

WildSafeBC Annual Report 2022

Pacific Rim Region

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Executive Summary

This report describes the activities of the WildSafeBC Pacific Rim Program between April 15th and November 30th, 2022. The Program is situated on the unceded traditional lands of the Ahousaht, Tla-o-qui-aht and Ucluelet First Nations. It includes the communities of the Ahousaht First Nation – Ahousaht, the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation – Opitsaht – Esowista – Ty-Histanis, the District of Ucluelet, and the District of Tofino (Figure 1).

There was considerable wildlife activity in all communities of the region throughout the season from April 1st, 2022 to November 30th, 2022. Black bear reports began early in the season as bears that were food-conditioned in 2021 seemed to come back to the same addresses and attractants that they were accessing the year prior. The West Coast then saw black bear reports increasing throughout the season, peaking in August, and then declining through October.

The WildSafeBC Community Coordinators (WCCs) performed outreach activities with the goal of preventing conflict with wildlife, promoting coexistence with the local fauna, and enhancing public safety within each community. The following summarizes key program deliverables over the course of the season:

- 6 WildSafe Ranger presentations were given to 12 classes, reaching 190 youth and teachers.
- 25 presentations were given to community groups, reaching over 340 participants.
- 370 people were reached through door-to-door activities.
- 1,060 people were reached during 8 display booth days.
- 49 Facebook posts were created, and the local page followers increased by 10% with an additional 119 new followers from April, 2022, to the end of November, 2022.
- 5 businesses completed the WildSafeBC Business Pledge criteria, and 10 others are working towards making their operation “WildSafe”.
- 2 campgrounds implemented the Bare Campsite Program (BCP) and their staff participated in a BCP training workshop.
- 14 electric fences were installed (residents and businesses), and 9 detailed consultations were provided that may lead to future installations.
- Human-bear interaction surveys were distributed to residents of Tofino (94 respondents) and Ucluelet (70 respondents).

A broad scope of human-wildlife conflict prevention activities with a focus on education, provision of training, and facilitating the implementation of conflict prevention infrastructure was provided in this region this season. The 2022 season was made possible thanks to generous financial support from the BC Conservation Foundation, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, the Province of BC, the District of Ucluelet, the District of Tofino, Ocean Outfitters, the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, the Wickaninnish Inn, Hotel Zed, Pacific Sands Beach Resort, Jamie’s Whaling Station, Long Beach Lodge Resort, the Tofino Coop, Black Rock Resort, Majestic Ocean Kayaking, Ucluelet Brewing co, Tofino Sea Kayaking, Gaia Grocery, Common Loaf Bake Shop and the Nuuchah-nulth Warriors Program. The Pacific Rim National Park Reserve and TuffCity Radio provided much appreciated in-kind support.

Some key challenges highlighted in the 2022 season were:

- The lack of uniform Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaws adopted across the region.
- Unsecured commercial garbage, recycling, and grease bins.
- Businesses that were using non-wildlife-resistant commercial garbage and grease bins.
- Residential garbage stored outdoors, in backyards, carports or in wooden, plastic or metal structures.
- Chicken and duck coops without electric fencing.
- Improper composting practices and non-bear-resistant structures.
- Freezers and fridges that were kept outdoors.
- The intentional feeding of wildlife.

Moving forward, many initiatives and collaborations are underway to address these and other challenges to help “keep wildlife wild and our communities safe”.

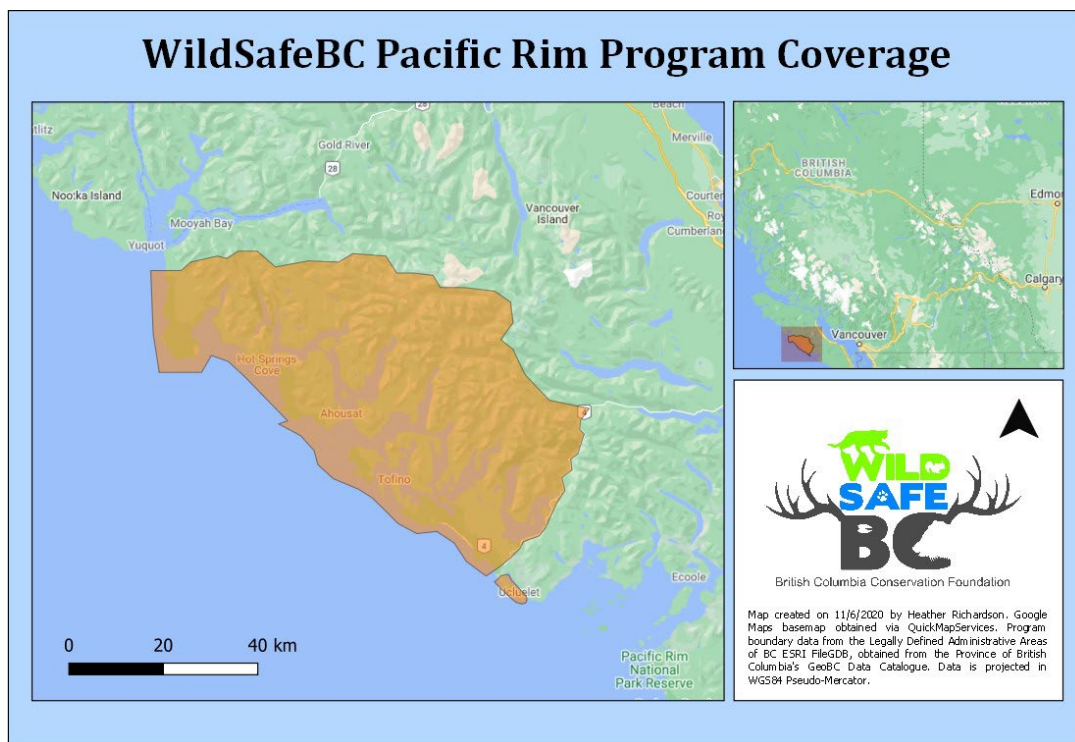


Figure 1. Coverage area for the WildSafeBC Pacific Rim program.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Highlights from the 2022 Season	6
Wildlife Activity - Overview	6
Wildlife Activity – Black Bear	7
Possible Factors Contributing to Bear Activity	10
Realities and Consequences of Human-Bear Conflicts	11
WildSafe Ranger Program	11
Presentations to Community Groups	12
Display Booths	13
Door-to-Door Education	14
Social Media, the Press and Other Medias	15
Partners and Collaborations	16
WildSafe Business Pledge	16
WildSafeBC Bare Campsite Program	16
Indigenous Awareness and Engagement	17
Special Initiatives	18
Electric Fencing	18
Sortn’Go Roll-Out Support	19
Bear Stewardship Committee Meetings	20
Tofino Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaw	21
Commercial Attractant Tagging Initiative	21
Tofino/Ucluelet Human-Black Bear Coexistence Survey	22
Increasing Online Visibility	23
Bear-Resistant Infrastructure	23
Challenges and Opportunities	24
Acknowledgements	26
Appendix I	28
Appendix II	29
Appendix III	31

List of Tables

Table 1. The 2022 Wildlife reports to the WCCs, COS and WARP in comparison to 2020, 2021 and 2016-2020 five-year average.	7
Table 2. Classes that received the WildSafe Ranger Program in 2022.	12
Table 3. Presentations provided by the WCCs in 2022.	12
Table 4. Booths hosted by the WCCs during the 2022 season.	13
Table 5. Door-to-door canvassing in 2022.	14
Table 6. Media employed to increase educational reach in 2022.	15
Table 7. Bare Campsite Program update.	17
Table 8. A diverse range of electric fencing applications that resolved pre-existing or current conflicts.	19
Table 9. Partners/Collaborations and Issues/Initiatives	31

List of Figures

Figure 1. Coverage area for the WildSafeBC Pacific Rim program.	2
Figure 2. Reports to the WCCs, COS and WARP by species from January 1, 2016, to November 30, 2022.	6
Figure 3. Reports to the COS, WCCs and WARP regarding black bear activity by month from January 1, 2016 to November 30, 2022.	7
Figure 4. Black bear reports to WCCs, COS and WARP in Pacific Rim region by primary attractant from January 1, 2016, to November 30, 2022.	8
Figure 5. Unsecured garbage (left), grease (middle) and recycling (right), were the most significant attractant issues.	8
Figure 6. Structure breached by bears.	8
Figure 7. Map of seven incidents involving chickens and one involving ducks in Tofino (left). One coop that was broken into and repaired on three occasions was subsequently electric fenced (right).	9
Figure 8. Bear exiting washroom building at the busy Tofino's Beaches business hub.	9
Figure 9. Bears attempting, and some succeeding, in entering vehicles.	10
Figure 10. WildSafe Ranger presentations at the Wickaninnish Community School in 2022.	11
Figure 11. Staff training sessions for Jamie's Whaling Station (left) and Pacific Sands Beach Resort (right).	13
Figure 13. Booth Day at the Wild Pacific Trail (left). WildSafeBC volunteer Caitlin standing to the left of Marianne, WildSafeBC Pacific Rim Coordinator (right).	14
Figure 13. Bob, Marianne & Loesha (left to right) during an interview with Tuff City Radio (left). Article for which the Westerly interviews both WCCs, a local resident, and Ozzard Environmental (right).	15
Figure 14. Businesses that took the WildSafeBC Business Pledge, in order left to right: Ocean Outfitters, Gaia Grocery, Long Beach Lodge & Embarc.	16

Figure 16. Damien, Manager of the Ucluelet Campground which has taken the Bare Campsite Pledge (left). Training session given to the staff of the Wya Campground at the start of their season (right).....	17
Figure 17. Ahousaht First Nation, Kelsemat Reserve session with resident Marcie Callewart-John (left). Twenty-five Warrior youth leaders and Elders participated in 2 electric fencing sessions using an electra netting kit (right).	18
Figure 17. Growing interest in electric fencing to protect chickens, ducks, and other applications.....	19
Figure 18. Marty (videographer), Bob and Marianne during the filming of the Sortn'Go video.	20
Figure 19. Results from the second bin-tagging survey of the season.	22
Figure 20. Examples of the promotion sent to residents and promoted on social media.	22
Figure 21. Long Beach Lodge Resort's Sea can container for compost bin storage (left) and the Ucluelet Campground Sea can containers that have been converted to food cache buildings (right).	24
Figure 22. Bears highlighted the attractant management issues in local communities.	28
Figure 23. Poster created for the Sortn'Go roll-out to explain ways to anchor carts if they must be kept outdoors.	29
Figure 24. Poster created for the Sortn'Go roll-out to explain waste management best practices in bear country.....	30

Highlights from the 2022 Season

Wildlife Activity - Overview

Reports made to the Conservation Officer Service (COS) through the RAPP line (1-877-952-7277) and online form (<https://forms.gov.bc.ca/environment/rapp/>) are available to the public through WildSafeBC Wildlife Alert Reporting Program (WARP) on the WildSafeBC website. This data is updated daily and this report for the Pacific Rim Region includes data from January 1st, 2016 to November 30th, 2022. The WildSafeBC Community Coordinators (WCCs) also received direct reports that did not show up in the WARP data. Detailed notes were kept by the WCCs, and those numbers are included in the analysis graphs that follow (Figure 2). Reports to the Conservation Officer Service's 24/7 Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line showed:

- Bear report numbers were down from 325 in 2021 to 281 in 2022. Both 2021 and 2022 numbers were significantly higher than the 44 reports in 2020.
- Cougar reports were lower with 6 in 2022, compared to 12 in 2021, and 12 in 2020.
- Wolf reports were 11 and came mostly from areas near to but outside of the communities. There were 4 reports in 2021 and 14 in 2020.
- 10 bears died due to human causes in 2022, 2 from vehicle collisions and 8 were destroyed because they became food conditioned (accessed human-provided food sources repeatedly).

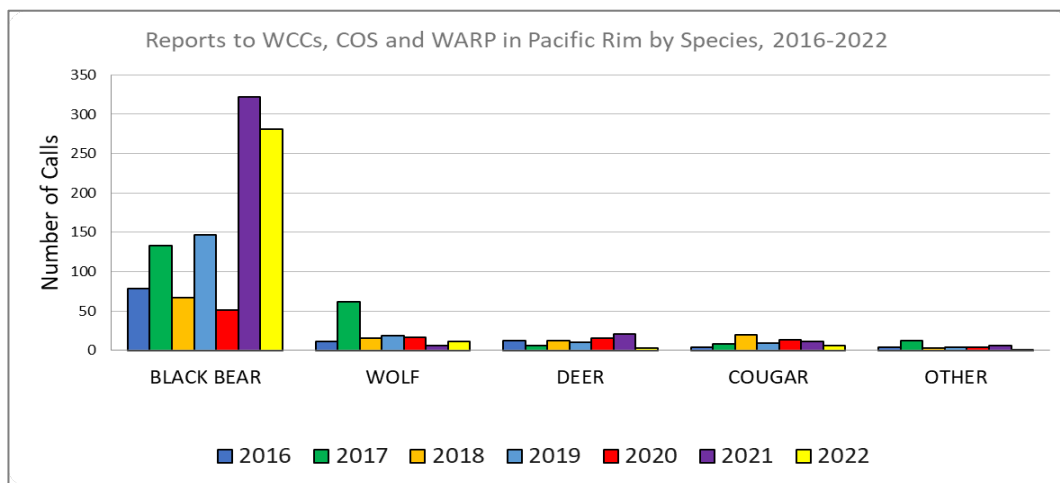


Figure 2. Reports to the WCCs, COS and WARP by species from January 1, 2016, to November 30, 2022.

The 2022 black bear reports (n=281) were significantly higher than the five-year average (n=93) from January 1, 2016, to November 30, 2020 (Table 1). Cougar reports (n=6) were lower than the five-year average (n=11). Wolf reports (n=11) were also lower than the five-year average (n=24). All wolf and cougar reports were sightings or vocalization reports and none were involved in direct human-wildlife conflicts.

Table 1. The 2022 Wildlife reports to the WCCs, COS and WARP in comparison to 2020, 2021 and 2016-2020 five-year average.

Species	2022	2021	2020	2016 to 2020 Average
Black bear	281	325	44	93
Cougar	6	12	12	11
Wolf	11	4	14	24

Wildlife Activity – Black Bear

Black bear activity was reported throughout the season (Figure 3). As in most years, bears were first sighted feeding on emergent green vegetation in roadside ditches starting in March. In April, there were a few reports of human-bear conflicts. Reports increased dramatically in May for Ucluelet and all the communities in the Program area. The pace of incidents continued at a higher frequency from May through mid-October. In July and August, there were multiple reports each day. Reports dropped off sharply after October 20th. There were no reports in November. There was a higher frequency of human-bear conflict reports overall for 2022. The season end number of 281 was 202% higher than the 2016 – 2020 average of 93.

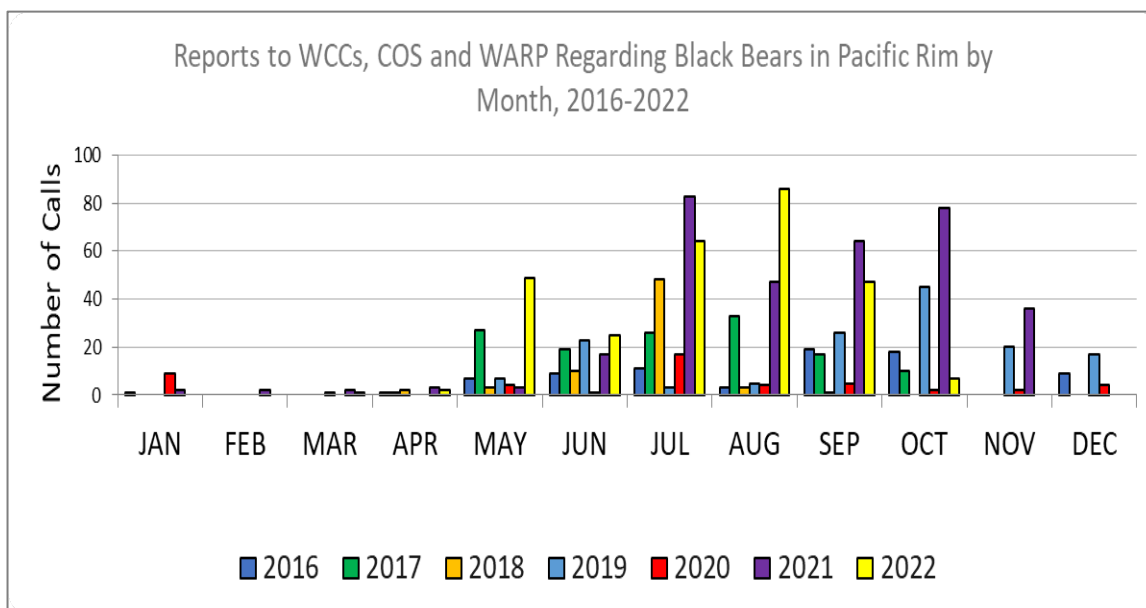


Figure 3. Reports to the COS, WCCs and WARP regarding black bear activity by month from January 1, 2016 to November 30, 2022.

Incident reports were associated with a diverse spectrum of unsecured attractants (Figure 4).

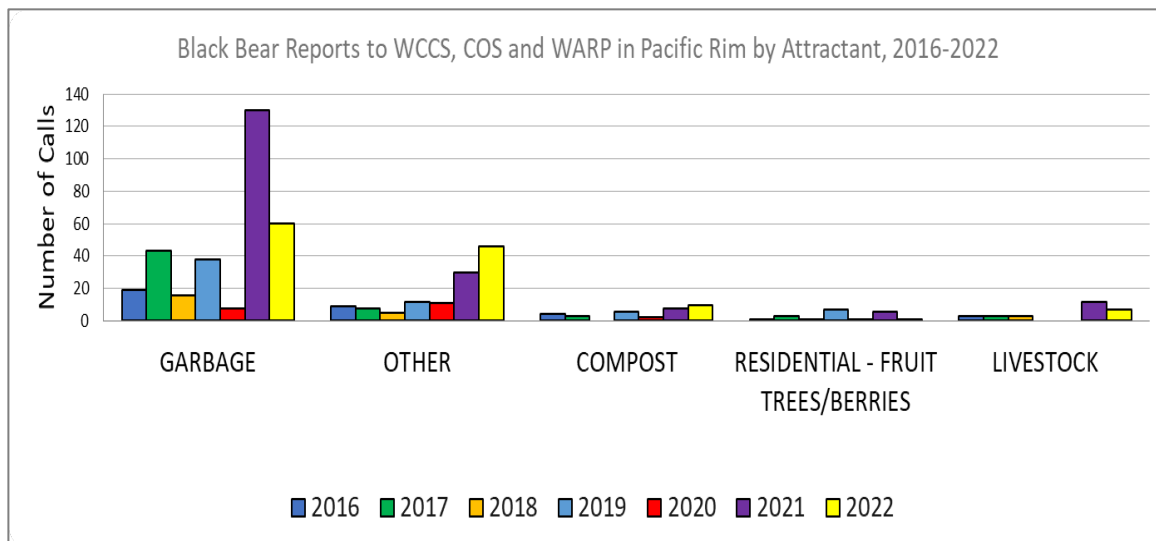


Figure 4. Black bear reports to WCCs, COS and WARP in Pacific Rim region by primary attractant from January 1, 2016, to November 30, 2022.

Many attractant-based incidents involved unsecured commercial bins, recycling storage and restaurant grease bins (Figure 5). There were 21 incidents of bears accessing unsecured commercial garbage, recycling, or compost bins.

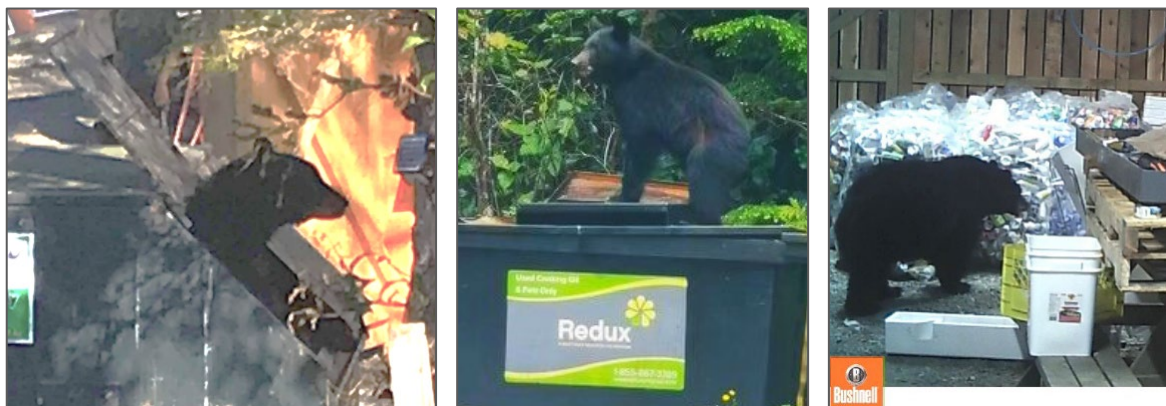


Figure 5. Unsecured garbage (left), grease (middle) and recycling (right), were the most significant attractant issues.

In 2022 structural damage reports started in April and there were regular occurrences into the fall. All structures reported as being damaged contained garbage and/or recycling, and in one case a freezer. Structures included wooden boxes to full sheds. Wooden, plastic and metal sheds were accessed (Figure 6). In all, 35 structures were breached.



Figure 6. Structure breached by bears.

In 2019 and 2020 there were no livestock-related reports. In 2021, there were 11 reports involving chickens in Tofino and one in Ucluelet. There were seven incidents in 2022 involving chickens and one of ducks in Tofino (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Map of seven incidents involving chickens and one involving ducks in Tofino (left). One coop that was broken into and repaired on three occasions was subsequently electric fenced (right).

In Tofino, two chicken owners experienced multiple incidents with bears this season. They were provided with options for electric fencing and the subsequent installations resolved their issues. There were no incidents involving livestock in Ucluelet or elsewhere in the Program area.

The 'Other' category captures numbers for a variety of incident types. There were eight reports of outdoor freezers being accessed. Bears damaged four barbecues. One resident had a bear return repeatedly to chew on their hot tub cover eventually destroying it. There were anecdotal reports of five other hot tub covers damaged. There were seven incidents where a bear entered a building, including a washroom in Tofino during daytime hours (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Bear exiting washroom building at the busy Tofino's Beaches business hub.

Multiple bears in the region learned how to open unlocked vehicles and, in some cases, found attractive items such as candy, baby wipes, leftovers from takeout meals and dog food. This new behaviour was first documented in the region in Ucluelet in the late fall of 2021. In 2022, there were 35 vehicle-entering incidents from across the region including Ucluelet, Millstream and Tofino.

Of these, four of the incidents involved vehicles that were significantly damaged. In two of the cases, bears opened an unlocked vehicle, entered, and then had the door close behind them. One bear in Tofino was believed to have been trapped for at least three hours. They were not able to exit until people opened a door to let them out. These two vehicles were badly damaged. A bear in Ucluelet opened a vehicle with the driver sitting inside. The person was checking their phone and didn't see the bear approach. Both were surprised and the bear left quickly.

A Ucluelet resident security camera captured a bear as it walked up to a vehicle, stood up, tried the door handle to find it locked and then walk over to the next vehicle and try it in the same way. It was locked as well and the bear carried on (Figure 10).



Figure 9. Bears attempting, and some succeeding, in entering vehicles.

Possible Factors Contributing to Bear Activity

Many of the human-bear conflicts in the area occurred at places where conflicts had occurred at the end of the 2021 season. As the 2022 season unfolded, it seemed that several food-conditioned bears from 2021 had returned to the communities.

For example, an easily identifiable ear-tagged bear from 2021 reappeared early in the 2022 season. This food-conditioned bear had been captured in Tofino in 2021. It was fitted with a yellow ear tag and translocated 100 km away into a remote mountain valley. The bear returned 10 days later to the same address where it had been captured. This bear was active in seeking out unsecured attractants and property damage incidents were reported until mid-December 2021. Beginning early in 2022 there were regular reports of this bear's involvement in human-bear conflict situations in Tofino, Esowista and Ty-histanis until it was shot in early August.

Other bears involved in human-bear conflicts in 2022 in Tofino and Ucluelet matched descriptions and behaviours of food-conditioned bears from 2021. All these bears had learned in 2021 that urban communities are reliable sources of easy calories during times when natural foods are limited.

In the early spring of 2022 natural foods were plentiful including grasses, sedges, horsetail, and skunk cabbage and there was an expectation that abundant crops of various berries would follow. However, several weeks of continuous wet and cool weather affected berry crops across the region. There was limited availability of the crucial seasonal natural food sources of berries and salmon. August can be a period of high berry availability on the west coast and in four of the last seven years, it was a month where human-bear conflicts usually decreased. In 2022, incident numbers peaked across the region. The numbers for August 2022 were the highest for any month in the past seven years.

This was followed by a long period of hotter, drier weather and water levels in local salmon systems dropped to very low levels. In the late summer and into the fall, salmon returning to spawn were prevented from going up streams. This extended period of drought-like conditions was eventually broken by heavy rain raising stream levels later in October and into November. Salmon moved upriver as water levels rose. Early reports from salmon stream monitoring crews indicated returns were delayed by several weeks but appeared to be stronger than 2021.

Realities and Consequences of Human-Bear Conflicts

By the end of August eight food-conditioned bears had been destroyed and two killed by vehicle collisions. Incidents involving property damage totaled 60 over the season. Aggressive bear behaviour was reported in 51 close encounter incidents. The WCCs heard of many personal accounts where people unexpectedly encountered bear(s) in their neighbourhood or at their place of work. Many occurred at night (e.g., taking out garbage to commercial bins at end of shift). The frequency and types of incidents generated elevated concern from community residents, visitors, business operators, and local government as noted in the heightened newspaper and radio coverage and social media discussions around the times of these incidents.

WildSafe Ranger Program

The WildSafe Ranger Program (WRP) introduces youth to the concept of human-wildlife conflict, prevention measures and safety, including what to do in close encounter situations with wildlife. The Wickaninnish Community School participated in the WRP by hosting classroom presentations (Figure 10). The total number of youth and teachers that received WildSafe Ranger sessions and received education kits in 2022 was 190 (Table 2).



Figure 10. WildSafe Ranger presentations at the Wickaninnish Community School in 2022.

Table 2. Classes that received the WildSafe Ranger Program in 2022.

School	Grade	Students
Wickaninnish Community School	K/1	34
Wickaninnish Community School	1-2	31
Wickaninnish Community School	2-3	29
Wickaninnish Community School	2-3-4	29
Wickaninnish Community School	4-5	35
Wickaninnish Community School	6-7	32
Total	K-7	190

Presentations to Community Groups

The WCCs gave a total of 24 presentations through webinars and outdoor presentations (Figure 11) to over 350 participants (Table 3).

Table 3. Presentations provided by the WCCs in 2022.

Organization/ Location	Date	Number of People	Topic
Wya Campground	May 11	6	Bare Campsite Program
Tofino Sea Kayaking	May 12	4	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Ocean Park Strata	May 17	7	WildSafeBC & 2021 season overview
Jamies Whaling Station	May 18	11	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Ucluelet Campground	May 19	4	Bare Campsite Program
Ocean Outfitters	May 20	9	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Tofino Mayor & Council Delegation	May 24	7	Season overview & Bylaw initiative
Majestic Ocean Kayaking	May 25	11	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Black Rock Resort	June 8	35	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Wickaninnish Inn	July 12	4	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Wickaninnish Inn	July 13	6	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Pacific Sands Beach Resort	August 11	17	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
Pacific Sands Beach Resort	August 11	23	Wildlife Safety and Awareness
NCFN Warriors	August 31	30	Wildlife Safety and Awareness/Tracking signs
NCFN Warriors	September 1	25	Electric Fencing 101
Iisaak-Sin-Hay_Tiic? mis Co-existence Network	September 14	16	Season overview – Bylaws initiative
Bylaw Services	October 14	3	Wildlife Safety and Awareness/Bylaws
West Coast NEST	October 26	25	Wildlife Awareness & Human-Wildlife Conflict
Tofino/Ucluelet Chambers of Commerce	November 3	40	Season overview – Bylaws – ACRD roll-out
Rotary Club	November 23	15	Season overview – Bylaws – ACRD roll-out
District of Tofino Delegation	November 22	15	Season overview 2022
Ucluelet Electric Fencing Workshop	November 26	3	Electric Fencing Principles, Safety & Demo
Tofino Electric Fencing Workshop	November 27	2	Electric Fencing Principles, Safety & Demo
District of Ucluelet Delegation	November 29	15	Season overview 2022
ACRD Delegation	December 7	15	Season overview 2022
Total of people reached:		356	



Figure 11. Staff training sessions for Jamie's Whaling Station (left) and Pacific Sands Beach Resort (right).

Display Booths

The WCCs hosted a total of 8 outdoor booths reaching over 1,060 people (Table 4). Booth days are a great way to connect with visitors and residents alike to discuss subjects such as attractant management, recreating in wildlife country, safe use of bear spray, and answering questions related to wildlife in the region.

Thank you to the efforts of one of our WildSafeBC volunteers, Caitlin, who has helped us host a booth day at the Wild Pacific Trail. She spent time discussing wildlife awareness and safety with hundreds of visitors and residents and engaging them with fun facts as well as games (Figure 12).

Table 4. Booths hosted by the WCCs during the 2022 season.

Location	Date	Number of people reached
Wild Pacific Trail	June 16	30
Cixwatin Center	June 20	8
Ukee Days	July 23	136
Ukee Days	July 24	105
Wild Pacific Trail	August 18	105
Wild Pacific Trail	August 25	154
Wild Pacific Trail (BC Goes Wild)	September 15	163
Tofino Market (BC Goes Wild)	September 16	359
Total of people reached:		1,060



Figure 12. Booth Day at the Wild Pacific Trail (left). WildSafeBC volunteer Caitlin standing to the left of Marianne, WildSafeBC Pacific Rim Coordinator (right).

Door-to-Door Education

Through door-to-door education, over 370 people were reached with door hanger education packages (Tables 5). An additional 30 door-to-door packages have been provided to Tofino Bylaw upon request to have educational materials on hand when they go around on their neighborhood patrols. WildSafeBC hopes to keep providing these resources to Bylaw in the future.

Thank you to one of our WildSafeBC volunteers, Margaux, who has helped us with door-to-door activities. With her help, we have been able to cover a larger area and speak to more residents in the neighborhood about attractant management in bear country.

Table 5. Door-to-door canvassing in 2022.

Door-to-Door Canvasses	Neighborhood	# of Residences
Ucluelet	Elina rd. Area/ Helen rd. Area/Pine rd. & Aspen rd.	90
	St. Jacques Boulevard	40
Tofino	Ocean Park	60
	WildSafeBC packages provided to Tofino Bylaw for patrols	30
Esowista & Ty-Histanis		150
Total # of residences:		370

Social Media, the Press and Other Medias

The WCCs made 42 posts on the WildSafeBC Pacific Rim Facebook page this season. Page followers increased by 113 from 1,155 to 1,268, a 10% increase. Various forms of media (Figure 13) were utilized to extend the educational reach of the program (Table 6).

Table 6. Media employed to increase educational reach in 2022.

Type	Outlet Name	Date	Title/topic
Radio Interview	Tuff City Radio	May 26	WildSafeBC/Wildlife Activity/Business Pledge & special initiatives
News article	CHEK News	July 21	Wildlife activity/what to do in the case of a bear encounter in highly populated areas/WildSafeBC resources
News Article	Westerly News	Sept 5	What about the bears (Input given for on the ACRD article)/securing the new carts/attractant management tips
News Article	Westerly News	October 7	Bear shot in Tofino after becoming addicted to local restaurant waste
Radio Interview	Tuff City Radio	Oct 17	Human-bear conflict in Tofino – the way ahead & how the community can help bears stay wild
Radio Interview	Tuff City Radio	November 17	The new ACRD Sortn'Go roll-out – how residents can help keep wildlife wild and manage their carts properly.



Figure 13. Bob, Marianne & Loesha (left to right) during an interview with Tuff City Radio (left). Article for which the Westerly interviews both WCCs, a local resident, and Ozzard Environmental (right).

Partners and Collaborations

WildSafeBC is grateful for the support of its funding partners and the many organizations that collaborate with the program to address human-wildlife conflicts in the region. Please refer to Appendix III for details on our partnerships.

WildSafeBC Business Pledge

The WildSafeBC Business Pledge Program has been developed to recognize and support businesses that are good examples in the community for how to safely co-exist with wildlife. To take the pledge, a business is required to follow best practices in solid waste management, provide appropriate wildlife awareness and safety training to staff and disseminate WildSafeBC safety and conflict prevention information.

In return, WildSafeBC will provide ongoing support to the business in the form of staff training, WildSafeBC materials (subject to budget constraints) and a WildSafeBC Business Pledge poster. A total of nine businesses, five in Tofino and four in Ucluelet, made tremendous progress over the season and are still working towards fulfilling the criteria of the pledge. Congratulation to Ocean Outfitters, Gaia Grocery, Long Beach Lodge Resort, Jamie's Whaling Station and Embarc Ucluelet as they are the first five businesses that have met the criteria of the WildSafeBC Business Pledge (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Businesses that took the WildSafeBC Business Pledge, in order left to right: Ocean Outfitters, Gaia Grocery, Long Beach Lodge & Embarc.

WildSafeBC Bare Campsite Program

Through the WildSafeBC Bare Campsite Program (BCP), WildSafeBC provides guidelines and resources to assist campground operators in maintaining a safe campsite for both people and wildlife. BCP staff training was provided in the spring of 2022 for the Wya Campground and the Ucluelet Campground staff. A total of 10 staff members from both campgrounds have been trained, including supervisors. Both campgrounds have fully implemented the program with training, use of bear-resistant infrastructure and utilization of WildSafeBC BCP educational resources such as brochures, posters, and signs (Figure 16). Some campgrounds have a modified BCP. They utilize the WildSafeBC educational resources and/or are working on upgrading infrastructure or have yet to participate in training (Table 7).

Table 7. Bare Campsite Program update.

Campgrounds	Status	Have taken BCP training
Ucluelet Campground	fully implemented	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2021-2022
Wya Campground	fully implemented	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2021-2022

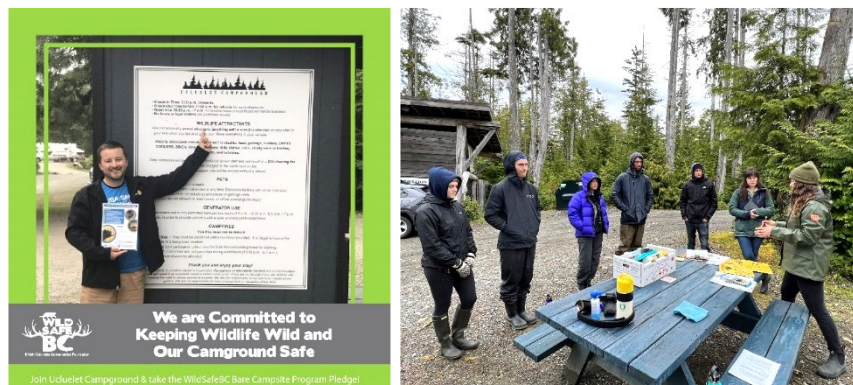


Figure 15. Damien, Manager of the Ucluelet Campground which has taken the Bare Campsite Pledge (left). Training session given to the staff of the Wya Campground at the start of their season (right).

Indigenous Awareness and Engagement

WildSafeBC has been supporting the Warrior program since 2019. The Pacific Rim WCC was invited and honoured to participate for a third year in a multiday field trip with Nuu-chah-nulth Warrior youth leaders and Elders at Cedar Coast Field Station on Vargas Island. WildSafeBC is a proud supporter of the [Warrior Youth Leadership Program](#).

Youth from many Nuu-chah-nulth Nations participated in wildlife tracking, wildlife safety and awareness, and bear spray training during the 2022 field trip. The WCC and Kelsemat Reserve resident Marcie Callewart-John shared knowledge in the field on wildlife habitats, ecology and co-existing with wolves (Figure 17). There was an additional day on learning how to install temporary electric fencing. This is a useful skill and tool for preventing human-bear conflicts in a variety of situations. The fencing was erected as a group activity and various applications were talked about such as protecting camp kitchens, cabins, and smokehouses.



Figure 16. Ahousaht First Nation, Kelsemat Reserve session with resident Marcie Callewart-John (left). Twenty-five Warrior youth leaders and Elders participated in 2 electric fencing sessions using an electra netting kit (right).

The WCC discussed with the project leaders and the youth about options for infrastructure, attractant management, and other ways to prevent human-bear conflicts at the site. WildSafeBC looks forward to supporting the program model as it continues to grow in more communities across British Columbia.

In another collaboration, the WCC responded to requests for educational information following human-bear conflicts in the Tla-o-qui-aht village of Esowista. Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR) provided printing support and helped assemble door hanger information packages for 130 residences. The PRNPR First Nation Liaison Officer, a Ty-his-tanis resident, hand delivered the packages to each household. The communities of Esowista / Ty-his-tanis were closed to the public due to a COVID-19 safety closure.

Special Initiatives

Electric Fencing

The new Tofino Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaw formally enacted in November 2022 requires residents to install electric fencing for protection of beehives, chickens, and other livestock. The ACRD once again provided funding so that WildSafeBC could offer subsidy funds for electric fencing to prevent and resolve human-wildlife conflicts (Figure 17). Residents and businesses were able to have 50% of the cost of their fence reimbursed to a maximum of \$500. There is increasing recognition that electric fencing is an effective option for protecting chickens, composters, garbage sheds, commercial recycling facilities, campground food caches, community gardens, fruit trees and for many other applications. There have been a diverse range of electric fencing applications and each of these projects have resolved pre-existing or current conflicts (Table 8). In 2022, there were also discussions and site visits with another nine residents to assess the best electric fencing options for their situation. These residents have yet to decide on proceeding and are listed as pending.

Table 8. A diverse range of electric fencing applications that resolved pre-existing or current conflicts.

Electric Fencing / Subsidies	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total	Pending - 2023
Chickens/Ducks	5	2	3	5	15	3
Livestock		2	2		4	
Gardens		1		1	2	
Greenhouses			1		1	
Compost	1		1	1	3	
Garbage Shed		1		1	2	
Recycling Shed			2	2	4	
Garbage/Recycling Shed			1	1	3	1
Sheds - other		2		1	4	1
Smoker					0	
Fruit Trees		1	1		2	1
Damage repairs			1	2	3	
Energizer replacements				2	2	
	6	9	11	16	45	6



Figure 17. Growing interest in electric fencing to protect chickens, ducks, and other applications.

Sortn'Go Roll-Out Support

With a new three-stream waste management service provided by the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, bear-resistant bins will also be provided along with the roll-out of this new service. The garbage and compost bins will both have retrofitted lids and clips to secure the bins and make them bear-resistant. As this is a new service, and the first residential compost program for the West Coast region, many education and outreach opportunities were needed to reach residents in the area. WildSafeBC has been collaborating with the ACRD to ensure the messaging regarding attractant management and bears is kept consistent through each platform and outreach campaign. WildSafeBC has participated in:

- 4 open-house events to answer questions from residents in the communities of Hitacu, Esowista & Ty-Histanis, Ucluelet, and Tofino.

- A video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVvqwZxzLiY>) was created to show the best practices when it comes to storing carts in wildlife country (Figure 18).
- An article in *the Westerly* written by the ACRD with input from WildSafeBC outlined these best practices for print media.
- The WCCs created resource sheets for residents and a poster explaining best practices (Appendix II).
- Reviewed the new Sortn'Go Bylaw to ensure that the necessary measures were taken, and that the bylaw is written in a way that is enforceable to further reduce conflict with wildlife.
- Brought the anchoring mechanism (chain, carabiner, and cement block) display to each of our booth days and discussed this option with residents.
- Put together information to be included in the Sortn'Go App to remind residents to keep their carts indoors or properly secured until the morning of pick-up.
- Touched base with the local hardware stores and lumber yards to ensure they are aware that the demand for some items might grow in the Fall during the roll-out of the bins.
- Collaborated with Ozzard Environmental and Surfrider Pacific Rim to have the anchoring mechanism and educational posters in place at both the Tofino and Ucluelet recycling depots.



Figure 18. Marty (videographer), Bob and Marianne during the filming of the [Sortn'Go video](#).

Bear Stewardship Committee Meetings

These bi-monthly meetings with multiple partners, stakeholders and experts give the opportunity to each member to put forward ideas and address specific challenges regarding human-bear coexistence in the region. The goal of the committee is to work together to prioritize the challenges and discuss short-term as well as long-term solutions. In the end, the goal is to enhance human-bear coexistence and public safety in the region.

There were six meetings held via Teams during the season and 17 members regularly participated in these conversations each representing their organization. These meetings included the Conservation Officer Service, multiple WildSafeBC programs operating in the

region, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Ozzard Environmental, the Toquaht Nation and the Ucluelet First Nation. The network continues to grow, and more initiatives have been born out of the conversations held during these key meetings.

Tofino Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaw

The District of Tofino Mayor and Council acknowledged the need for a specific Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaw to provide more regulatory tools for human-wildlife conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The WCCs and the Provincial Coordinator assembled the best examples of bylaws from around the province. They brought these resources and their knowledge of the recommendations from the Tofino Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Plan (2019) to assist Tofino Bylaw Services in the creation of a new bylaw. Ucluelet Bylaw Services also participated in the task.

The Tofino Wildlife Attractant Management Bylaw was passed unanimously in a 3rd reading by Mayor and Council on August 9, 2022. Final Provincial Ministerial approval was expected for November, 2022. The final approved Bylaw will be shared with the District of Ucluelet for their consideration.

Commercial Attractant Tagging Initiative

A survey of commercial attractants including garbage bins, grease bins, compost containers and recycling was undertaken in the hours immediately following the destruction of a fourth food-conditioned bear in Tofino. The bear had been inside a commercial bin during the day behind a restaurant in the downtown core on a busy Saturday.

During a commercial bin tagging activity, the WCC was able to speak to employees of local businesses that had accessible attractant sources. The goal of the survey was to look at the community from the perspective of a hungry bear and see areas that needed improvement. During this first commercial bin survey, the WCC identified 17 major areas containing large accessible attractant sources during a two-hour period (on foot). Within these areas, there were 15 poorly secured commercial bins, 5 small bear-resistant bins left open, 1 poorly managed composter, 1 outdoor freezer and 1 grease bin found unsecured.

A second survey took place in November to observe as many commercial bins as possible in both Tofino and Ucluelet. Two volunteers helped the WCCs accomplish this task; a huge thank you to Ava and Paul. The results of the activity showed that in Tofino, 48% of the bins surveyed were not secured and in Ucluelet, 26% of the bins were found unsecured (Figure 19). Similar initiatives had been undertaken years ago for reports written about human-bear conflicts in the communities. By comparing the data from these reports, we have seen an improvement in Tofino with 19% more bins latched since 2019 and 11% more bins secured in Ucluelet. These improvements are encouraging however the goal would be to get close to 100% secured bins for both communities at any given time during the year.

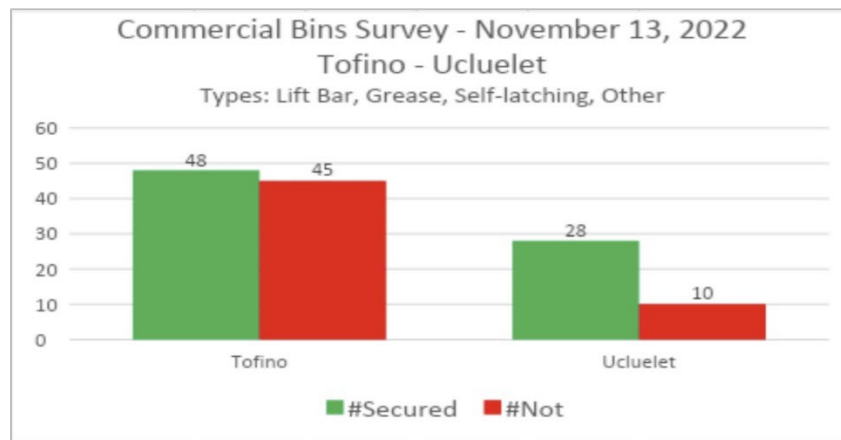


Figure 19. Results from the second bin-tagging survey of the season.

Tofino and Ucluelet Human-Bear Coexistence Survey

Two social science surveys were put together to get more insight into current practices and views towards wildlife for residents of the area. These surveys will help inform future program initiatives and policies regarding coexistence with wildlife.

The survey has been distributed through a Canada Post neighborhood mail out which has allowed the WCCs to target residents of the District of Tofino and Ucluelet specifically. Each local resident should have received a flyer with the information necessary to take part in the survey (Figure 20). Promotion through online tools has also taken place to engage as many people in the region, as possible.



Figure 20. Examples of the promotion sent to residents and promoted on social media.

Within the District of Tofino, approximately 5% of the population (92 respondents) participated in this voluntary Human-Bear Interaction Survey. Most respondents (91%) liked having bears in the area, but 43% of these individuals stated their concerns about bear conflicts with people and human safety. Respondents felt strongly that bears are important for future generations to enjoy (90%), for keeping ecosystems in balance (97%) and that learning to coexist with these

animals is a normal part of living in the region (96%). Most respondents (94%) felt strongly about the District of Tofino pursuing Bear Smart status.

Within the District of Ucluelet, approximately 3% of the population (68 respondents) participated in the survey. Most respondents (96%) liked having bears in the area, but 51% of these individuals stated their concerns about bear conflicts with people and human safety. Respondents felt strongly that bears are important for future generations to enjoy (87%), bears are important for keeping ecosystems in balance (97%), and that learning to coexist with these animals is a normal part of living in the region (97%). Most respondents (90%) felt strongly about the District of Ucluelet pursuing Bear Smart status.

Increasing Online Visibility

By collaborating with many partners and businesses, we have been able to increase the visibility of the organization and our messaging. Having multiple partners referencing our website or sharing our information has created a greater awareness around best practices around coexisting with wildlife.

Additionally, many resort and accommodation providers have included our website link and information about wildlife on their confirmation emails to their guests and we have also been working with both the Tofino and Ucluelet Chamber of Commerces to send important timely information to the business community. The hope is to keep growing this visibility each year. Here are some links referencing our messaging:

- Long Beach Lodge Resort [Wildlife Blog post](#)
- Ucluelet Campground [Bare Campsite program](#)
- ACRD [Sort & Go West Coast page](#)
- The District of Tofino [Talk Tofino Wildlife Attractant Bylaw page](#)
- District of Ucluelet [Waste Management & Recycling page](#)
- Jamie's Whaling Station's website (www.jamies.com)

Bear-Resistant Infrastructure

The WCCs provided information and supported residents as well as local businesses in investing in certified bear-resistant products to replace non-bear-resistant infrastructure. Some examples include:

- Ucluelet Campground sourcing two sea can containers and converting them into food caches for their campers (Figure 21).
- Long Beach Lodge Resort removed any non-bear resistant containers from their property and invested in additional Hid-a-bag Haul-All bins as a replacement.
- Pacific Sands has committed to replacing all non-bear-resistant containers on their property; they have already switched over their recycling bins to TyeDee bins and are waiting for another Haul-All Hid-a-Bag bin order to replace non-bear-resistant containers.

- Hotel Zed purchased an additional Haul-All Hid-a-Bag for their staff accommodation and also made infrastructure changes to their garbage enclosure to ensure it always stays closed and secured from bears.
- One staff accommodation property invested in bear-resistant bins and four others started the process with the WCCs to investigate options.

Many more businesses involved in the WildSafeBC Business Pledge have done small to large changes within their operations to ensure the safety of their staff, the community, and our local bears.



Figure 21. Long Beach Lodge Resort's Sea can container for compost bin storage (left) and the Ucluelet Campground Sea can containers that have been converted to food cache buildings (right).

Challenges and Opportunities

Garbage, recycling, and commercial compost (e.g., unsecured commercial bins, unsecured compost bins, residential garbage stored outside in containers, sheds, or carports) as well as chicken coops (without electric fencing), outdoor freezers, unlocked vehicles and unsecured commercial grease bins have all been major types of attractants in the community that continue to draw wildlife into residential and business areas. Bears have been finding other unnatural food sources including smelly recycling, BBQs with grease and food residues, pet and livestock food, fruit on unmaintained fruit trees, seeds from birdfeeders and more.

There were several instances of a bear(s) not responding to efforts to deter them, remaining in people's yards and at times reacting aggressively or displaying bold behaviors in close encounters with people. There have been 51 close encounters and 7 instances where bears entered buildings with people in them. These behaviors suggest a high degree of food-conditioning which impacts the safety of people, pets, and property.

To address the abundance and availability of unnatural wildlife attractants in the community, the following actions should be implemented in 2023:

- Tofino and Ucluelet Mayors and Councils to consider steps to break the cycle of human-bear conflicts by:
 - Adopting (Ucluelet) and implementing (Tofino) the new wildlife attractant management bylaw.
 - Passing a formal resolution to pursue Bear Smart Community Status.
 - Provide secure multi-year funding to support the WildSafeBC Pacific Rim Program and create an opportunity for year-round, full-time WCC positions.
 - Consider adding “WildSafe” practices to the local business license conditions and development permit conditions.
- Support development of additional portals including comprehensive wildlife-conflict prevention and co-existence information on the websites for the Districts of Ucluelet and Tofino as well as on the websites for Tourism Ucluelet and Tourism Tofino.
- Electric fence workshops to showcase the effectiveness of this tool in preventing human-wildlife conflict in our communities.
- Continued electric fence installations supported by WCC and the ACRD subsidy funds.
- A comprehensive education campaign focusing on the hazards and solutions through social media, news articles, workshops, inserts in municipal notices and other opportunities to extend the program reach.
- Engage volunteers to increase frequency of door-to-door campaigns in hotspot areas.
- Establish working groups in both communities to discuss and develop strategies for reducing the availability of garbage, both commercial and residential to wildlife.
- Keep engaging with businesses on the WildSafeBC Business Pledge Program with the goal of creating a regional approach to having all businesses in the area become a part of the solution to keep wildlife wild and the local communities safe.
- Support campground operators in the full implementation of the Bare Campsite Program.
- Continue offering Wildlife Awareness and Safety and Bear Spray training courses as well as staff training session for businesses.
- Promote the WildSafeBC E-Learning courses.
- Maintain and grow working relationships in the region through participation in the lisaak-Sin-Hay-Tiic?mis Co-existence Network, the Bear Stewardship Committee.
- Increase presence in the schools through the WildSafe Ranger Program.

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Appendix I



Figure 22. Bears highlighted the attractant management issues in local communities.

Appendix II



Figure 23. Poster created for the Sortn'Go roll-out to explain ways to anchor carts if they must be kept outdoors.

Bear-resistant garbage carts

Note that the bear-resistant carts provided are **NOT BEAR-PROOF**. Given enough time and motivation, a black bear can cause serious damage and eventually access the contents.

Black bears that learn to access containers may continue to cause more damage and get into conflict with people, which then leads to safety concerns and the potential death of that bear.

Help keep bears wild!

-  Keep your carts in a secure location (inside your home is best). Note that bears can easily tear apart a shed.
-  If you are unable to keep it inside, anchor your carts securely to ensure an adult bear cannot drag them away.
-  Always keep the clips latched until the morning of collection.
-  Freeze smelly items until the morning of collection.
-  Only put your carts curbside on the morning of collection.
-  Rise your recycling thoroughly as the recycling cart is not bear-resistant (dirty recycling can attract a bear).



Any questions? Contact:

WildSafeBC Pacific Rim
pacrim@wildsafebc.com

Follow us on Facebook

 WildSafeBC Pacific Rim

Report wildlife conflicts:

 BC Conservation Officer
Service RAPP line at
1-877-952-7277



Alberni-Clayoquot
Regional District



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Figure 24. Poster created for the Sortn'Go roll-out to explain waste management best practices in bear country.

Appendix III

Table 9. Partners/Collaborations and Issues/Initiatives

Partners/Collaborations	Issues / Initiatives
Clayoquot Biosphere Reserve - Partner	Funder. Tofino Mudflats Wildlife Management Area, Tofino Official Community Plan, supporter of regional fruit gleaning initiative, West Coast Nest presentation and promotion.
District of Ucluelet - Partner	Funder. Waste management operations, infrastructure and strategy, Bear Smart Community Program, Bylaws development, Official Community Planning.
District of Tofino – Partner	Funder. Waste management operations, infrastructure and strategy, Bear Smart Community Program, Bylaws development, Official Community Planning.
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) - Partner	Funder. Waste management operations, infrastructure and strategy for west coast communities, and First Nations. ACRD Communities Subsidy for electric fencing for the prevention of human-wildlife conflicts, Coastal Food Policy development and human-bear conflict prevention with the upcoming roll-out.
Ocean Outfitters – Partner	Funder. Prevention of dog-wildlife conflicts, training for eco-tourism guides, supporter of regional fruit gleaning program. Prevention of wildlife habituation due to inappropriate wildlife photography and film-making practices.
Pacific Rim National Park Reserve - Partner	In-kind sponsor. Wildlife research, monitoring information sharing. In-kind WildSafeBC operations support. Wild about Wolves research project. Prevention of wildlife habituation due to inappropriate wildlife photography and film-making practices.
Hotel Zed – Partner	Funder. Promotion of human-wildlife safety and coexistence. Development of dog-owner education and for hotel guests. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC in the form of a power point to be added to their current staff on-boarding resource.
Wickaninnish Inn – Partner	Funder. Promotion of human-wildlife safety and coexistence. Training for staff provided by WildSafeBC in person. Engaged in WildSafeBC Business Pledge process.
Iisaak Sin Hay Tiic?mis - Regional Coexistence Network – Collaboration	18 members representing First Nations, all levels of government, Tourism agencies, business organizations, NGOs and others.
Ucluelet and Tofino Chambers of Commerce - Collaboration	Deliver wildlife co-existence education and safety for Ambassadors Training Program for tourism frontline staff. Input on content from WCC. Monthly newsletters distribution with Wildlife activity and attractant management tips.
Conservation Officer Service - Collaboration	Information sharing to remain current on wildlife activity, human-wildlife conflict situations and to develop and implement action plans.
Both District Bylaw Services –	Funders. Information sharing to remain current on wildlife activity,

Collaboration	human- wildlife conflict situations and to develop and implement action plans. Collaborating on development and implementation of a wildlife attractant management bylaw as well as other tools to effect improvements in wildlife attractants management.
BC Provincial Parks Service – Collaboration	Promotion of human-wolf conflict prevention program on Vargas Island and backcountry Bare Campsite Program. Prevention of wildlife habituation due to inappropriate wildlife photography and film-making practices.
Tofino Community Food Initiative – Collaboration	Promotion of prevention of human-wildlife conflicts as a core principle of sustainable food production. Collaborating on booth days and promotion of electric fencing for livestock owners.
Regional Fruit Gleaning Organization – Collaboration	Promotion of prevention of human-wildlife conflicts as a core principle of sustainable food production.
Ozzard Environmental - Collaboration	Providing self-latching commercial bins to hotspot areas identified by WildSafeBC. Engaging with their customers and making sure they are aware to keep their bins locked 24/7. Supporter of human-black bear conflict reduction best practices.
Black Rock Oceanfront Resort - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC.
Tofino Sea Kayaking - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC.
Gaia Grocery - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge has been completed by this business. This business has received staff training through the WildSafeBC e-learning platform.
Common Loaf Bake Shop - Partner	Funder.
Majestic Ocean Kayaking - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC.
Tofino Coop - Partner	Funder. This business has invested in bear-resistant recycling and garbage bins. They have also removed one of their non-bear-resistant bins outside the store to decrease human-black bear conflict.
Ucluelet Coop - Collaboration	WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business.
Pacific Sands Beach Resort - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC.
Embark Ucluelet - Collaboration	WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business.
Ucluelet Brewing - Partner	Funder.
Long Beach Lodge Resort - Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge has been completed by this business. This business has received staff training through the WildSafeBC e-learning platform.
Jamies Whaling Station – Partner	Funder. WildSafeBC Business Pledge is in progress for this business. Staff training was provided by WildSafeBC.

Ardent Properties Management - Collaboration	Distribution of wildlife in area, wildlife awareness and attractant management information by email to each homeowner of multiple strata developments managed by this agency.
Surfrider Pacific Rim - Collaboration	Collaborating on messaging for the upcoming ACRD roll-out and other initiatives about wildlife attractant management tips.
Tofino Urban Farm & Co - Collaboration	Working with businesses to make sure that they are securing their bear-resistant bins properly and that residents are putting compost out only on the morning of pick-up.
Ucluelet Campground - Collaboration	This business has implemented the BARE campsite program and keeps improving their operation year after year to decrease human-wildlife conflict. Staff training has been provided for staff by WildSafeBC.
Wya Campground	This business has implemented the BARE campsite program and keeps improving their operation year after year to decrease human-wildlife conflict. Staff training has been provided for staff by WildSafeBC.
Tuff City Radio Collaborator & in-kind partner	Supporter of our messaging, reminding residents to keep attractants secure and help keep wildlife wild. Many radio interviews to help spread the WildSafeBC messaging.