

NORTHERN ROCKIES ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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*Keeping Wildlife Wild and
Communities Safe*

**NORTHERN
ROCKIES**
Regional Municipality



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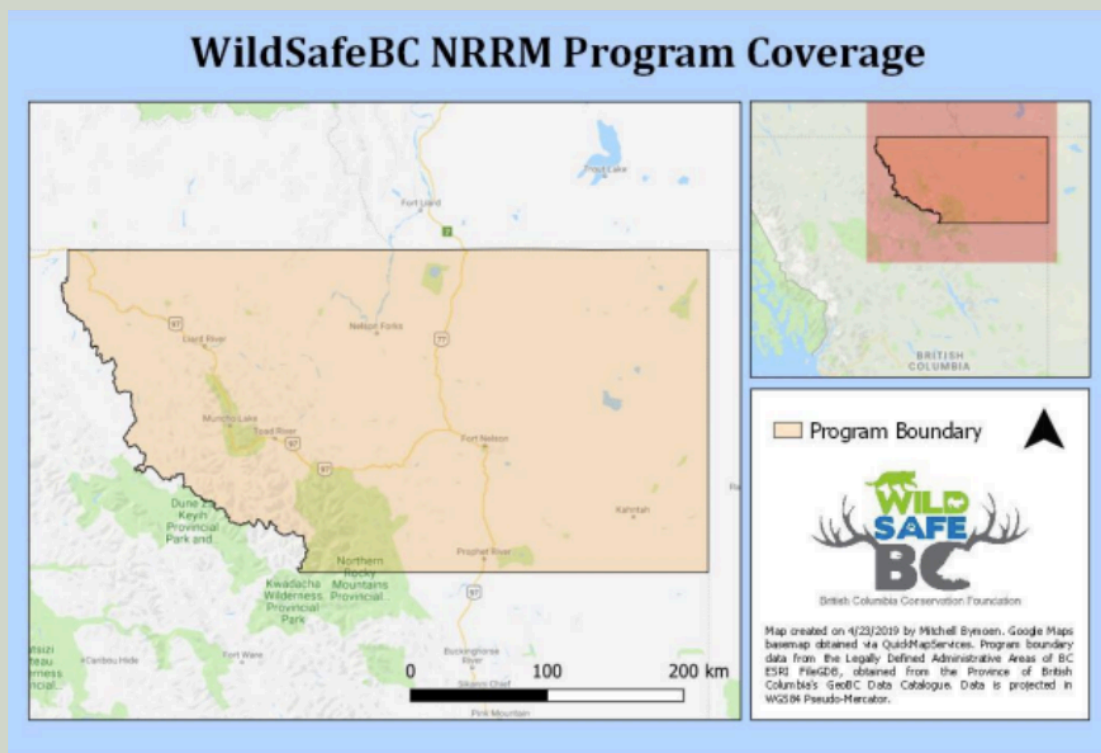
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Executive Summary

This report describes the activities of the WildSafeBC Northern Rockies program for the 2024 season between April 15, 2024 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 Northern Rockies Regional Municipality is located in the traditional territory of Treaty 8 and Fort Nelson First Nation and includes the communities of Fort Nelson, and the unincorporated settlements of Toad River, Muncho Lake, Liard River, Tetsa River, Prophet River, and surrounding areas. Efforts were focused on the Fort Nelson town site, which has the highest density of people.



2024 Highlights

250

Students Educated

1619

Community Members Reached

7

Community Event Booths

208

Bins Tagged

7056

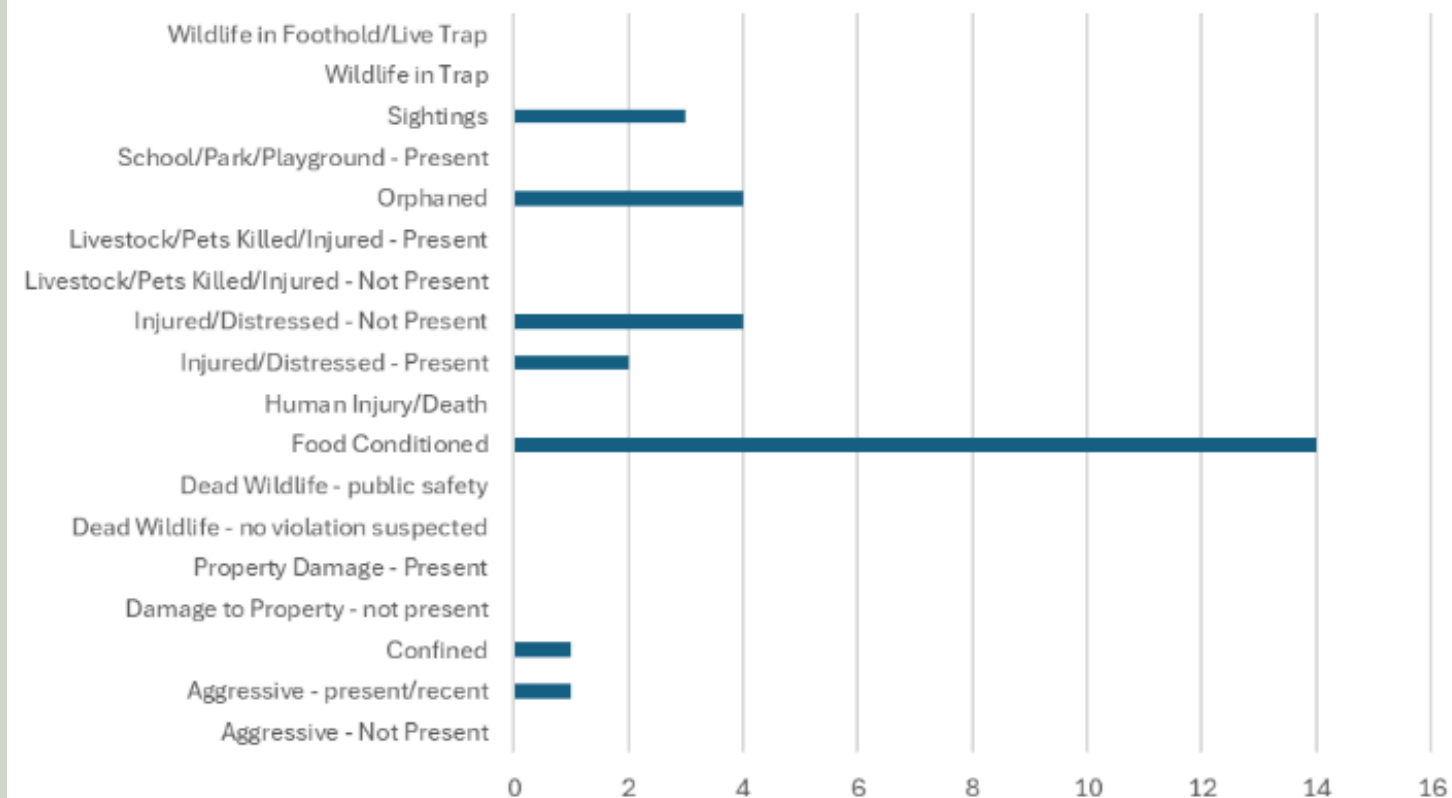
Facebook Users Reached

Conservation Officer Service Reports

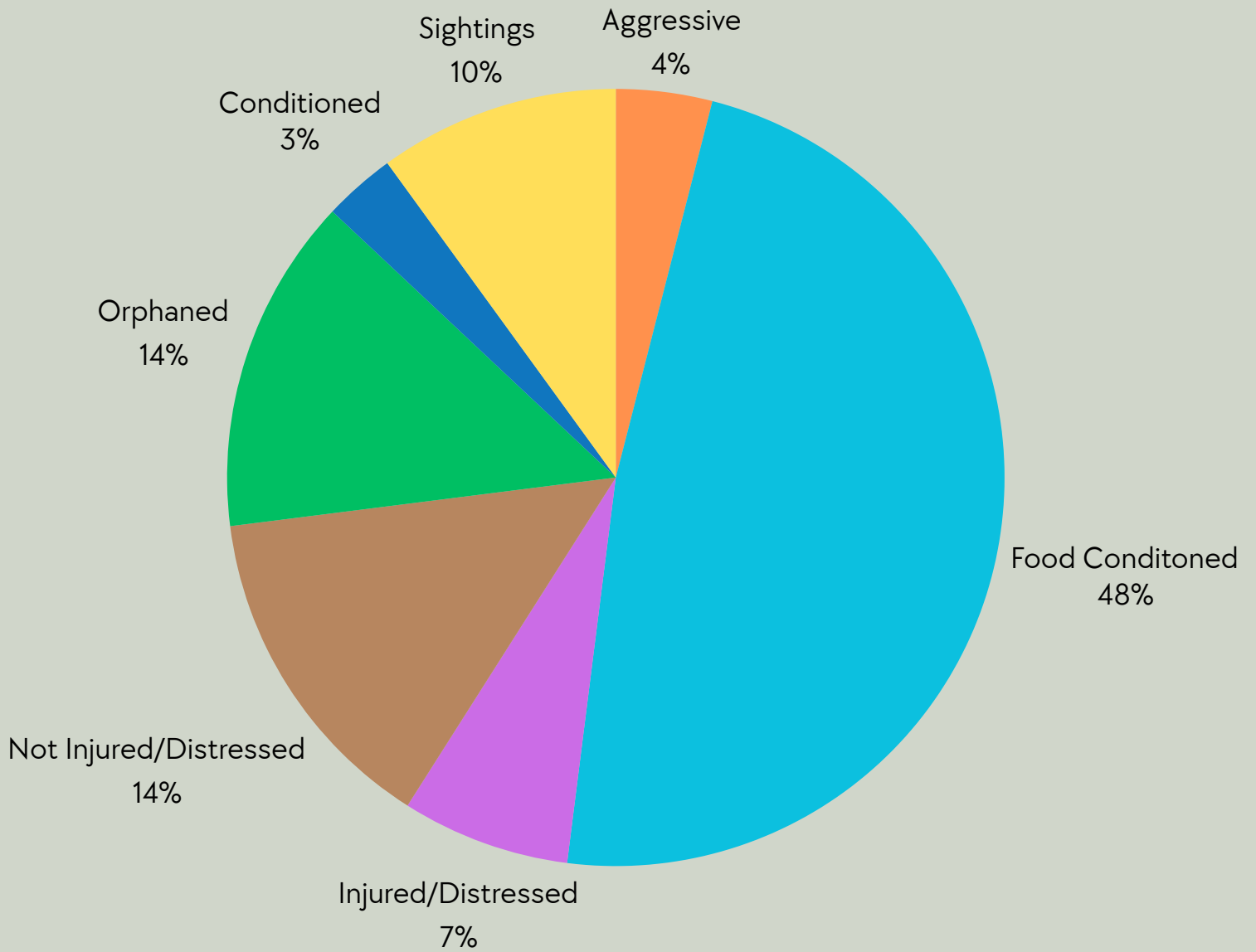
From January 1st to October 30th, a total of **48** wildlife reports have been made to the COS through the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line (1-877-952-7277) or online form (<https://forms.gov.bc.ca/environment/rapp/>).

From January 1st, 2024 to October 30th, 2024, there were 29 black bear reports, which is significantly lower than the number of reports made in 2023. Multiple wildfires in the area, and an extremely hot and dry summer meant natural food was abundant in the bush. Thick smoke could have also been a factor, as well as increased ATV traffic and sirens in the evenings driving them away.

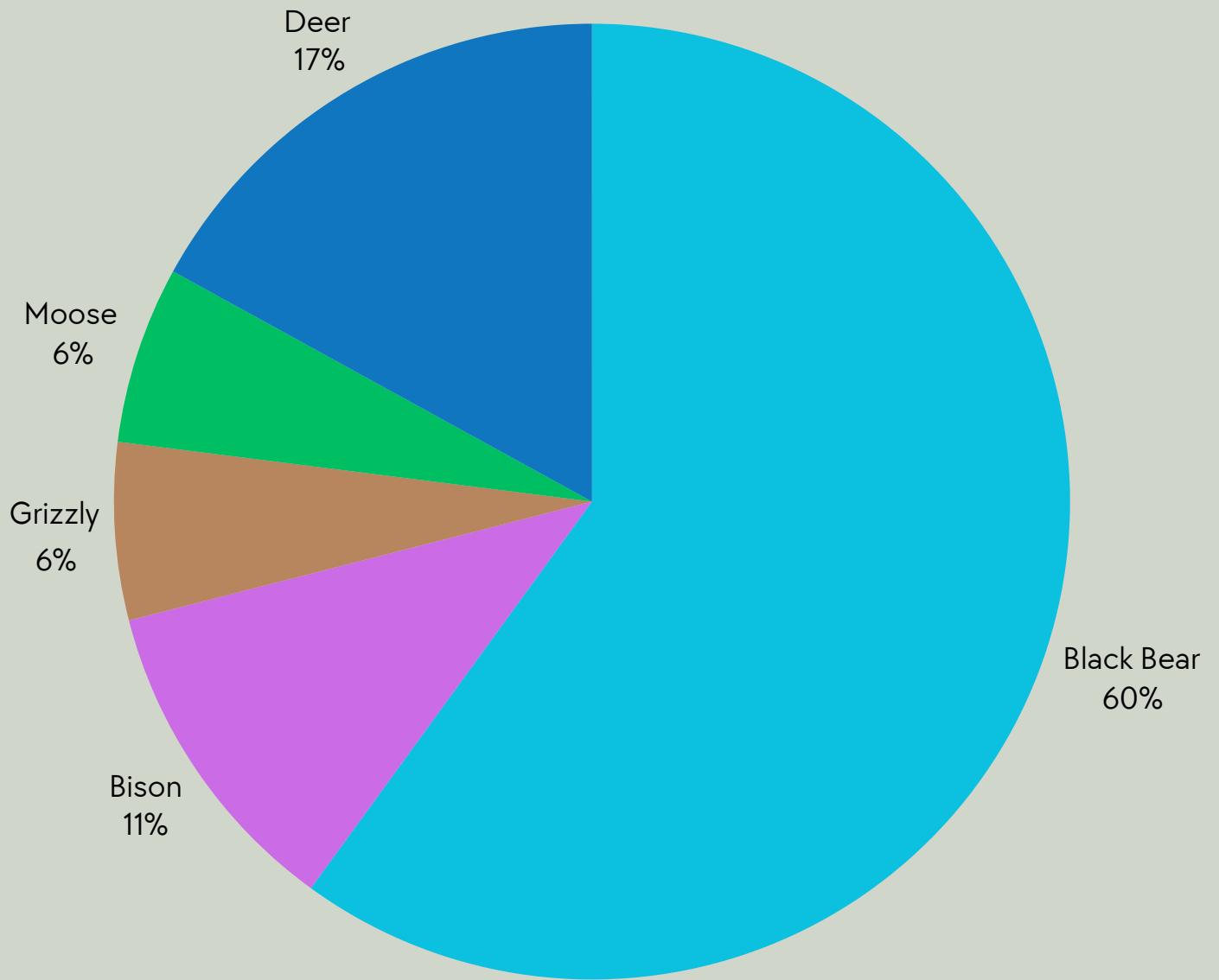
Fort Nelson Black Bear Reports 2024 (n=29)



Black Bear Reports January 1 - October 22, 2024



Wildlife Reports January 1 - October 22, 2024



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 Northern Rockies coordinator delivered 3 WRP presentation. A total of 150 children throughout Northern Rockies became WildSafe Rangers and received a WildSafe Ranger kit to take away with them. One weekend program was cancelled due to a lack of registration.

School/Group	Age	# Reached	Date
Comminity BBQ	3-9	100	September 2
Street Festival	3-9	25	September 6
After school Club	pre 4	25	September 19



Community Groups

We held 3 Bear Spray Workshops at Riggs Safety to a total of 17 people. We held 2 Bear Safety & Awareness Programs to two grade 10 classes that were planning on a back country school hike. Approximately 50 kids participated.

2 more Bear Safety and Awareness Programs were cancelled at Riggs Safety due to a lack of registration.

Overall, bear sightings were rare this season and we believe that may have attributed to a lack of interest from community members.



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 **1000** people visited the WildSafeBC display booth at 7 community events across the community.

- Environmental Stewardship Day – April 18th (75)
- Fort Nelson District Chamber of Commerce Trade Show May 4th and 5th (300)
- Pride Day – June 15th (100)
- Canada Day – July 1 (300)
- Teddy Bear Picnic - August 25th (30)
- Street Festival - September 6th BC GOES WILD (50)
- Culture Fest October 12th (150)

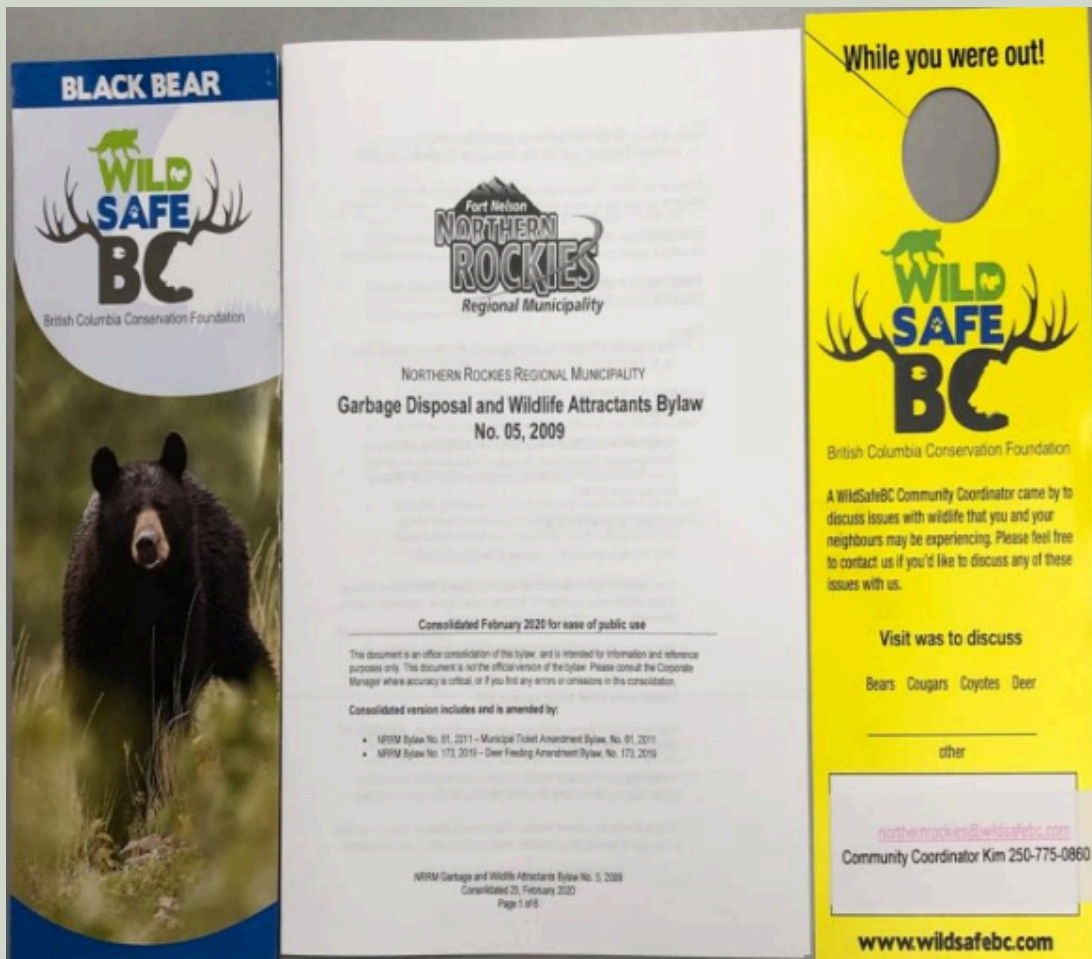


Bin Tagging and Door-to-Door

Garbage bin tagging consists of placing a highly visible and removable warning sticker on top of curbside containers the evening before collection day. During 58 outings, a total of 208 bins were tagged across 2 garbage collection zones. The WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Coordinator focused on streets where bear-human conflict was common or repeated due to garbage attractant.

The efficacy of bin tagging was shown, as 174 of residences whose bins were tagged during an initial survey did not have bins out on the curb again during a second survey, and only 35 of residences whose bins were tagged during an initial survey had their bins out on the curb again during a second, third or fourth surveys.

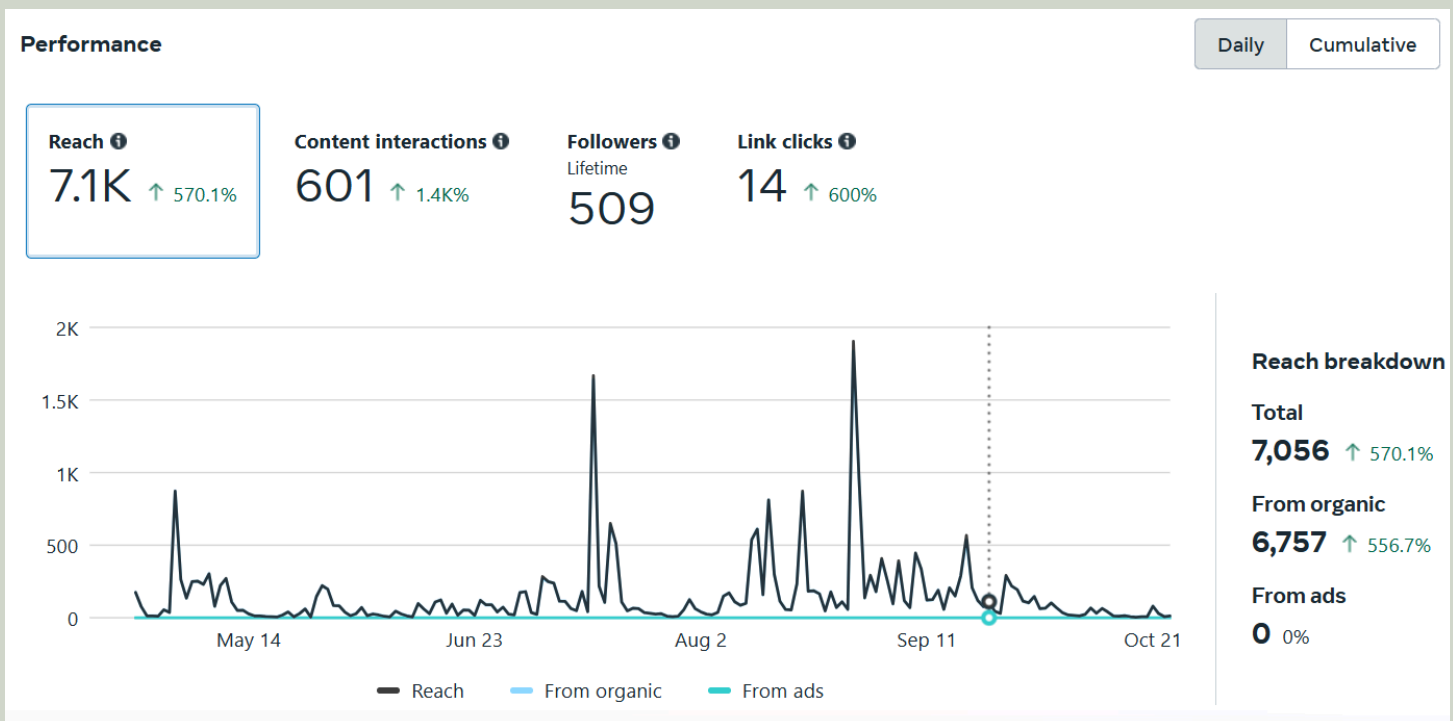
Door-to-door education reached 144 people with door hangers. This number is much lower than years past due to air quality advisories from wildfires in the area. The WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Coordinator also knocked on doors and engaged residents in conversations about wildlife.



Social Media and Press

The WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Facebook page came out of hibernation on April 24th, 2024 with an introductory post. Over the season, the page has had 56 new Facebook followers, from 459 followers in November 2023 to 509 followers in November 2024. As well, the page has received 1281 Facebook Page likes during this same time period.

Throughout the season, the WildSafeBC Northern Rockies 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 Northern Rockies Facebook page. In total, 117 Facebook posts were created that reached 7056 people from April 24th to November 30th. A Facebook post warning the public about a sow and her 3 cubs had a reach of over 3000, and was shared more than 30 times.



Indigenous Awareness and Engagement

This season, the WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Coordinator tagged the Fort Nelson First Nation in Facebook posts when relevant. WildSafeBC had planned on setting up a booth at Fort Nelson First Nation (FNFN) Treaty days in August however an air quality advisory that day made it not possible. The WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Coordinator did attend the swearing in ceremony of the new Chief and Council. The orange shirt provided by WildSafeBC was worn 90% of the time while giving presentations and while manning our various booths throughout the community.



BC Goes Wild

Throughout September when human-bear conflicts are at their highest in BC, WildSafeBC celebrates its annual BC Goes Wild campaign to acknowledge the spectacular diversity of wildlife in the Province. This year WildSafeBC celebrated it's 9th Annual BC Goes Wild Event.

On September 6th WildSafeBC Northern Rockies partnered with the Northern Rockies Arts Council to set up an outdoor booth at the 2024 Street Festival. This booth included an interactive kids table where children were provided scavenger hunt and facticity sheets and were encouraged to participate in WildSafeBC's 2024 Coloring and Drawing Contest. Kids learned about wildlife attractants and their participation was rewarded with gummy bears and animal crackers. 50 people were in attendance learning about wildlife attractants.

Wildsafebc Northern Rockies's Post

 Wildsafebc Northern Rockies
September 3 · 🌐

Look for our tent at the Street Festival. We'll have a scavenger hunt, Coloring contest, story time, snacks, and more. We can't wait to see everyone. Friday 4pm to 9pm at the Museum.
[Northern Rockies Regional Municipality](#)
[Fort Nelson First Nation](#)
[Conservation Officer Service](#)
[Northern Rockies Tourism & Events Society](#)
[Northern Rockies Arts Council](#)



**9th Annual
BC Goes Wild
September 2024**



What: Street Festival - Kids Activity Tent
Where: Museum - Look for our tent
When: Friday, September 6th, 2024 4pm to 9pm
Who: Everyone

Event Details:
Scavenger Hunt, Coloring Contest, Wildsafe BC Ranger Program, and other stuff for kids.

Challenges and Future Goals

Improperly managed garbage, fruit trees, continue to be a source of human-wildlife conflict in Northern Rockies. 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 Northern Rockies Coordinator recommends the following activities for 2025:

- Continue to support the NRRM in working towards Bear Smart Community status by implementing some of the recommendations in the HBCMP that was completed in 2022
- Competing areas of focus has made follow up and bylaw enforcement difficult. Dedicated resources need to be established so that follow up and bylaw enforcement can be implemented consistently. Understandably wildfires took precedence in 2024.
- Continue door-to-door campaigns throughout the season in hotspot areas
- Increased education on keeping garbage bins clean and free of scent
- Increase human-deer conflict reduction education in a proactive manner in order to avoid the human-deer conflicts reported in other BC communities. Once established, urban deer issues can be very challenging and expensive to resolve.
- Increase both Bear Spray Demonstrations and Bear Aware & Safety Presentations
- Education campaign focusing on the hazards and solutions through social media, news articles, workshops, flyer in municipal tax information, and door-to-door canvassing
- Find a volunteer to coordinate fruit gleaning or find other suitable management if required

Acknowledgements

The WildSafeBC Northern Rockies Coordinator would like to thank the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, the Province of British Columbia, and the BC Conservation Foundation for funding the WildSafeBC Northern Rockies project. Thank you to the Conservation Officer Service for their direction and support of the program, including Conservation officers Jeff Clancy and Erich Harbiche. Thank you to the two volunteers who offered their help this year, Susan Walsh and Linda Mackenzie. Lastly, the WildSafeBC Northern Rockies 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!



***Keeping Wildlife Wild and
Communities Safe***