

KIMBERLEY - CRANBROOK ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Prepared By :

Danica Lisk



*Keeping Wildlife Wild and
Communities Safe*



KIMBERLEY
BC • CANADA



www.wildsafebc.com



bc@wildsafebc.com



250-828-2551 ext. 110

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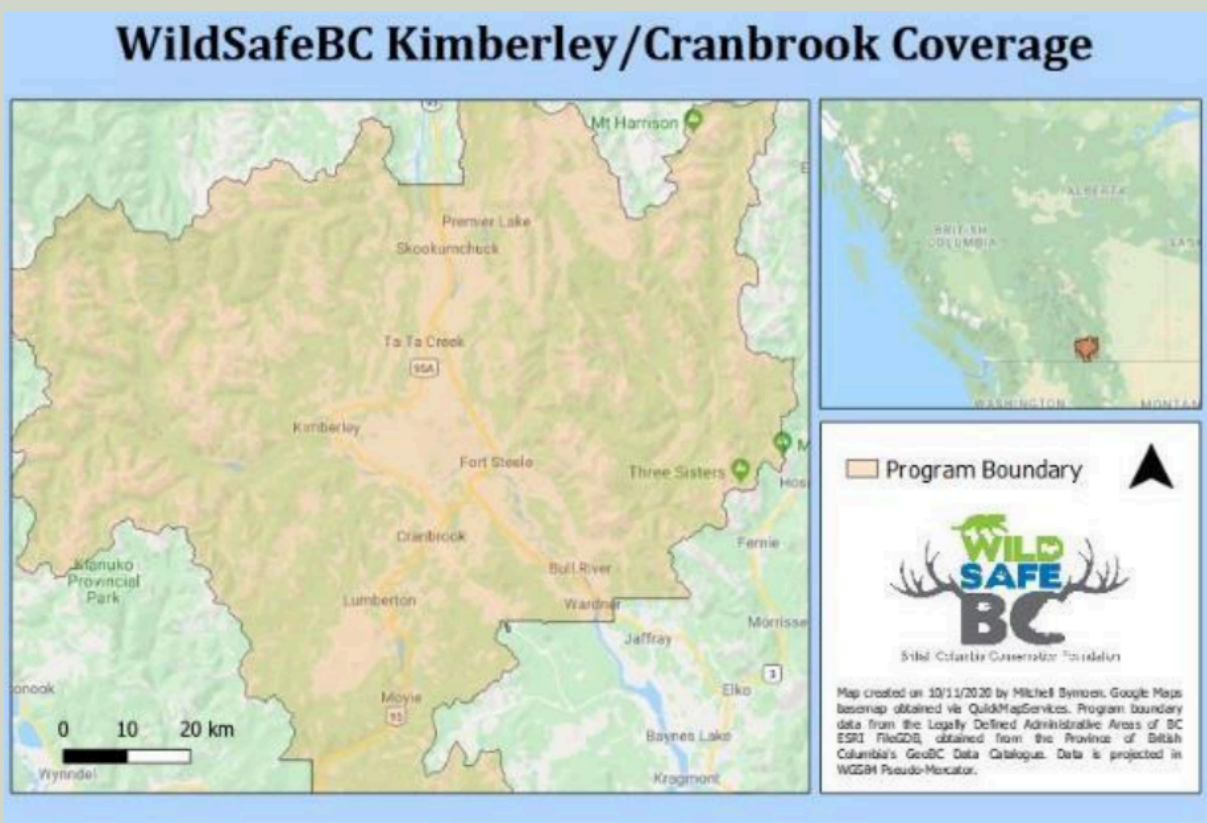
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Executive Summary

This report describes the activities of the WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook program for the 2024 season between April 15th and November 30th. The main goal of the WildSafeBC Community Coordinator 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 Kimberley-Cranbrook program covers approximately 974 square kilometers. WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook is located within the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa, in the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) management zones C & E including the City of Cranbrook, the City of Kimberley and the surrounding communities from Wycliffe, Wasa, Skookumchuck, Moyie to Wardner.



2024 Highlights

1874

Students Educated

3161

Community Members Reached

10

Community Event Booths

71

Bins Tagged

7.1K

Facebook Users Reached

Conservation Officer Service Reports

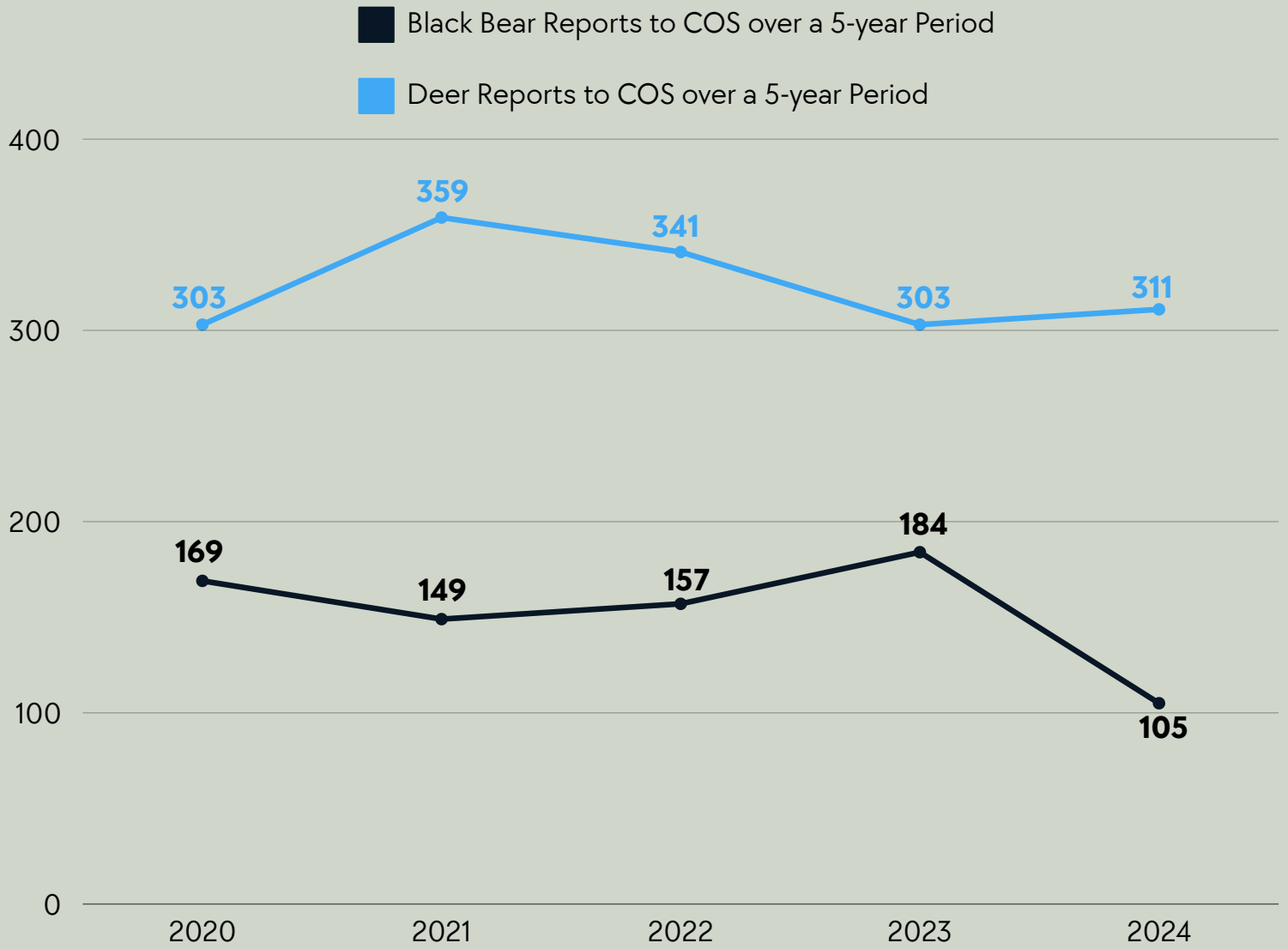
From January 1 to November 30, a total of 480 wildlife reports have been made to the COS through the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line (1-877-952-7277) or online form (<https://forms.gov.bc.ca/environment/rapp/>) regarding black bear, deer, elk, raccoon and cougar.

Similar to previous years, deer were the species most often reported to the COS in 2024, followed by black bear (Figure 1). From January 1st, 2024, to November 30th, 2024, there were 105 black bear reports, which is lower than the number of reports made in 2023. Reasons for why the black bear reports are lower can be attributed to more educational outreach door to door immediately after a reported conflict, as well as increased communication between the Conservation Officers, Bylaw Enforcement Officer and the WildSafeBC Community Coordinator regarding attractant management enforcement within the City of Kimberley. More volunteers to manage bear in area signs as well as picking up scattered garbage that bears had gotten into overnight. There was also a healthy amount of berry crops in the area this year.

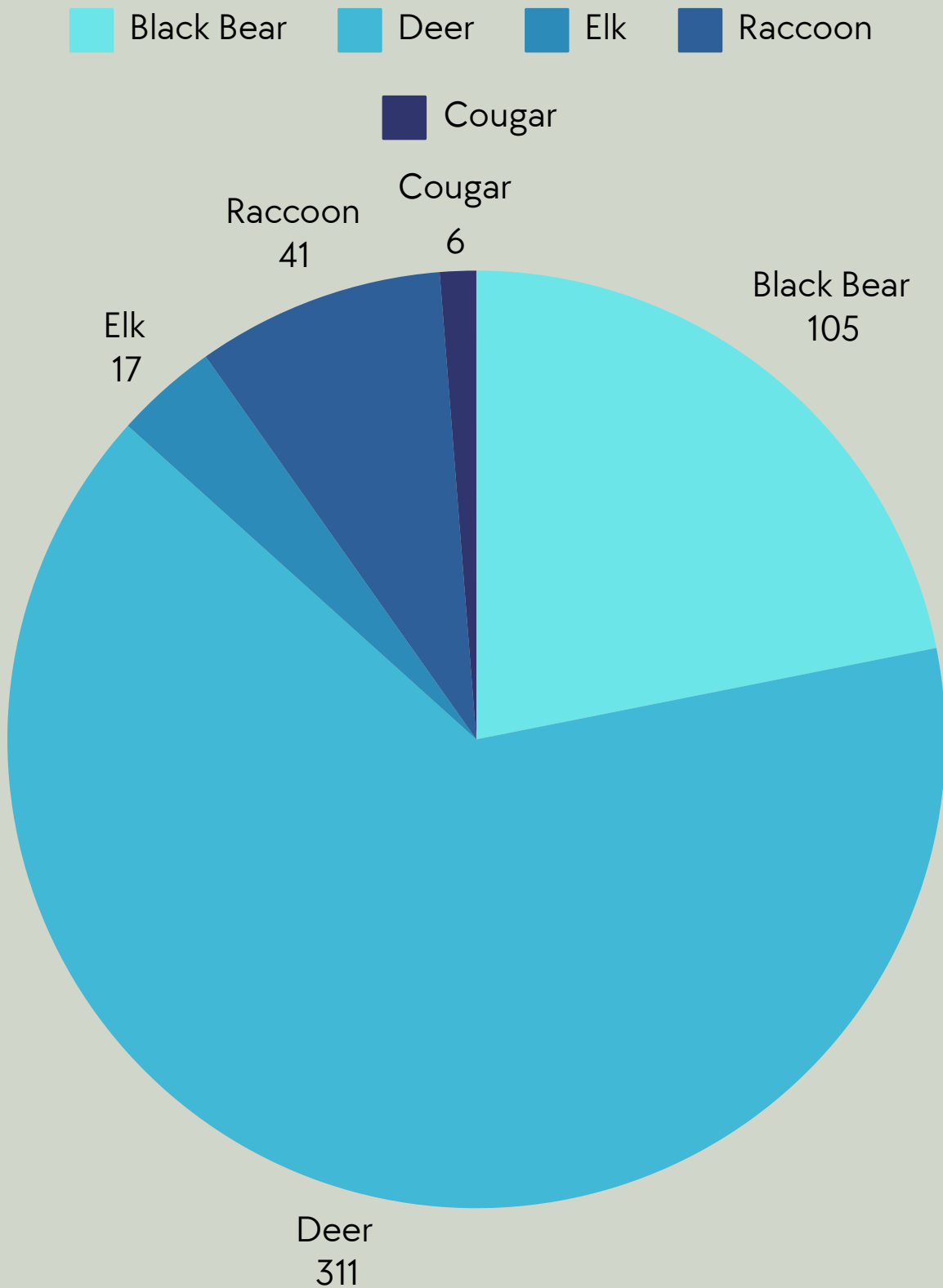
The deer calls have increased this year, most likely because there was a couple of Chronic Waste Disease samples found in the deer population around Cranbrook and area. There was an education campaign put out by Provincial Biologists, the City of Cranbrook as well as WildSafeBC to better explain the behaviour of deer infected with Chronic Waste Disease. As populations of urban deer increase within the City of both Kimberley and Cranbrook, fear of Chronic Waste Disease within city limits may be a factor driving these calls in.



Conservation Officer Service Reports



Conservation Officer Service Reports



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 Kimberley-Cranbrook coordinator delivered 5 WRP presentations with 1 entire elementary school completing the program, 3 summer camps, 1 youth programs (Table 1). A total of 212 children throughout RDEK management Zone C & E became WildSafe Rangers and received a WildSafe Ranger kit to take away with them.

School/Group	Grade	# Reached	Date
Camp Odessey	2-4	24	July 12
Moyie Provincial Park - BC Parks Foundation	preschool -7	62	July 12 & 13
Wasa Lake Provincial Park - BC Parks Foundation	preschool - 7	32	August 23-24
Scouts, Cubs and Beavers	Ages 4 - 10	34	October 28
McKim Elementary School	1-6	91	November 1



Community Groups

The WildSafeBC Coordinator provided 18 community presentations, reaching 464 members of the public. Presentations included wildlife awareness, such as deer safety during fawning seasons/rutting season and bear behaviour presentations, to Nexus Community Support Society, Girl Guides, Scouts, Camp Odessa, Wildsight, Mainroads, Junior Chamber International (JCI) Kootenay and, Bayer Crop Science Inc.. Know my animals + scavenger hunt presentations were provided to Cubs, Beavers and, the Kimberley Library. Bear identification and bear spray demonstrations Bayer CropScience Inc., Mainroads, the College of the Rockies, the City of Cranbrook at Idlewild Park, the City of Kimberley at Marysville baseball field, JCI, Moyie Provincial Park, Wasa Lake Provincial Park. Other wildlife presentations made available to the public online or in person at Idlewild Park, Provincial parks and the College of the Rockies. Below is an image of the International Students from the College of the Rockies participating in a wildlife awareness presentation.



Display Booths

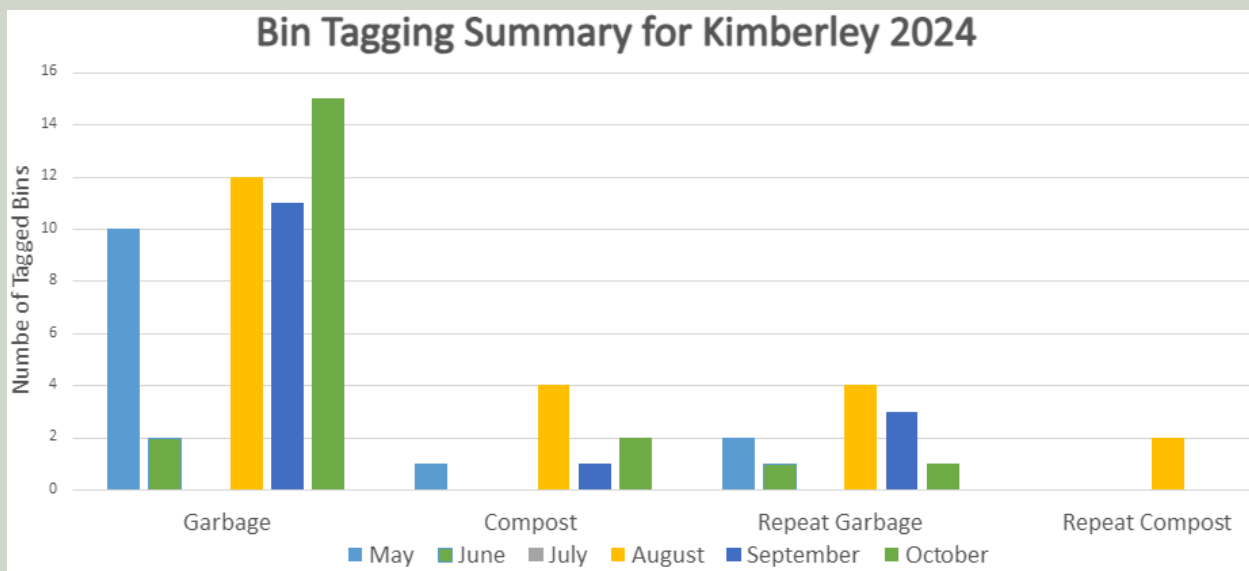
Display booths allow the public to view and interact with our educational materials, learn about wildlife safety, discuss wildlife attractant management, and network our program offerings to various groups of residents. In 2024, more than 1461 people visited the WildSafeBC display booth at 10 community events across the community. WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook had display booths at the following events: Kimberley's Paddle Fest, (Re)Discover Kimberley, The Future is Now event, Girl Guides in the East Kootenay, International Student welcome, Wasa Lake Provincial Campground, Moyie Provincial Park, Kimberley Platzl event, Ed Fest and a couple of trail display booths at Eager Hill, Idlewild Park and during Marysville Daze. Many participants enjoyed the scavenger hunt set up around the booth, the props; especially the skulls and the tattoos.



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 30 outings, a total of 71 bins were tagged across 4 garbage collection zones. Kimberley is the only City that participated in garbage tagging this year and all neighbourhoods were focused on, with higher priority on the ski hill, townsite and Marysville. Garbage bin tagging was effective in Kimberley. The efficacy of waste bin tagging was shown, as 39 of residences whose waste bins were tagged during the survey did not have bins out on the curb again during a second survey, and only 11 of residences whose bins were tagged during an initial survey had their waste bins out on the curb again during a second survey. The efficacy of compost bin tagging was shown, as 8 of residences whose waste bins were tagged during the survey did not have bins out on the curb again during a second survey, and only 2 of residences whose bins were tagged during an initial survey had their waste bins out on the curb again during a second survey. October had the highest number of waste bins tagged (15) but the lowest number of repeat offenders (1). August had the second highest number of waste bins tagged (12) but the highest number of repeat offenders (4).

Door-to-door education reached 1103 people with door hangers. The WildSafeBC Coordinator also knocked on every door and engaged residents in conversations about wildlife as well as looking for participants to complete a social science survey to add to Kimberley's Bear Working Group's analysis of what the community thinks about bears, bear behaviour and bear attractants within the community. Once analyzed, data was entered into the draft bear hazard assessment.



Social Media

The WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook Facebook page came out of hibernation on April 15, 2024 with an introductory post. Over the season, the page has had 25 new Facebook followers, from 1,658 followers in November 2023 to 1,691 followers in November 2024. As well, the page has received 33 Facebook Page likes during this same time period. Throughout the season, the WildSafeBC coordinator engaged with posts relating to wildlife activity and provided education and information to residents in community Facebook Page groups. This approach was an effective method to bring people in to explore our page and our content while continuing to provide engaging education. Many Facebook posts created were also shared by Facebook users into other groups or on their own personal timeline, which helped promote the WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook Facebook page. In total, 102 Facebook posts were created that reached 7,100 people from April 15th to November 30th. Many posts reached over 1,000 Facebook users, with the most impactful post created was WildSafeBC Bear Spray Tips reaching approximately 1,522 people and was shared 8 times.

Reach



7.1K

↑ 402%

Content interactions



293

↑ 4.1K%

Messaging contacts



3

↑ 50%

Follows

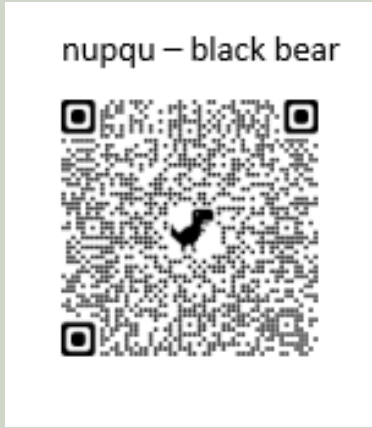


25

↑ 66.7%

Indigenous Awareness and Engagement

WildSafeBC incorporated Ktunaxa Language into general wildlife presentations delivered within the school system as well as general wildlife presentations for the public for all ages. QR Codes were made up of words found within the messaging WildSafeBC delivers to bring Ktunaxa Presence into WildSafeBC's programming. Participants used their phone camera to read each QR Code and the word was pronounced in Ktunaxa Language for the participant. The WildSafeBC Coordinator also attended Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 to watch the Hoop Dancers at Rotary Park in Cranbrook as well as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with the Ktunaxa Nation at St. Eugene on September 30 for a Truth and Reconciliation walk to Crying Hill.



BC Goes Wild

BC Goes Wild Colouring contest sheets were handed out by the Cranbrook Library as well as the Kimberley Library. WildSafeBC Community Coordinator also held three events. On September 13th, there was a wildlife booth and presentation provided to the International Students at the College of the Rockies, with an extended invitation to all students and teachers for the bear spray demonstration. A bear identification and behaviour presentation, followed by a bear spray demonstration was provided to interested members of the public at Idlewild Park in Cranbrook on Sunday September 15th. A nature story walk in Kimberley was provided on September 19th to all ages, where plants that bears eat were identified, followed by a bear spray demonstration at Eimer's Lake. In total, there were 81 participants throughout the week.



Challenges and Future Goals

Improperly managed garbage, fruit trees, bird feeders, and urban livestock continue to be a source of human-wildlife conflict in Kimberley-Cranbrook. 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 WildSafe Kimberley-Cranbrook Coordinator recommends the following activities for 2025:

- Work on an educational campaign around bird feeders being a major attractant in Kimberley for bears, esp. in the Spring. Early door-to-door outreach regarding not only bird feeders, but barbeques and garbage up at the Skill Hill and Dogwood area would be beneficial.
- Aggressive Deer outreach in Cranbrook continues to work well, more calls are coming to WildSafeBC Coordinator rather than to the City. It is recommended to bring out Chronic Waste Disease pamphlets along. Reach out to Ministry of Environment for pamphlets. Wildlife biologists with the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship have this information.
- Reconnect with Wildsight's Apple Capture gleaning group. Needs more awareness as apples are becoming more and more of an attractant in both Cranbrook and Kimberley. Recommended to start in the surrounding RDEK management areas such as Meadowbrook, Wycliffe and Moyie and work towards the City of Kimberley and Cranbrook.
- Reach out to Wildlife Biologists with the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship to start up electric fencing cost share program in the East Kootenays. Currently started but needs attention from WildSafeBC to share the information.
- Work on Business pledges. In Kimberley, the restaurants need attention. In Cranbrook, focus on outdoor shops.
- Composting campaign for Kimberley and Cranbrook (if Cranbrook is getting a compost program in place). Recommended to go door-to-door and ask about storage, human-wildlife conflict, how residents like the program so far. Take these stats and bring them back to the Bear Working Group in Kimberley.
- Finalize Bear Smart Working Group's Bear Hazard Assessment by inputting stats from the Social Science Survey, send off draft for review and then present final Bear Hazard Assessment to City Council prior to beginning Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Plan.

Acknowledgements

The WildSafeBC Kimberley-Cranbrook Coordinator would like to thank the City of Cranbrook, the City of Kimberley, the Regional District of East Kootenay, Columbia Basin Trust, the Province of British Columbia, and the BC Conservation Foundation for funding the WildSafeBC Kimberley- Cranbrook project. Thank you to the Conservation Officer Service for their direction and support of the program, including Jim Melenka, Jesse Risto, Reiker Krenz. Lastly, the WildSafeBC Kamloops 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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