Wildlife Collision Prevention Program

ANNUAL REPORT
2015/2016

www.wildlifecollisions.ca

Administered by the British Columbia Conservation Foundation

April 2016
The Wildlife Collision Prevention Program was formed in 2001 in response to the growing number and severity of wildlife vehicle collisions in British Columbia. The guiding organization behind the Wildlife Collision Prevention Program is the British Columbia Conservation Foundation, which is a registered not-for-profit organization that promotes and assists in the conservation of the fish and wildlife resources of British Columbia.

WCPP strives to reduce wildlife collisions through research, collision mitigation activities, and public awareness. We implement programs enabling motorists to anticipate situations where wildlife hazards might be present on the road, and educate them about ways to avoid colliding with wildlife.

**Mission Statement**

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.
Print Notices

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

Cariboo Newspapers
WCPP continued to advertise in the Cariboo communities of 100 Mile House and Williams Lake. Highway 97, through the Cariboo, ranks third in the province on the list of highways with the most wildlife collisions. Ads were carried in local newspapers in the spring.

Kootenay Newspapers
WCPP continued advertising in the east and west Kootenays. About 55% of all wildlife vehicle collisions in BC occur in the southern interior. Newspapers in nine communities carried the wildlife collision avoidance message during the spring of 2015.
Radio Notices

A series of radio advertisements provides 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, moose, and bighorn sheep hot spot areas, plus general wildlife collision awareness tips.

Moose – Central interior
These ads incorporated the community and regionally specific data obtained from the University of Northern BC research on wildlife collisions. The ads aired in December in Hazelton, Granisle, Burns Lake, Houston, Smithers, Fraser Lake, Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, Prince George, and Quesnel. Moose comprise 23% of wildlife collisions in northern BC, and pose a significant risk of human injury or death.

Deer - Kootenays
Collisions with deer comprise 82% of wildlife collisions in this region. The ads aired in the spring in Trail, Castlegar, Creston, Grand Forks, Revelstoke, Golden, Radium, Invermere, Rock Creek, Christina Lake, Cranbrook, Fernie, and Nelson.

Deer - Cariboo
Collisions with deer comprise 85% of wildlife collisions in this region. The ads aired in the spring in Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, and the surrounding area.

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

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

WILDLIFE COLLISION PREVENTION PROGRAM

Protect People and Wildlife

Slow Down
buy yourself time to react to wildlife on the road

Watch for Wildlife Warning Signs
they mark high risk collision locations

Use Your Vehicle
clean your headlights, use high beams, wear seatbelts

While Driving
scan continuously and actively watch for wildlife

www.wildlifecollisions.ca

Slow Down

Reduce speed in areas with wildlife warning signs

SPEED reduces your ability to steer away from objects
SPEED extends the distance required to stop your vehicle
SPEED increases the force of impact if there is a collision
Reducing your speed from 100 kph to 80 kph gives 30 extra metres to stop – that’s several car lengths
When the driving conditions are good (long straight stretches, clear nights, and dry roads) resist the tendency to speed up. Wildlife collisions occur more often than expected in good conditions

To Swerve or Not To Swerve?
Do not take unsafe evasive actions
Use your brakes, not your wheel
Driving slower may mean that it is not necessary to swerve at all

www.wildlifecollisions.ca

Handouts

Bison vehicle collisions on the Alaska Highway are a concern for the conservation of this threatened species. Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative provided funding for the design, printing, and distribution of a handout that included bison collision awareness messages and frequently asked questions about bison. Handouts will be distributed at the Liard Hot Springs Provincial Park gate, in cooperation with BC Parks.

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### Protect People and Wildlife

- **Actively watch** for wildlife, especially at dusk and at night when bison are very hard to see.
- **Slow down** so that you have time to react to hazards on the road.
- **Bison stand with their heads down**. Don’t expect to see shining eyes at night.
- **Watch for wildlife warning signs** and obey speed limits.
- **Wood bison are herd animals**. If you see one, there will be others nearby.

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### WOOD BISON ALERT

**on the Alaska Highway**

The wood bison along the Alaska Highway are not domestic animals. They are wild animals and very dangerous.

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**Did you know...**

- Bison were re-introduced to this area after they almost became extinct.
- Bison are commonly seen along the highway at all times of the year because of the abundant forage and ease of travel.
- Wood bison are different than plains bison. They are slightly larger and darker with a more pronounced shoulder hump.

A herd of bison is an amazing sight. There seems to be a lot of animals, but actually, they are a threatened species in Canada. Herd growth is limited because many animals are killed in collisions with vehicles.

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**DRIVE WITH EXTREME CAUTION**

- [www.bisonandroads.com](http://www.bisonandroads.com)
Roadside Signs - Kiosks

Roadside kiosk signs are located throughout BC.

**Highway 16 W** - Cluculz Creek rest area

**Highway 16 E** - Slim Creek and Terry Fox rest areas

**Highway 97 N** - Pine Le Moray viewpoint

**Highway 97 S** - near Clinton, 6 Mile Lake pullout

**Village of Clinton** - rest area

**Highway 5** - Wire Cache rest area

**Highway 19** - Buckley Bay and Hoomak Lake (Vancouver Island) - rest areas

**City of Fort St. John** - rest area

**Alaska Highway** - Steamboat Mountain Summit
Km 535

**Alaska Highway** - Muncho Lake - Km 702

**Alaska Highway** - Allen’s Lookout - Km 880

**Alaska Highway** - BC/Yukon border - Km 964

**Westside Road, near Kelowna** - Bear Creek and Fintry Provincial Parks
Roadside Signs - Billboards

Four billboard styles are currently used in BC.

**Moose - Northeast BC**
The billboard is located west of Dawson Creek, on Highway 97.

**Deer - West Kootenays**
The billboard is located on Highway 3, east of Grand Forks.

**Moose - Alaska Highway**
Two billboards are permanently located on the Alaska Highway, near Km 135.

**Bison - Alaska Highway**
Two billboards are permanently located on the Alaska Highway, near Iron Creek.

Media Coverage

**Radio Interviews**
Oct 30, 2015 – Radio NL Kamloops
  – time change and wildlife collisions
Nov 4, 2015 – Radio NL Kamloops
  – fall wildlife collision awareness
Jan 5, 2016 – 94.3 FM
  – winter wildlife collision awareness

**TV Coverage**
Oct 21, 2015 – Global BC TV
  – discussion about recently installed intelligent warning signage near Elko and Sparwood
Numerous inquiries and contacts come from the website feedback button. Inquiries are received 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 include: comments on the need for eye-catching wildlife warning signage; media outlets requesting information and/or fact verification for wildlife vehicle collision stories; driving instructors wanting information to supplement their curricula; transportation managers requesting information; community members wanting to initiate projects in their local areas; and biologists requesting wildlife collision data to use in population inventories.

There had been a steady increase in the numbers of unique visitors to the website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># Unique Visits per Month</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>1478</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>1339*</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>1467</td>
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*In May 2014, the program used to derive website statistics was changed. Therefore, the year-end 2015 figures are not directly comparable to previous years.
Northern BC Research and Operational Activities

There is a five-point plan to address wildlife collisions in northern BC:

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

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and UNBC entered into a multi-year contract to monitor and assess moose activity at roadside mineral licks. WCPP is a technical advisor to this contract.

Five strategies (rocks, fencing, logs, cedar bark mulch, and human hair/dog fur) have been used to deactivate mineral licks. Both deactivated licks and untreated control licks have been monitored with motion-activated trail cameras.

Research findings clearly show repeated and regular use of roadside licks by moose, predominantly in mid-summer and in low light conditions. Decommissioning of roadside licks (fencing, reject rock and cedar mulch applications) has decreased the number of moose visits to these areas, leading to fewer animals using roadside areas and reducing the threat of wildlife vehicle collisions. Monitoring of treated licks, untreated licks, and control sites to determine treatment efficacy and understand post-treatment implications (requirement of additional treatments, spread of invasive plants) continues.

Research partnership with Shell Canada Limited

Shell Canada Limited funded a two-year research project to study mineral licks located on Highway 29, north of Chetwynd. Motion-activated camera monitoring of the licks occurred from November 2013 to May 2015. Both research cameras were stolen from their installation sites near the licks (October 2014 and May 2015) thereby ending the project.

Results from Highway 29 indicated that visits to roadside licks by moose most commonly peaked from mid-June to mid-July at night. These findings correspond with the moose visitation patterns at other licks in northern BC and also correspond with the mid-summer peak in moose-vehicle collisions in northern BC.
**Underreporting of wildlife vehicle collisions**

The actual (true) number of wildlife vehicle collisions that occur is unknown and underreporting of wildlife vehicle collisions has been documented in many jurisdictions. Reasons for underreporting include carcasses being removed by others prior to collection by officials, the animal being hit but not killed, and not all collisions being reported to ICBC or attended by police. The primary concern is that any conclusions drawn about wildlife collisions, and the environmental and engineering factors associated with them, are based on a substantially incomplete dataset, and therefore, subject to error.

The BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BC MoTI) and WCPP entered into a contract to compare wildlife vehicle collision data from several different agencies to establish a baseline number of collisions on highways in northern BC. This data was then used to document patterns in wildlife collision underreporting and establish the degree of underreporting by agency.

Wildlife vehicle collision data from collisions with large mammals (deer, moose, bear, elk, and caribou) occurring on select highways in northern BC were used in this project. Data from January 1, 2004 to November 30, 2013 were obtained from highways maintenance contractors (carcass counts), ICBC (claimant collision reports), RCMP (police-attended collision reports), and the Conservation Officer Service (incident reports of injured or dead wildlife on the roadside).

Currently, BC MOTI reports that they capture between 25% and 35% of the actual number of wildlife vehicle collisions and that ICBC captures approximately 75% of collisions.

An improved understanding of the baseline numbers of collisions will assist highway managers to make better informed decisions about wildlife vehicle collision hotspot identification, prioritization, and treatment, and support more effective monitoring and evaluation of mitigation treatments.

Wildlife vehicle collision data from 14 highway segments on eight highways in northern BC were used in this project.

The project report is expected to be released in May 2016.
Wildlife Vehicle Collision Figures – One Measure of Success

The most important way to measure the success of our program is to be able to demonstrate that the number of wildlife vehicle collisions is declining.

Crash data (2003 – 2013*) from ICBC’s Business Intelligence Warehouse

![Number of animal related crashes in north central BC](chart)

Human injury data (2003 – 2013*) from ICBC’s Business Intelligence Warehouse

![Number of human injuries resulting from animal related crashes in north central BC](chart)

* 2014 ICBC crash data was unavailable at the time of this report

There were 140 human injuries due to animal-related crashes in north central BC in 2012 and 110 injuries in 2013. The five-year moving average should drop next year to reflect this.

Factors that influence the numbers of wildlife vehicle collisions are complex and inter-related. There may be many factors that contribute to a reduction in collisions, but we believe that our public awareness campaign is one of those factors.
### Financials

#### Financial Highlights
April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016

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<th><strong>Revenues</strong></th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Gaming</td>
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<td>BCCF</td>
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<td>Public Donations</td>
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<td>Fee for Service Research</td>
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<td>Corporate Donations</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74,648</strong></td>
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**Carry over to 16/17** | 20,565

**Total Revenues**: 54,083

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<th><strong>Expenses</strong></th>
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<td>Public Awareness</td>
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<td>General Operations</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td>GST</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>54,083</strong></td>
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1. Shell Canada Limited and BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
2. ICBC, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, FortisBC
3. The carry-over amount reflects the fact that funds were received throughout the year, and two Gaming grants were received within a 12 month period.
Partnership Support

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

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

Platinum Sponsors
- Jim Pattison Broadcast Group – Prince George
- Shell Canada Limited
- The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC)
- BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Gold Sponsor
- Lo-Bar Log Transport Co Ltd.

Bronze Sponsors
- Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative
- RoadHealth Regional Task Force
- Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program

In-Kind Contributors: Goods and Services
- Jim Pattison Broadcast Group – Prince George
- Lo-Bar Log Transport Co Ltd.
- BC Ministry of Environment, BC Parks, Okanagan, Peace, and Omineca Regions
- University of Northern British Columbia
- International Conference on Ecology and Transportation
- Columbia Mountain Institute of Applied Ecology

In-Kind Contributors: Technical Advice and Support
- Parks Canada
- BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- BC Ministry of Environment, Okanagan Region, Fish & Wildlife Section

Partners in Community Projects
- 2015 Canada Winter Games - Prince George
- Public Works and Government Services Canada
- Northern Rockies Regional Municipality
- Sheila Carroll
- Mountain Caribou Project
- Bighorn In Our Backyard
- Yellowhead Road & Bridge (Vanderhoof) and (North Peace) Ltd.
- Caribou Road Services (South) Ltd.

Many other individuals concerned for wildlife and human safety have contributed generously.
Wildlife Collision Prevention Program
British Columbia Conservation Foundation
1B 1445 McGill Road
Kamloops, B.C V2C 6K7
Phone: 250.828.2551
Fax: 250.828.2597
Web: www.wildlifecollisions.ca
www.bisonandroads.com
Email: wcpp@bccf.com

Head Office
British Columbia Conservation Foundation
206 17564 56A Ave.
Surrey BC V3S 1G3
Phone: 604.576.1432
Fax: 604.576.1482
Web: www.bccf.com
Email: hoffice@bccf.com

Business Identification Number 123042822 RT0001