

COLUMBIA SHUSWAP ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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*Keeping Wildlife Wild and
Communities Safe*

CITY OF
SALMON ARM



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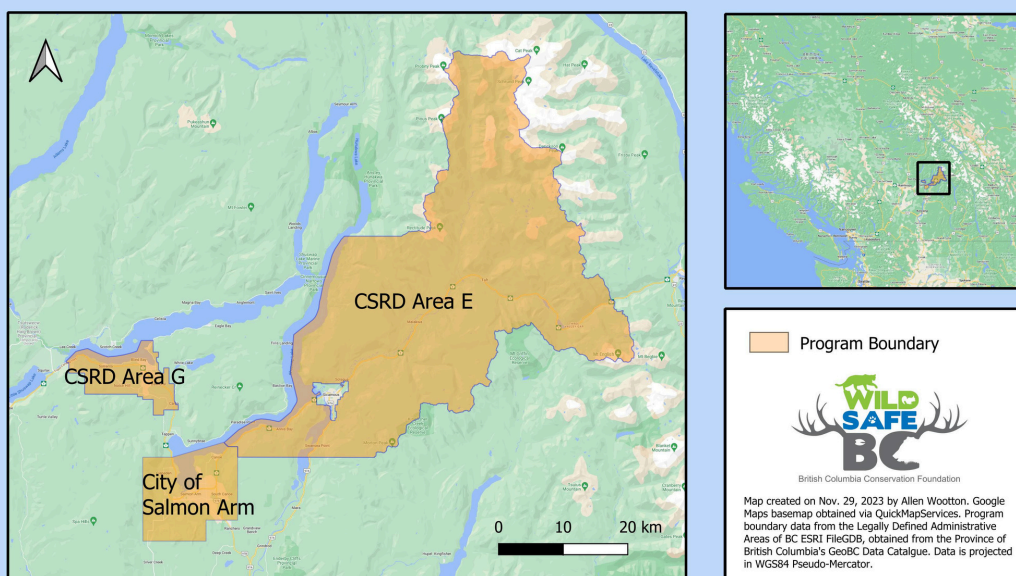
Executive Summary

This report describes the activities of the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap program for the 2024 season between April 28 - June 24. (*The program was ended early due to the coordinator departing WildSafeBC*). The main goal of the WildSafeBC Community Coordinator (WCC) is to assist communities in preventing human-wildlife conflicts through educational programs, collaboration, and community solutions. The following report summarizes key program deliverables over the course of the 2024 season, and will help shape the delivery of the program for the 2025 based on coordinator, community, and sponsor needs.

Program Coverage Area

The WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap program covers the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) Areas G and E, as well as the City of Salmon Arm. This includes the communities of Blind Bay, Sorrento, Notch Hill, Swansea Point and Malakwa. WildSafeBC acknowledges that the program takes place on the unceded traditional territory of the Secwépemc People.

WildSafeBC CSRD Areas G&E and City of Salmon Arm Program Coverage



2024 Highlights

21

Students Educated

255

Community Members Reached

3

Community Event Booths

109

Bins Tagged

27

Facebook Posts

WildSafe Ranger Program

The WildSafe Ranger Program introduces students to the concept of human-wildlife conflict and encourages them to take an active role in reducing human-wildlife conflict at home by helping their families identify backyard wildlife attractants. In addition, students learn how to have a safe and respectful relationship with wildlife. The program complements the BC Science K-9 Curriculum. The WildSafeBC Community Coordinator delivered one WRP presentations to the We Think Outside Foundation at Shuswap Lake Provincial Park on June 19th, 2024. A total of 21 children aged between 3-14 years old became WildSafe Rangers and received a WildSafe Ranger kit (activity book, a WildSafe Ranger oath card, a sticker, a WildSafe Ranger pin, and a bookmark) to take away with them.



Community Groups

The WildSafeBC Community Coordinator gave a total of 3 presentations to 78 participants. These presentations were bear spray workshops that allowed participants to practice using inert bear spray that does not have the active ingredient. Participants also learned about wildlife behaviour and biology, factors that lead to human-wildlife conflict, and the many solutions available to reduce conflict and stay safe.

The WCC also delivered a bear spray workshop to the Silver Star Bear Stewardship Society on June 22, 2024, where 41 individuals attended. This presentation took place in Silver Star, near Vernon BC, which does not currently have a WildSafeBC Community Program in place.

Community Organization	Attendees	Date
Shuswap Outdoors Club	25	May 27th
Salmon Arm Hiking Group	35	May 29th
City of Salmon Arm	18	June 6th



Community Groups



Display Booths

Display booths allow the public to view and interact with our educational materials, learn about wildlife safety, discuss wildlife attractant management, and network our program offerings to various groups of residents. In 2024, 136 people visited the WildSafeBC display booth at 3 community events across the community.

Community Event	Attendees	Date
Sorrento Farmers Market	50	June 1st
South Shuswap Chamber of Commerce Emergency Preparedness Day	11	June 8th
Sorrento Centre Senior's Picnic	75	June 11th



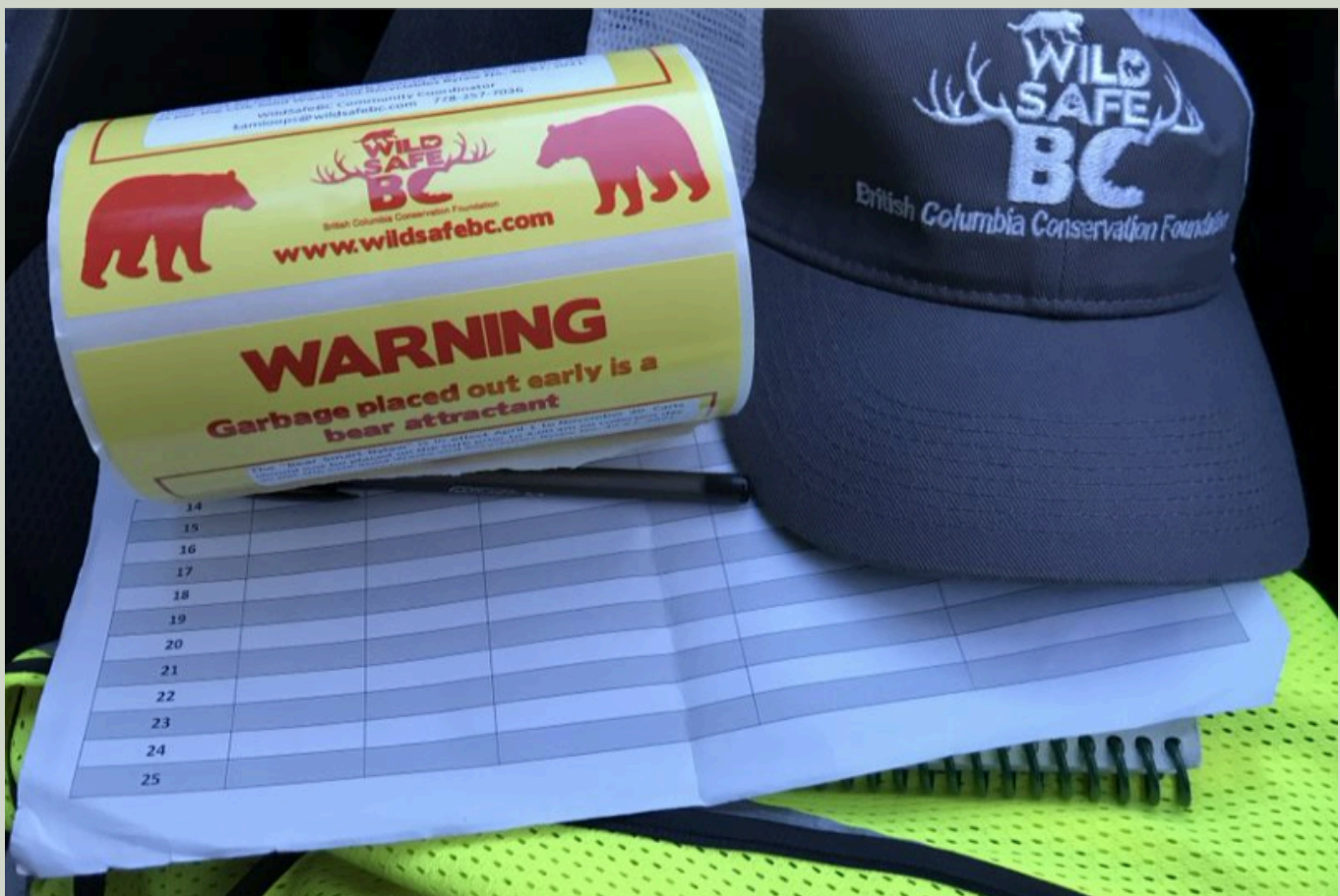
Display Booths



Bin Tagging and Door-to-Door

Garbage bin tagging consists of placing a highly visible and removable warning sticker on top of curbside containers the evening before collection day. During 2 outings, a total of 109 bins were tagged, one outing in Zone A and one outing in Zone E within the Salmon Arm Solid Waste Collection Program boundaries.

Door-to-door canvassing was conducted in areas that were experiencing high human-wildlife conflicts and requested by the COS. One door-to-door canvas was done in Canoe Creek Estates following frequent black bear sightings. A total of 39 homes received WildSafeBC's wildlife safety and awareness messaging through door-to-door canvassing, and 10 people were reached with an in-person conversation. Discussions regarding attractant management and wildlife activity, along with educational written letters were delivered to this high-conflict area.



Social Media and Press

The WildSafeBC Community Coordinator created 27 posts on the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap Facebook page between April 28th and June 24th. Many Facebook posts were also shared by Facebook users into other community groups or on their own personal timeline, which helped promote the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap Facebook page.

The WCC also participated in 5 media releases in the 2024 season:

- Video interview on the City of Salmon Arm Facebook page with Mayor Alan Harrison
- Newsletter article by the Swansea Point Community Association
- News article with the South Shuswap SCOOP
- News interview with Castanet in the Shuswap
- News interview with the Salmon Observer

Shuswap reminded to be bear aware after sightings

WildSafeBC offers tips to help avoid human-wildlife conflicts

[Heather Black](#)

Jun 1, 2024 10:00 AM

Updated Jun 1, 2024 10:06 AM



The bears are back in town and WildSafeBC is urging people to take steps to reduce wildlife-human conflicts as there have already been a few sightings in town, including this one seen roaming around 2nd Avenue NE by King's Christian School. (Kara Wiebe-Facebook)

STEPS TO AVOID BEAR CONFLICTS

Wildsafe BC urging residents to reduce attractants as Shuswap bear sightings on the rise

Luc Rempel - May 29, 2024 / 4:00 am



Photo: Pixabay

Challenges and Future Goals

Improperly managed garbage, fruit trees, bird feeders, and urban livestock continue to be a source of human-wildlife conflict in the Columbia Shuswap. While some residents are familiar with conflict and how to prevent it, others are less aware of the risks of human-wildlife conflict. Continued outreach is needed to provide people with knowledge and skills on how to manage wildlife attractants and how to stay safe when in wildlife country. The WildSafeBC Community Coordinator recommends the following activities for 2025:

- Continued participation in the Columbia Shuswap Wildlife Working Group
- Increase door-to-door campaigns in hotspots and recruit volunteers to assist in canvassing neighborhoods
- Continue to promote WildSafe Ranger Programming in schools and to youth organizations to education children on human-wildlife conflict and wildlife safety
- Note the neighborhoods in Salmon Arm that have solid waste bins outside but not on the curb and follow up during the day for door-to-door canvassing to speak with residents about storing waste securely
- Utilize the WildSafe Business Pledge to increase awareness in the business community
- Continue promoting the WildSafeBC Bare Campsite Program to local campgrounds and assist already interested campgrounds in implementing the program in the spring
- Continue to increase the followers of the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap Facebook page and share more posts on community neighborhood pages
- Host electric fencing workshops in more rural areas of the community where there may be need or interest
- Continue to support the City of Salmon Arm as they explore further ways to help residents secure their solid waste
- Continue to promote the use and importance of bear spray when recreating – this could be done by reaching out to recreation/hiking clubs again next year to train new members
- Continue to develop relationships with Indigenous groups and other Columbia Shuswap communities and neighborhood association groups
- Continue to work with the COS and strengthen working relationship

Acknowledgements

The WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap Community Coordinator would like to thank the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, the City of Salmon Arm, the Province of British Columbia, and the BC Conservation Foundation for funding the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap project. Thank you to Barbra Fairclough for her instrumental role in bringing WildSafeBC to the region and for her continued support. Thank you to CSRD Area G Director Natalya Melnychuk, Area E Director Rhona Martin, and many other CSRD staff for their continued support. Thank you to the many staff at the City of Salmon who assisted in the delivery of the program in the community, including Jon Mills. Thank you to the Conservation Officer Service for their direction and support of the program. Lastly, the WildSafeBC Columbia Shuswap Coordinator would like to send an enormous thank you to all the British Columbia Conservation Foundation staff and fellow provincial WildSafeBC Community Coordinators for their encouragement and support. This program would not be able to succeed without the collaboration of all those mentioned.

Thank You!



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