

ANNUAL REPORT

2009/2010



Photo: John Gomes / Anchorage Alaska



Wildlife Collision Prevention Program

www.wildlifecollisions.ca

Administered by the British Columbia Conservation Foundation



Wildlife Collision Prevention Program

The Wildlife Collision Prevention Program was formed in 2001 as a partnership between the British Columbia Conservation Foundation (BCCF) and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, in response to the growing number and severity of wildlife vehicle collisions in British Columbia. BCCF is a registered not-for-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and stewardship of BC's ecosystems and species.

Collisions between vehicles and wildlife are a serious problem for species conservation and management, public safety, animal welfare and the economy. Past wildlife vehicle collision records demonstrate that in a typical year in BC it is estimated that:

- 5 people are killed, and 370 people are injured.
- 4,900 animals are recorded as killed, and a further 14,900 wildlife deaths go unrecorded if the animal leaves the roadside area to die.
- ICBC expends \$30 million dollars on animal related crash incidents
- \$600,000 is spent by BC Ministry of Transportation for highway cleanup.
- \$36 million is no longer available to provincial revenue due to lost hunting license revenue, lost value of wildlife to hunters and non-hunters, and lost opportunities for wildlife viewing.
- Substantial costs are incurred for policing, medical aid, WCB, EI, and lost staff productivity.

In order to reduce the number of wildlife vehicle collisions in British Columbia, WCPP implements programs enabling motorists to anticipate situations where wildlife might be present on the road, and educating them about ways to avoid colliding with wildlife hazards.

Mission Statement

The Wildlife Collision Prevention Program seeks to save human lives and prevent injuries, protect wildlife from unnecessary death and injury, and reduce the economic losses to society caused by wildlife vehicle collisions.



PROJECT SUMMARIES

Brochures

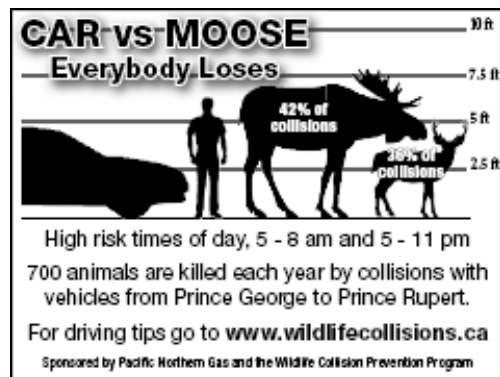
Achievements

Approximately 9,000 brochures were distributed through Visitor Information Centres, on BC Ferries, at Parks Canada Tourist Centres, at the BC Wildlife Park, through the BC Wildlife Federation clubs, and by our corporate sponsors.

Print Notices

Continuing Projects

WCPP continues to advertise in 10 community newspapers along Highway 16 from Vanderhoof to Prince Rupert during high risk times of year. These ads emphasize the danger of moose collisions to the motorist, comparing moose size to vehicle size.



Achievements

WCPP places notices in travel, tourist and outdoor/nature publications.

Magazine	Circulation	Magazine	Circulation
Sno Riders	40,000	BC Outdoor Hunting	25,000
Westworld	502,000	BC Parks Provincial	100,000
Rocky Mountain Visitors	35,000	RV Times	55,000
BC Parks Thompson	10,000	BC Parks Kootenay	30,000
Outdoor Edge	50,000	Northword Magazine	40,000
RV West	30,000	Northern Explorer	45,000
BC Outdoors Fishing	25,000	Regional newspapers	10 communities



Rest Stop Signs

Existing partnerships

Yellowhead Road & Bridge (Vanderhoof) Ltd.
 BC Ministry of Environment, BC Parks, Peace Region
 City of Fort St John
 BC Ministry of Transportation - Courtenay Area Office, Northern Regional Office, Fort George District Office
 Clinton & District Outdoor Sportsmen Association
 Village of Clinton
 Initiatives Prince George
 BC Ministry of Environment, BC Parks, Omineca Region
 RoadHealth Regional Task Force, Prince George
 HMC Services Inc., Quesnel

New partnerships

Northern Rockies Regional Municipality
 Public Works and Government Services Canada

Achievements

17 rest stops are located throughout BC.

Junction of Highways 16 and 97 – Visitor Information Centre
 Highway 97 south - Australian rest area; Woodpecker rest area
 Highway 16 west - Cluculz Creek rest area
 Highway 16 east - Slim Creek and Terry Fox rest areas
 Highway 97 north - Pine Le Moray viewpoint
 Highway 97 south - near Clinton, 6 Mile Lake pullout
 Village of Clinton rest area
 Highway 5 - Wire Cache rest area
 Highway 19 - Vancouver Island, Buckley Bay and Hoomak Lake rest areas
 City of Fort St. John rest area
 Alaska Highway - Steamboat Mountain Summit – Km 535; Muncho Lake - Km 702; Allen’s Lookout - Km 880; BC/Yukon border - Km 964



Slim Creek



Highway 16/97 Junction



6 Mile Lake



Billboards

Continuing Projects

There are 7 billboards located near high risk wildlife vehicle collision locations in BC.

Northeast BC – Moose Style. During 08/09, the billboard was located west of Dawson Creek on Highway 97.

West Kootenays – Deer Style. During 08/09, the billboard alternated between 2 locations – Highway 22 south of Castlegar and Highway 3B east of Grand Forks.

East Kootenays – Deer Style. During 08/09, the billboard alternated between 2 locations – Highway 3 east of Fernie and Highway 93/95 south of Fairmont Hot Springs.

Alaska Highway - Moose Style. There are 2 billboards permanently located along the Alaska Highway, north of Fort Nelson.

Alaska Highway – Bison Style. There are 2 billboards permanently located along the Alaska Highway, north of Fort Nelson.



Near Iron Creek, Alaska Hwy



Km 135 Alaska Hwy



Highway 97 north



Highway 93/95



Highway 3



Radio Ads

Continuing Projects

A series of radio advertisements were developed to provide wildlife collision prevention information directly to motorists. The ads provide species specific behavioural information in high crash areas, and there are different versions of the ads for deer and moose hot spot areas and also for fall and winter conditions. These 30 second ads incorporated the community and regionally specific data obtained from the University of Northern BC research on wildlife collisions.

The take home message is "Slow down and give wildlife and yourself a brake!"

Existing Partnerships

Our existing partnerships with the RoadHealth Regional Task Force and the Forestry TruckSafe "Sharing the Road" ad campaign assisted with funding for the radio ads and provided coverage throughout northern British Columbia.

Again this year, our moose collision prevention ads featured Mike Gouchie, a country music recording artist who was seriously injured in a moose vehicle collision in July 2007, south of Prince George, BC. He had previously been involved in a moose collision several years ago in which his best friend was killed. After Mike's recovery, he generously donated his time and talent to record three moose collision radio advertisements for the series.

New Partnerships

We initiated a new partnership with TransWild Alliance, which is a coalition of conservation advocacy organizations dedicated to reducing the impacts of highways on wildlife and natural resources. With their financial contribution, and our continuing partnership with RoadHealth, we were able to continue our radio advertising in 2009/10.

Achievements

From January 4, 2009 to January 24, 2010, radio advertisements were aired twenty times per week on 8 radio stations across northern BC. This equals 480 30-second radio ads during this time period. Where possible, radio playing time corresponded to the highest risk time of day for wildlife collisions.

The towns and surrounding areas covered by these stations included Terrace, Hazelton, Granisle, Houston, Burns Lake, Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, and Prince George; essentially the Highway 16 corridor from Prince George to Terrace.



Right of Way Signage

Continuing Projects

WCPP continues to maintain two right of way signs located on Highway 97 north, on the north and south approaches to the Taylor Hill, south of Fort St. John, BC. Through partnerships with the Ministry of Transportation, Yellowhead Road & Bridge (North Peace) Ltd., and Caribou Road Services (South) Ltd., the signs were put into place in March 2006.



Website

Achievements

Visits to the WCPP website www.wildlifecollisions.ca continue to increase.

6 Month Timeframe	Mean hits per month	Mean hits per day	% increase previous 6 month period
Oct 04 to Mar 05	174	6	104%
Apr 05 to Sept 05	396	13	127%
Oct 05 to Mar 06	459	15	16%
Apr 06 to Sept 06	460	15	0.2%
Oct 06 to Mar 07	541	18	18%
Apr 07 to Sept 07	580	19	7.1%
Oct 07 to Mar 08	660	22	13.8%
Apr 08 to Sept 08	774	26	17.3%
Oct 08 to Mar 09	896	30	15.9%
Apr 09 to Mar 10	1204	38	49.0%

Website Inquiries

Continuing Extension

Numerous inquiries and contacts are made with WCPP through the website feedback button. They represent inquiries from: universities and academics; transportation and environmental consultants; driving schools; trucking companies; general inquiries; occupational health and safety committees; non-profit organizations working in related fields of study; the media; governments in other jurisdictions; and organizations in related fields of business.

Email inquiries range from comments on the need for eye-catching wildlife warning signage, to media outlets requesting information and/or fact verification for wildlife vehicle collision stories; to driving instructors wanting information to supplement their curricula; to transportation managers requesting information; to community members wanting to initiate projects in their local areas.



Media Exposure

Achievements

Media releases

Media releases in 2009/10 concentrated on utilizing locally specific information provided through University of Northern BC research to advise communities 1) when they were entering the highest risk months of the year for wildlife collisions 2) which wildlife species drivers were most likely to encounter and 3) when the highest risk time of day would be. Additional media releases detailed stolen moose signs on Highway 16 near Tabor Mountain and the high numbers of moose collisions near UNBC in Prince George. The following references to WCPP were noted in the media.

Achievements

Print media

Newspapers/Magazines

Prince George Citizen
 RV Snow Birds Magazine
 Prince George Citizen
 Prince George Citizen
 Globe and Mail
 Prince George Citizen
 Prince George Citizen Letters
 Prince George Citizen
 Prince George Citizen Letters
 Prince George Free Press

Story Focus

Warning of Moose Collisions
 A Collision with Wildlife
 Moose Collision Signs Walk Off
 Moose Warning Signs Replaced
 Highway 33 Slammed as Dangerous
 June/July Moose Collisions
 Moose Collisions near UNBC
 Slower Speed Limits Needed near UNBC
 Lights Needed Near UNBC
 Winter is Prime Time for Moose Collisions

Website Links

Opinion250.com
 Opinion250.com

Moose Collision Signs Stolen
 Speed Watch Campaign Launched

Radio interviews

CIRX Prince George
 CJFW Smithers
 CBC Radio 1, provincial
 CIRX Prince George
 CJCI Prince George
 CIRX Prince George
 CIRX Prince George
 CJCI Prince George
 CJCI Prince George
 CJCI Prince George
 CIRX Prince George

Watch out for Deer in the Spring
 Watch out for Deer in the Spring
 Bison on the Alaska Highway
 Stolen Flashing Moose Signs
 Stolen Flashing Moose Signs
 Wildlife Collision Prevention Tips
 Moose Collisions near UNBC
 Moose Collisions near UNBC
 Spring Wildlife Collision Prevention
 Spring Wildlife Collision Prevention

TV Interviews

CKPG TV

Speed Watch Board near UNBC



Conferences

Achievements

WCPP participated in two conferences during 2009/10.

Bird Strike Committee Canada & USA 11th Joint Meeting – Victoria, BC: September 14-17, 2009

The goal of the Canada and USA Bird Strike Committee conferences is to expand the aviation industry's knowledge of ongoing and current projects that aim to reduce the frequency and occurrence of bird strikes with aircraft.

Presentation Title: *Wildlife Management at Western Canadian Airports*

WCPP was invited to present the research results of a survey conducted of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan airports. This survey documents current airport wildlife management practices, specifically compliance with federal regulations; recording of wildlife strikes with aircraft; and efforts to implement and measure the effectiveness of mitigation methods to reduce the risk of wildlife strikes.

This was an excellent opportunity to network with professionals in the aviation industry, both private and military, who are involved with wildlife management at airports.

BC Rural & Remote Health Research Network 2nd Annual Conference – Prince George, BC September 28-29, 2009

The theme of this conference was "Research to Action: Improving Health in Rural and Remote BC." The goal was to improve networking, communication, and knowledge transfer and exchange among professionals in the fields of health and safety research.

Poster Title: *Evaluating the potential of the Otto[®] Wildlife GPS device to collect roadside wildlife live sighting and carcass location data for use in road safety planning*

WCPP was invited to present a poster on the results of the research project utilizing the Otto GPS device to record roadside moose and deer locations. From this research, our recommendation is that GPS locational data can and should be used by road safety managers to identify high risk stretches of highway. These moose collision hot spot stretches can be prioritized for treatments such as roadside brushing, enhanced signage, and removal of roadside attractants, thereby mitigating the hazard to drivers. We feel that the incidence of wildlife collisions occurring on rural and remote roads can be reduced if drivers are more knowledgeable about high risk collision locations, and the use of GPS technology through the Otto Wildlife units appear to be an operationally feasible method of achieving locational accuracy.



Northern BC Wildlife Collision Working Group

Continuing Projects

The Wildlife Collision Working Group has a five point plan to address wildlife collisions in northern BC:

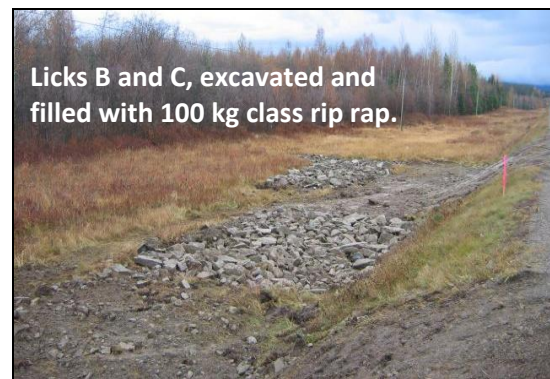
- 1) identify high risk times of day, months of the year, and hotspot locations in northern BC - **completed**
- 2) prioritize these hotspots for site visits - **completed**
- 3) conduct field inspections of collision hot spot areas - **completed**
- 4) recommend, implement and assess mitigation methods – **ongoing**
- 5) carry out public awareness projects - **ongoing**

Achievements

In October 2008, Working Group member Roy Rea presented the following report to the group: *A Site-Specific Operational Plan for Reducing Moose-Vehicle Collisions in Northern British Columbia*. The report contains the following findings and recommendations to address the 29 moose-vehicle collision “hotspots” identified from WARS data in northern British Columbia.

- 60% of the 29 identified moose hotspots do not currently contain appropriate wildlife warning signage. Non-traditional site-specific signage should be installed at each end of these 29 sites.
- To reduce the attractiveness of roadside browse for moose, each of these sites should be brush cut in July 2009 and repeatedly cut in July at 3 to 4 year intervals
- 9 of the 29 hotspots contain roadside mineral licks which are moderately to heavily used by moose. To limit visits to the road corridor by moose, these mineral licks should be deactivated or otherwise made inaccessible to moose.

The Working Group researched various deactivation options for moose collision hot spots. In October 2009, Mineral Licks B and C, located at LKI 26.97 Highway 16 East, were excavated to mineral soil (~0.4 m deep) and covered with clean, angular rip rap. Lick A, located at LKI 24.97 Highway 16 East, was deactivated using modular fencing to render the mineral/muck lick inaccessible to moose. Both sites will be monitored by remote cameras to assess moose use. The project was funded by MoT and ICBC, with monitoring by UNBC.



Two moose collision warning signs, with blinking, solar powered LED lights that was installed near Mineral Licks B and C was reported stolen in early April 2009. In July 2009, MoT replaced the flashing signs with regular sized traditional moose warning signs. No funding partners have been found to provide new blinking signs.



Fee for Service Projects

Otto Wildlife device

Working with UNBC researchers, WCPP Coordinator Gayle Hesse authored the final report on the testing of the Otto Wildlife device. The report has now been accepted for publication in the peer reviewed journal *Wildlife Biology in Practice*, and is entitled *Evaluating the potential of the Otto® Wildlife GPS device to record roadside moose and deer locations for use in wildlife vehicle collision mitigation planning*. Project results were presented at the BC Rural & Remote Health Research Network's Conference in Prince George, BC, in September 2009.

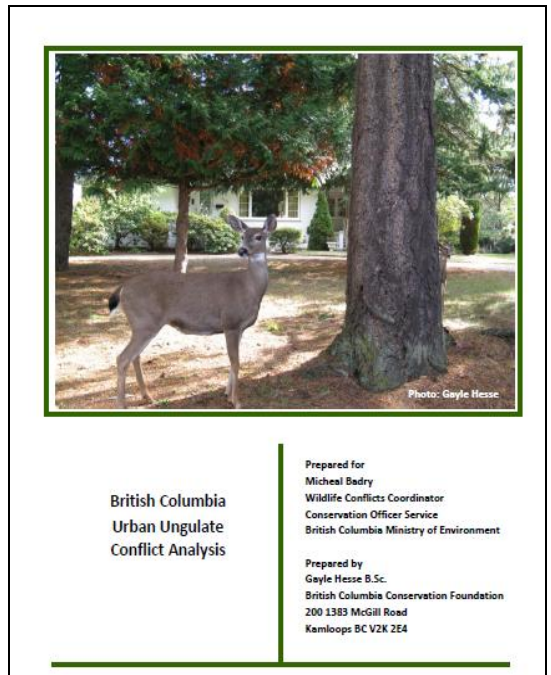
Wildlife Management at Airports

Working with UNBC researchers, WCPP developed and conducted a survey of airports in western Canada to identify factors contributing to bird and animal strikes involving aircraft. The final report for this project is completed and available by request. The results from this research were presented at the 2009 Bird Strike North America Conference, in Victoria BC, in September 2009. A peer reviewed paper *Wildlife management at western Canadian airports* was published in the *Journal of Air Traffic Management*.

British Columbia Urban Ungulate Conflict Analysis

Increasing populations of urban deer are a concern in several BC communities because of increasing deer vehicle collisions, aggressive behaviour towards humans and pets, and damage to gardens and plantings. WCPP Coordinator Gayle Hesse researched this issue, interviewed biologists and managers in Canada and the USA who have worked in this field, and prepared a report for the Wildlife Conflicts Coordinator of the BC Conservation Officer Service.

The report discusses the human dimensions, community involvement, consequences and management challenges associated with urban ungulate management, and contains a summary of management options including comparative discussions of efficacy, costs, logistical constraints, human health concerns and humaneness for the target animal. A full reference section, sample public opinion survey questions, and details of recent urban deer management projects in Canada and the USA is included.





Additional Projects

Alaska Highway Wood Bison Vehicle Collision Prevention

Continuing Projects

Posters on the Alaska Highway

WCPP partnered with Public Works and Government Services Canada staff to develop posters which provide information about the endangered Nordquist Wood Bison herd that frequently grazes along the Alaska Highway.



New Projects

WCPP received a donation from TransWild Alliance to facilitate Wood Bison vehicle collision prevention projects on the Alaska Highway north of Ft. St John, BC. WCPP used this contribution as seed money to develop an additional partnership with the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM; formerly the Town of Fort Nelson).

NRRM entered into a contributory agreement with WCPP to design and provide four Wood Bison collision prevention awareness signs and kiosk structures to house the signs. The kiosk structures were erected along the Alaska Highway by Public Works and Government Services Canada. Public Works Canada crews transported and put up the kiosks and signs.

In partnership with the BC Ministry of Environment, BC Parks, Peace Region Parks, Public Works and Government Services Canada, and TransWild Alliance, WCPP designed a handout to be distributed at the Liard Hot Springs Provincial Park gate, intended to remind visitors about the Nordquist Wood Bison herd, and their frequent occupation and use of the Alaska Highway and right of way.





Community Based Projects

Badger Wildlife Warning Sign

The northbound badger crossing sign near 70 Mile House on Highway 97 was damaged by shotgun blasts and removed. WCPP worked with the local MoTI District Office and funded a replacement sign.

Badgers are an endangered species in BC, so the prevention of road-associated badger mortality is extremely important.



Westbank Bighorn Sheep

In 2005, 15 bighorn sheep were relocated to the Shorts Creek canyon on the west side of Okanagan Lake. By 2007, bighorn sheep from this herd were regularly being encountered on Westside Road. This road is very windy, and has increasing traffic volumes due to growing residential and recreational traffic. WCPP has partnered with the Ministry of Environment, Okanagan Region to develop some public relations material to make travellers more aware of the newly named Lambly (Bear) Creek herd and its year-long proximity to Westside Road.

Chetwynd Elk

A school bus driver reported a near-collision with an elk on a stretch of Highway 97 40 km west of Chetwynd. The right of way near the site in question had been hayed and the hay had been improperly stored in the right of way. Elk were attracted to and eating the piled hay. Although there had been several near-misses, only one collision had been recorded where the elk was hit and killed. MoT implemented mitigation (based on procedures developed by WCPP in 2007 for a similar situation involving deer) and contacted WCPP for any further recommendations. Temporary elk crossing signs with flashers were installed, the hay was moved out of the right of way, the hazard area was posted on the DriveBC website, and some hay bales were moved to a treed area on the other side of the highway in an attempt to hold the elk in their treed bedding area.





Consolidated Income Statement April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010

Revenues

Gaming	\$30,000.00
BC Ministry of Environment	\$0.00
BCCF	9,800.20
Donations	\$483.39
Fundraising (RoadHealth, FortisBC)	\$10,464.58
TransWild Alliance	\$3,007.50
Fee for Service (Northern Rockies Regional Municipality)	<u>10,531.00</u>
	64,286.67
Carry over to fiscal 10/11	<u>16,716.67</u>
Total Revenues	47,570.00

Expenses

Contract Wages	\$12,779.45
Radio Notices	\$2,520.00
Print Notices	\$5,883.13
Rest Stop Signs	\$8,554.16
Billboards	\$7,480.00
Communications	\$74.90
Computer Costs	\$440.00
Materials/Supplies	\$1,036.42
Brochures	\$3,246.89
Website Maintenance	\$286.88
Image Purchase	
Travel	
Accommodations/Food	
Per Diems	
Training/Safety	
GST	\$718.17
Fees	<u>\$4,550.00</u>
Total Expenses	47,570.00



PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

WCPP partners and contributors are essential to achieving its goals. Partnerships of all kinds continue to be pursued with public and private agencies as well as government and not-for-profit organizations. Collectively, WCPP, its partners and advisors are working successfully together to achieve our goals.

The Wildlife Collision Prevention Program extends warm thanks to all its partners.

Elite Sponsors

BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Platinum Sponsors

Bronze Sponsors

RoadHealth Regional Task Force
TransWild Alliance

InKind Contributors: Technical Advice and Support

Roy Rea
ICBC
Parks Canada
BCAA
BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
BC Forest Safety Council, Forestry TruckSafe Program
BC Ministry of Environment, Okanagan region, Fish & Wildlife Section

Partners in Community Projects

Public Works and Government Services Canada
Northern Rockies Regional Municipality
Sheila Carroll
Mountain Caribou Project
Bighorn In Our Backyard
Yellowhead Road & Bridge (Vanderhoof) Ltd.
Yellowhead Road & Bridge (North Peace) Ltd.
Caribou Road Services (South) Ltd.
HMC Services Ltd.

**Many private individuals concerned for both wildlife and human safety
have donated generously to the program.**

Header Photo Credits: Gayle Hesse (dead deer), Jim Hesse (deer with vehicle) Ernie Kroeger (dead bear). Dead moose in blue vehicle images from the internet, no photographer noted. Terry Mannella, (close-up, dead moose in vehicle)



Photo: Bill Swan, Osprey Communications



Photo: Jim Hesse



Photo: Internet

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www.animalsinthewild.org



Photo: Roy V. Rea



Photo: Internet