 19, 2022.

I submitted a brief entitled, "Disinformation, false or misleading claims made in SECU on Bill C-21," to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security regarding proposed legislation Bill C-21, "An Act to amend Certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms)." It was translated and distributed to members of SECU.

- <https://justiceforgunowners.ca/false-claims-made-in-committee-on-bill-c-21/>

Gary Mauser also participated in a few podcasts: one with the Danielle Smith through the Fraser Institute, another with Anthony Furey that was published in the National Post, and a third Podcast with Travis Bader on The Silvercore Podcast, <https://silvercore.podbean.com>

In the Silvercore podcast we discussed the paper I wrote for the Congress for the Law and Society Association meetings in Lisbon, Portugal, July 13th- 16th on the topic, "How Canadians lost the right to keep and bear arms."

Gary Mauser was quoted in Epoch Times about rising gang murders in Canada

- https://www.theepochtimes.com/social-media-drill-music-fuelling-gang-related-homicides-in-canada-says-expert_4879366.html

On Nov 25, 2022, the Fraser Institute published a blog I submitted, which was reprinted and will appear in the January issue of the Canadian Access to Firearms.

"Trudeau government targets law-abiding gunowners, again".

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/blogs/trudeau-government-targets-law-abiding-gunowners-again>

Nov 30, 2022 , I was quoted in National Post, Bryan Passifume,

"Expanded Liberal gun ban could cost taxpayers 'another billion dollars,' says criminologist."

<https://nationalpost.com/news/expanded-liberal-gun-ban-could-cost-taxpayers-another-billion-dollars-says-criminologist>

I got a few other pieces published defending the responsible use of firearms by civilians:

Canadian Access to Firearms republished a few firearms-related articles:

In February 2022, Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published a blog post, "A Liberal MP spreads lies." <https://justiceforgunowners.ca/liberal-mp-spreads-lies/>

In March 2022, Canadian Access to Firearms, published a profile article, "Who is Gary Mauser?" p 70.



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In June 2022, Canadian Access to Firearms republished an opinion piece, “Ottawa’s new rules on sale of firearms effectively create a long-gun registry,” that Epoch Times had published on 13 May 2022.

In July 2022, Canadian Access to Firearms republished “Ottawa’s new rules on sale of firearms effectively create a Long-Gun Registry,” A reprint of my Epoch Times article, 13 May 2022.

In August 2022. Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published, “StatsCan treats PAL holders as criminals.”
<https://justiceforgunowners.ca/statscan-treats-pal-holders-as-criminals/>

In the September issue, Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published “Trudeau government ‘buyback’ Firearm Plan may cost up to \$6.7 billion.” This was a reprint of my Fraser Institute article,

<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/blogs/trudeau-government-buy-back-firearms-plan-may-cost-up-to-67-billion>

In the October issue, Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published “Moose kill more Canadians than licenced gun owners.” [a 2 page spread].

<https://justiceforgunowners.ca/moose-kill-more-canadians-than-licenced-gun-owners/>

In the November issue, Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published “Children and firearms safety.”

<https://justiceforgunowners.ca/children-and-firearms-safety/>

In the December issue, Canadian Access to Firearms, re-published “False claims made in committee on Bill C-21.” <https://justiceforgunowners.ca/false-claims-made-in-committee-on-bill-c-21/>

In closing I would like to thank all committee members for their work, especially Pete Aussem, and give a hearty “Thank You” to Doug Bancroft and Jesse Zeman. Our work would not have been as successful without the continued support of BCWF staff members.

If we don’t stand up for ourselves, who will?

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY: “Little Strokes, Fell great oaks.”

-Benjamin Franklin, statesman, author, and inventor (17 Jan 1706-1790)



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Fishing Forever Committee

Respectfully submitted by David Oliver

The BCWF office received some grant money in 2021 that needed to be used up by the end of March 2022.

In February 2022, a fishing supply funding for Clubs letter was sent to the clubs and like-minded organizations that had hosted Fishing Forever events in 2019 and to those going to be putting on their first-time event in 2022. They were offered the ability to purchase \$700.00 (incl. tax) worth of fishing gear and associated outdoor gear to support your Future Fishing Forever events.

They were also asked to go to their preferred local tackle shop and outdoor shop, with a list of supplies that they needed and then the BCWF would make payment to store directly.

After not having any Fishing Forever events for two years, most of the events for 2022 were successful in getting participants out to their events.

List of clubs that have had their event with the total number of participants

- Parksville-Qualicum Fish & Game Association, May 25th, 2022, (11 – participants)
- Lower Mainland Region BCWF, June 4th and 5th, 2022, (96 – participants)
- Courtenay & District Fish & Game Protective Association, June 6th to 10th, June 13th to 17th, 2022, (148 – participants)
- Accessible Okanagan, Osoyoos, June 11th, 2022, (12 – participants)
- Bulkley Valley Rod & Gun Club, June 15th, 2022, (16 – participants)
- Biff's Pond, Williams Lake, June 19th, 2022, (25 – participants)
- Nelson District Rod & Gun Club, June 19th, 2022, (125 – participants)
- Nanaimo & District Fish & Game Protective Association, July 17th, 2022, (100 – participants)

April 7, 2022, Terms of Reference (TOR) for the new Fishing Forever committee were put together and Fishing Forever chairpersons from some of the club's and like-minded organizations were asked to be on the committee, along with office staff members that are assigned to the Fishing Forever Program. There are eight people plus two office staff on the committee.



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Governance Committee

Respectfully submitted by Alan Dabb

The Governance Committee was formed in early 2022, with its stated purpose being, “to ensure that the BCWF adopts and follows best-in-class governance policies and procedures and to ensure that the By-Laws of the BCWF codify those governance policies and procedures.”

Almost all of the Governance Committee’s work in 2022 involved reviewing the BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws with a view to updating them to reflect best-in-class governance policies and procedures. This review led to the Governance Committee drafting and submitting to the Board of Directors five special resolutions proposing amendments to the BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws covering the following topics:

1. The setting of annual dues: This Resolution amends the By-Laws to clarify that annual dues may be set by the Board of Directors, and need not be set by a resolution passed by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. This amendment will allow the Federation to efficiently and effectively set Annual Dues such that it will be able to respond in a timely manner to changes in operating costs, increased inflation, and other factors.
2. Committees: The growth and evolution of the BC Wildlife Federation has necessitated the creation of additional standing committees. This resolution proposes to amend the Committees section of the BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws to include the following standing committees:
 - a. Nominating Committee;
 - b. Finance Committee;
 - c. Governance Committee; and
 - d. Strategic Planning Committee.
3. Management Structure: The management structure of the Federation has not been updated since inception, and does not conform to current best practices. This resolution proposes changes to the roles and responsibilities of key actors within the Federation, including the President, Executive Committee, Executive Director and Board of Directors.
4. Qualifications and Discipline of Directors: The BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws do not currently set out the qualifications that must be met by an individual seeking to be elected as a Director; this resolution remedies that absence. In addition, this resolution proposes amending the BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws to clarify the circumstances in which Directors may be disciplined and to set out the steps that may be taken by the Board of Directors to discipline a Director in the specified circumstances.
5. Gender-Neutral Language: The BC Wildlife Federation By-Laws do not currently use gender-neutral language. Such language is important to demonstrate the Federation’s commitment to inclusion. This resolution proposes to amend the By-Laws to incorporate gender-neutral language.

Assuming that these Resolutions receive the support of the Board of Directors, they will be presented to the membership for approval at the Annual General Meeting scheduled for April 2023.



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Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Committee

Respectfully submitted by Rob Chipman

During 2022 the challenges involved with Indigenous Relations were logical extensions of three themes we've faced during the previous years: legislation, judicial rulings and social changes.

The passage by the BC provincial government of DRIPA in 2020 is the best example of the first theme. It was followed in 2021 by similar federal legislation, Bill C-15. These two pieces of legislation directly impact how BCWF achieves our goals of conservation and access by giving the UN's aspirational Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples the force of Canadian law. That in turn increases the legal powers of First Nations in BC to both aid or obstruct BCWF's activities. During 2022 DRIPA compliance legislation continued to evolve, with amendments to the Wildlife Act probably being the best example. How we choose to respond to these kinds of legislative developments came into sharper focus in 2022 and will continue to do so.

The 2021 ruling on the Yahey/Blueberry River First Nations claim is an example of the second theme. 2022 saw a less celebrated but also very significant judicial ruling of interest to BCWF members - the Thomas and Saik'uz vs Rio Tinto Alcan decision. The BC Supreme Court ruled that damming and diverting the Nechako interferes with Aboriginal fishing rights. The ruling a) recognized constitutionally protected Indigenous rights, b) ruled that Indigenous plaintiffs can sue private parties for infringement of Indigenous rights, c) that historical permissions granted by the Crown does not justify such infringements and d) that the Crown has a responsibility to protect and be accountable for third party infringements on Indigenous rights. This is an expansion of a continuing theme in the world of Indigenous law that will impact how BCWF pursues our goals. In this case many non-Indigenous conservationists welcome the ruling because it's good for fish and the overall health of the greater Fraser watershed, but some BCWF members will not welcome the impact on the economy, government spending or the realignment of power. This matters to BCWF members because it challenges us evaluate if, when and how the increasing recognition of Indigenous rights is complimentary to BCWF's goals.

2022 also saw the first appointment of an Indigenous person, Michelle O'Bonsawin, as a justice to the Supreme Court of Canada. The significance of this on future judicial rulings cannot be understated.

The third theme - social change - came into stark focus in the wake of the widespread revelations of the Kamloops Residential School in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory during the summer of 2021. As with all traumatic stories this revelation generated significant controversy across not only BC, but Canada and the world. The story is not over and has in fact grown in importance. The wider residential school issue continues to impact every relation BCWF has with Indigenous peoples. As stated earlier and as I think we all are beginning to recognize, Indigenous peoples have the power to aid or obstruct BCWF in the achievement of our conservation and access goals. How each of us chose to respond to the continuing evolution of the residential schools experience came into sharper focus in 2022 and will continue to do during 2023.

In concrete terms BCWF's response to the three themes of legislation, court rulings and important social issues has focused on conservation through collaboration. This has traditionally been the area where BCWF excels in Indigenous Relations and we will continue to do so. Recognition of Neil Fletcher and the BCWF Wetlands staff's role in this success is well deserved. Work on the Lower Fraser Collaborative Table has also been beneficial in terms of our own education and access to government. BCWF has also retained various consultants to help us learn how to work more effectively with Indigenous people, including an in depth Board wide in person session with Indigenous Corporate Training.



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Collaboration is not always easy, and there are sometimes bumps along the way, but 2022 demonstrated that good faith willing partners can resolve differences, and this underlines the wisdom of what's come to be known informally as "The Zeman Doctrine" - it states that BCWF will collaborate with anyone who wants to collaborate with us as long as we share common values. The Zeman Doctrine has been an effective guide through some turbulent situations.

In 2023 the Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Committee will produce an updated Indigenous Relations policy as well as an entirely new Reconciliation policy. Work on the updated Indigenous Relations policy brought into sharp contrast some differing views on the Board, but also demonstrated that BCWF leadership identified as early as 1997 the implications and importance of Indigenous relations. Perhaps counter-intuitively, the instincts of those early leaders are not out of step with the proposed Indigenous Relations policy update that will go public in 2023. The Reconciliation policy will complement the Indigenous Relations policy by giving all of us some guidelines on how to communicate when dealing with Indigenous issues.

BCWF's biggest Indigenous related challenge in 2023 will be our ability to recognize the three themes of Indigenous legislation, judicial rulings and social issues, how those three themes affect our core mission, and how we, all BCWF members, choose to respond to those themes. At times in the past we have not responded well to them. However, as reviews of our earlier work as far back as the 1980s demonstrates, we have good values and instincts. We are facing some big changes. Change is both hard and scary, but these long held values and instincts will serve us well as we go forward. As Chair of BCWF's Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Committee I ask all BCWF members to remember BCWF's core mission as we decide, as an organization, how to respond to legislative, judicial and social changes in order to more effectively achieve our goals.



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Inland Interior Fisheries Committee

Respectfully submitted by Ed George

Steelhead are still a top priority for Inland Fisheries with seals, sea lions, gillnets and poachers all impacting the returns. While SARA listing of Thompson and Chilcotin steelhead is an option, be careful of what you ask. A SARA listing would affect all fisheries in the province where you might encounter a Thompson or Chilcotin steelhead.

Fishing is a learned activity and as such we don't start with selective methods. Most children start with a bobber and worm and as such we do not support fly fishing only regulations. Having a grandson that convinced his grade 5 teacher that his education would be better served with a day on the Fraser River fishing with his grandfather than spending a day in school was a great joy to me.

The collapse of the Gerrard rainbow trout in Kootenay Lake is a prime example of ego over science where a new biologist does not understand or agree with the value that we the recreational fishers place on these stocks. This is a place where mentoring probably would have had a better outcome.

The biggest complaint that I have received is to do with retention limits, "what do they mean I can only keep 1". Some of us fish for food and some of us fish for the activity.

The closing of streams and rivers near roads, be they highways or forest service, does nothing for recruiting new fishers.

At this time the BCWF does not have any representatives on the "Provincial Hunting Angling Advisory Team" PHAAT that speak for fishing, this has to change.



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Inland Northern Fisheries Committee

Respectfully submitted by David Lewis

One of the few bright spots of the year was Halibut as we were able to fish Halibut for the full length of the season. In August we saw the limits raised.

We had precautionary closures put in place in Tidal for 2022 for Chinook, as the date neared for the opening of Chinook, we saw DFO extend the closure. This closure was put in place for the purpose of allowing Skeena Chinook to enter the river. By DFO's own model this extension of the closure did not save any more Skeena Chinook. Once again, we did not have an opening in river for Chinook and are wondering if fishing the river has become a thing of the past. Will this opportunity ever present itself again? Within the North in the Skeena watershed, there is no in season ability to open a Chinook Fishery as there are no assessment tools available to us for this watershed. We have requested DFO to have the ability for in season adjustments based on the run itself. These tools do exist elsewhere in the province. We have been asking for a number of years to have a Chinook Coho working group. Time will tell if this will ever come to fruition and become a functioning group.

As per the allocation policy the Area F fleet can not fish unless we are fishing to our full limits. On an over site by DFO they were going to allow the Area F fishery to take place prior to us being at our full limits, therefore DFO had to make some alterations on where the Area F fleet could fish so they could open up the fishery while we still did not have our full limits in all areas.

We saw one of the largest Sockeye runs this past season, which saw a number of discrepancies. For this past season due to the prediction of such a large run we asked that Sockeye start open, and we were denied. We eventually did reach full limits with DFO operating outside of the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) we saw early closures to the commercial fleet who fished for the first time in a number of years. With the commercial fleet not fishing enough of the terminal fishery and us fishing with our single barbless hook this left approximately 2 million fish go to waste.

Steelhead returns this year were better than last year they were not in the extreme conservation mode. Yet we were dealing with requests for bait bans and gear restrictions. These types of proposals do not work their way through the system in a proper manner. In fact, the bait ban proposal was placed on the AHTE website. The way steelhead has been managed through the years is like trying put a band aid on an arterial bleed by attempting to ban gear, bait, closing other fisheries has done nothing to stop the collapse of the fishery. This fishery needs to be managed by science and not by ecotourism. If we don't start putting proper plans in place with abundance-based models, and protecting the fish on the spawning beds then we will see the extinction of another species. To put in gear restrictions, bait bans and closing other fisheries to create an inclusive use fishery, has shown over the last couple of decades what will happen if nothing is done. We will see the collapse of a fishery and the inability to take a kid out with a worm and bobber to teach them to fish as many of us have.



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Resolutions Committee

Respectfully submitted by Mark McDonald

The following is a compilation of reports from respective committee chairs regarding the resolutions presented at the April 2022 AGM

- 1- Access to Public Lands and Water Bodies – As this is a large task to carry out, the Access Committee is still in the planning stages on how to present this to government.
- 2- Prohibition of Import and Sale of Non-Native Fish Species – No progress has been made at this time.
- 3- Helicopter Use for Fishing Access – Withdrawn at AGM
- 4- Changes to Limited Entry Hunting (LEH) System – At this time there is a commitment from PHTAT (Provincial Hunting & Trapping Advisory Team) to look at alternate systems through a subcommittee.
- 5- Priority for Licensed Resident Hunters for Wildlife Allocations – This resolution has been presented in writing and discussions with ministry staff have taken place. This can take place through a guide outfitters license but no examples have been seen so far.
- 6- Blacktail Deer Species License – No progress to report at this time. The idea has been briefly presented to ministry staff.
- 7- Species License for Merriams Wild Turkey – Work is still progressing. One senior ministry staffer has been the stumbling block. Most PHTAT members are in favour. GOABC is neither for or against.
- 8- Signing Authority – Withdrawn at AGM
- 9- Value of Penalties Under the Wildlife Act – Penalties under the Wildlife Act are already reviewed on a regular basis. Some people fear that if penalties are too high, that people will tend to not self report and, for example, try to hide an animal that had been illegally harvested. Higher penalties dedicated to fish and wildlife management have also been brought up within two other groups in the Together for Wildlife Group – the Ministers' Wildlife Advisory Council and the First Nations Wildlife Forum.
- 10- Advocacy for Firearms Rights and Privileges – The BC Wildlife Federation has hired Steve Hamilton as Conservation, Hunting, Angling and Firearms Policy and Engagement Coordinator to fill this position.
- 11- Senior Family Membership Category – Defeated at AGM
- 12- To Set Dues for Senior Family Membership – Withdrawn due to failure of Resolution # 11

Thanks to all of the committee chairs that have given me feedback to compile this report. As 2023 progresses, my committee will be looking at updating both our Terms of Reference and the Summary of Resolutions which has not been undertaken since 2019. Thank you to the members of the committee, David Oliver, Mel MacIntosh and Wilf Pfeleiderer, for their assistance again this year. Without their help, putting together the resolutions package would be a monumental task.

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Recreational Sport Shooting Committee

Respectfully submitted by Doug Bancroft

Overall, 2023 was a very busy year for the RSSC; which is a diverse group of volunteers, with a broad range of expertise in legislation, regulation, environmental impact assessments, and range operations. My thanks to team for their energy, commitment, and efforts on behalf of BCWF members and clubs.

Our most important work was supporting Gary Mauser and the Firearms Committee in responding to federal Bill C-21 and additional Order-in-Council challenges. Throughout the year, we were fully backed by Jesse Zeeman and Chuck Zuckerman, for which I am especially grateful.

Member Club/Range Assistance

The RSSC supported numerous BCWF clubs and ranges to address many issues, including:

- SSIRGC range inspection and discussions with their President, Treasurer, Legal Council and Board Members on lead, noise, and range expansion.
- Vernon Fish and Game Club in developing a Lead Management Plan as part of their replacement Crown Land lease application in the Coldstream Creek area, as required by Ministry of Forests.
- Nanaimo & District Fish and Game Protective in dealing with requirements for police background checks for volunteers working with youth.
- Gold River gun club with questions about restricted firearms safety rules, as well as Timber West access program.
- Creston Valley Rod and Gun Club with best practises for rifle range safety rules.
- North Thompson Fish & Game Club in clarifying the Firearm Violence Prevention Act aftermath.
- Bridge River Valley Rod and Gun Club as they start up a range near Gun Lake, BC.
- Hope Club with BC Assessment challenges.
- Helped an anonymous range respond to a police inquiry.
- Kelowna Fish and Game with media advice in preparation related to the BC Firearm Violence Prevention Act.

Media Interviews

As a designated spokesperson for the BCWF for firearms and sports shooting issues, I gave numerous interviews throughout the year. These went well; and a few extremely well. All dealt with federal firearms legislation, i.e., on C-21 and related OICs. This included:

- Two with 980-CKNW Vancouver.
- One with CFX 1070 Victoria
- Five with CBC (one live, province wide, and 24 minutes long).
- Two with CTV Victoria
- One with Mark Nielsen from the Prince George Citizen
- Two with CHEK news Victoria

Meetings with Politicians

- I met with MP Mel Arnold, and discussed many subjects of interest related to conservation, hunting, fishing, and shooting sports.

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- In mid August, I was the sherpa for CTV and CHEK news, as they interviewed many of the 230-shooting competitors at a large pistol match held at the Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association. Again, the focus was on federal Bill C-21 and the Order-in-Council challenges. More importantly, I also hosted our local MP Alistair McGregor to have him to meet with many individuals who will be adversely impacted by these federal initiatives. He listened intently. The actions taken by MP McGregor since then during the Committee hearings dealing with the review of C-21 have been enormously helpful in slowing down, and potentially stopping Bill C-21. The lesson for all clubs is to constantly engage with all MPs and MLAs on issues that matter to us.

Senior Government Officials

On April 20th, the BCWF was notified that the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General has decided that the implementation of provisions of the Firearm Violence Prevention Act that would increase the regulation of shooting ranges will not proceed. This was great news for all ranges in BC, and for BCWF member clubs with ranges. Since passage of the Act, the BCWF RSSC has worked to inform Regulators of the challenges and risks imposed by the Act, and the government made the correct decision.

I have subsequently met with senior offices in the Ministry. The contents of these meetings are subject to a non-disclosure agreement, and further announcements are forthcoming.

Miscellaneous Support to BCWF

The RSSC also provided additional internal support, including:

- Supported Rosie Burn writing a BC Outdoors article Shooting for Resilient Communities: The Strong Role of the Legal Shooting Community in B.C.
- Arranged interview access for BC Outdoors to two young indigenous champion shooters, conservationists, and in one case a hunter for BC Outdoors articles, and a subsequent four-page article in the Victoria Times Colonist.
- Worked with BCWF communications to inform members about a large ammunition recall notice.
- Attended the BCWF 2022 AGM and gave a plenary update on the RSSC (mandate, composition, and activities).
- Attended Region 1 Executive and Board meetings and answered questions on provincial and federal legislation, the latter informed by Gary Mauser and the Firearms Committee.
- Delivered a BCWF Webinar to over 150 participants on recent Federal firearms legalisation and implications, e.g., OIC and Bill C-21.

Conclusion:

The RSSC continues to be an effective information “clearing house” that supports member club ranges as they address a variety of operations issues. The committee has a critical mass of subject matter experts in numerous range related fields, as well as broad regional representation.

More importantly, we support Gary Mauser and the Firearms Committee defending against existential federal attack on sports shooters and hunters.

We can't solve every problem, but we continue to successfully address many.



2022 B.C. Wildlife Federation Committee Reports

Saltwater South Fisheries Committee

Respectfully submitted by Ted Brookman

It is another year of ups and downs for the Saltwater Fisheries Committee. It is nice to welcome Ed George back as Inland Fisheries chair as he is now back at SFAB where his experience on the Fraser River will be drawn on by myself when dealing with Fraser River questions. Ken Franzen and David Lewis cover the North and Mike Fowler covers the Central Coast and Halibut where he has been a great addition to the Halibut committee as his modelling skills blew me away.

The BCWF is happy to assist in any way as we in the “community fishery” work side by side with the SFAB and the service providers to help support the fellow British Columbians and others participate in our BC salt water fishery.

We are now in the planning stage for our fisheries this year so there are proposals to review and question. This is slow work but our volunteers within SFAB who know what their local history is add to the decision making. Each year is different and check out next year to see if we decided right.

The other problem we have is the over population of pinnipeds and how they are affecting the smolts as they head to sea. We need to find a way to get them back in balance.

2022 B.C. Wildlife Federation Committee Reports

Tidal Water North Fisheries Committee

Respectfully submitted by Ken Franzen

With the exception of Halibut and Lingcod, 2021 saw the continued erosion of most fishing opportunity on the North Coast. Chinook returns to the Skeena River System continue to be poor even with drastic reductions in angling opportunities in Tidal Water and particularly in the In River fishery. DFO needs to have a much better understanding of the “Why” if there is to be any hope of correcting the problem. There also needs to be a willingness to correct the problem.

Lower Skeena Coho and Chum stocks continued to see poor returns and Coho fishing would have been poor if DFO had not canceled the directed area F Coho troll fishery.

Alaskan Fisheries continue to harvest a disproportionate number of Canadian bound salmonoids. According to Alaska Department of Fish and Game the Alaskan commercial fishery harvested 2.7 million Coho in 2021, many of which would have been bound for streams on the West Coast of British Columbia. Compare this to the Area F troll fishery whom caught a mere 67,000 Coho all as by-catch in Chinook and Pink fisheries. The Pacific Salmon Treaty is failing Canadians.

Without any consultation with the SFAB, DFO in Ottawa introduced a 647 million dollar program that they referred to as PSSI (Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative). While some of the initiative is supportable and some consultation is emerging, one of the pillars of this initiative is “Harvest Transformation” whose goal is to “Implement extensive closures to commercial salmon fisheries”.

At first blush you might think this is a good idea but in reality it is more about reallocation to First Nations and an unwillingness to deal with pinnipeds than it is about conservation. It seems DFO is far more prepared to cull commercial fisherman than they are to cull problem seals and sea lions. It is worth noting that the Washington Department of Fish and Game do in fact lethally remove both California and Steller Sea Lions on the Columbia River as a part of their salmon management program.

Steelhead returns to the Skeena this year were very poor even in the complete absence of any commercial net fisheries in the approach waters of the Skeena River. With harvestable numbers of Babine Sockeye expected to return to the Skeena in 2022 it begs the question: How will DFO conduct net fisheries for Sockeye and still achieve their conservation objectives for Chinook and Steelhead, and of further concern, why would DFO fully load the spawning channels on the Pinkut and Fulton Rivers with Sockeye in 2021 ? We now run the risk of having a massive return of enhanced Sockeye in 2024 / 2025 with little evolution of selective fishing methods. In other words ,if the enhanced run of Sockeye return in large numbers ,massive gillnet and seine fisheries will take place on the approachwaters of the Skeena River and by-catch and associated mortalities of non target species will be significant.

While we saw some improvement in Halibut and Lingcod retention opportunities, Rockfish daily and possession limits continue to be very low in recent years. We have dropped from 8 Rockfish a day of which three could be Yelloweye to 3 Rockfish a day of which only one could be Quillback ,Tiger or China and non could be Yelloweye or Bocaccio. Additionally, a seasonal closures has been imposed for both Rockfish and Lingcod even though angler effort on the North Coast in the winter is almost unmeasurably.

For years the SFAB have requested DFO to provide the North Coast with a public Clam digging beach. The request has continually fallen on deaf ears. With three Federal Agency’s involved, the process has become so convoluted that SFAB members have given up in disgust. It is ironic though that DFO can provide the opportunity on the South Coast.

2022 B.C. Wildlife Federation Committee Reports

Wildlife and Allocations Committee

Respectfully submitted by Gerry Paille

The focus of the BCWF's Wildlife and Allocation Committee continues to be improving the management of, and outcomes for, British Columbia's fish and wildlife by promoting the short-term goals of:

- Greater and dedicated funding.
- New or amended natural resource legislation that puts fish, wildlife and their habitats on equal footing;
- Legislated, measurable and achievable objectives; and
- A new governance model that all can see themselves in.

Wildlife Act

The Wildlife Act is under review and while the BCWF has not been formally invited to comment, we have been providing feedback in the background. The BCWF needs to define what we want to see in an updated Wildlife Act.

Together for Wildlife

In 2022, the focus of Together for Wildlife (T4W) was defining what Regional Wildlife Advisory Councils (RWACs) will look like and to get them up and running. Focus groups were held including members from the Ministers' Wildlife Advisory Council (MWAC), the First Nations-BC Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Forum and the Provincial Hunting and Trapping Advisory Team (PHTAT), other stakeholders and the public. The BCWF participated as part of PHTAT. The main discussions included what was in scope and what wasn't, the geographical extent of the committees (wildlife regions, watersheds, or...) and whether or not RWAC members would be representative or non-representative (i.e., could the BCWF participate specifically representing its members or participate by taking the BCWF hat off at the door and focusing on what is good for wildlife and habitat.) The process is slow going and the only region that has made any progress in establishing a committee is the Kootenays, based on impetus from regional stakeholders.

BC Fish Wildlife and Habitat Coalition

The BC Fish Wildlife and Habitat Coalition continued to meet every two weeks with the BCWF taking the lead on this initiative. The coalition met face-to-face in November 2022 to scope out priorities and actions for 2023. The priorities for the coalition align well with the BCWF's priorities including making positive impacts, strengthening the Wildlife Act through the review process, establishing objectives, increasing and dedicating funding and remediating the impacts of access and BC's resource sector legislation such as the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA).

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) continues to be of great concern as known cases get closer and closer to BC from Alberta in the east and Montana to the south. There are still no positive tests for CWD in BC, but many believe the disease is already present in BC, just undetected. BC's current testing level is borderline in terms of confidence that negative results can truly translate into BC being CWD free. Samples tested from the Peace and Kootenays were down in 2022 but increased in the Okanagan because of workshops and support from the Okanagan Region of the BCWF.

Transport of infected tissue by hunters bringing game into BC from known CWD areas (mostly Alberta) remains a concern as does the lack of a testing facility and facilities to effectively treat CWD contaminated tissues in BC.

The Terms of Reference for the Provincial CWD Working Group has been updated and an updated CWD response plan was distributed for comment. How to respond to a positive CWD case and funding for an appropriate response are of major concern.