

SELKIRK-PURCELL ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Prepared By :

Lisa Thomson



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



Columbia
Basin **trust**



www.wildsafebc.com



programs@wildsafebc.com



250-828-2551 ext. 109

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Program Coverage Area.....	1
2025 Highlights.....	2
Conservation Officer Service Reports.....	3, 4
Community Groups.....	5
Display Booths.....	6
Social Media and Press.....	7
Challenges and Future Goals.....	8
Acknowledgements.....	9

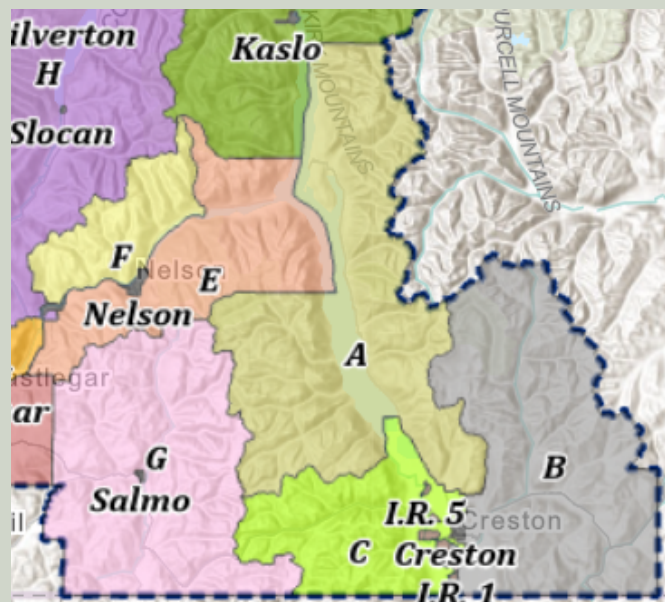
Executive Summary

This report describes the activities of the WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell program for the 2025 season between mid July 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.

This season, the Selkirk-Purcell program was managed as a hybrid program, therefore, some duties were not executed as in previous years. It is hopeful to secure a dedicated local member to cover this important program.

Program Coverage Area

The Selkirk Purcell area includes the Town of Creston, the Village of Salmo, the Lower Kootenay Band of the Ktunaxa First Nation, the Regional District of the Central Kootenay (RDCK) Areas A, B, C and G and the communities of Erickson, West Creston, Kootenay Bay, Riondel, Crawford Bay, Gray Creek, Boswell, Kuskanook, Wynndel, Canyon-Lister, Rykerts, Kitchener, Yahk, Kingsgate, Ymir and Nelway. The area includes two borders with Alberta and the United States, five provincial parks, and the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, which is a UNESCO world heritage wildlife management area. The WildSafeBC Selkirk Purcell area operates on the traditional lands of the Ktunaxa Peoples.



2025 Highlights

211

Community Members Reached

3

Community Event Booths

13,000

Facebook Users Reached

Conservation Officer Service Reports

From January 1 to October 31st, a total of 113 wildlife reports had been made to the Conservation Officer Service through the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line (1-877-952-7277) or online form (<https://forms.gov.bc.ca/environment/rapp/>).

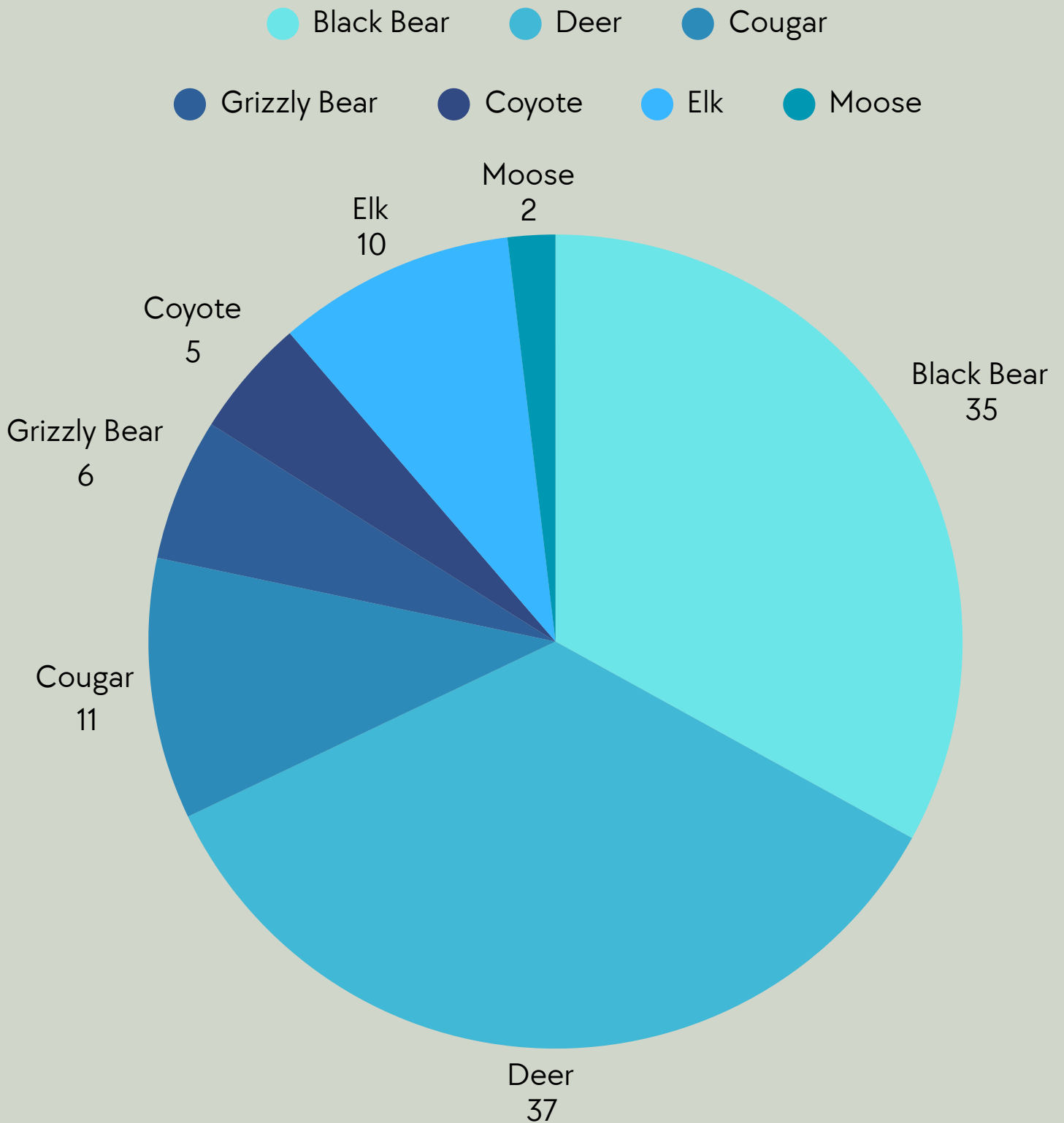
Deer were the most reported species to the COS in 2025, followed by black bears and cougars. There were 6 grizzly bear reports from the Creston area and Salmo. April to June continue to be higher conflict months. This coincides with bear mating and dispersal season.

15 animals were euthanized due to illness or injury. Species included were bobcat, deer, elk and grizzly bear. BCCOS were tasked with lethal removal of 3 grizzly bears, 1 black bear, 1 elk and 1 deer, due to human-wildlife conflict within the region.

The grizzly bear attack involving 2 cyclists and 2 sub-adult sibling bears in the summer, was deemed to be defensive in nature and no lethal action by the BCCOS was taken.



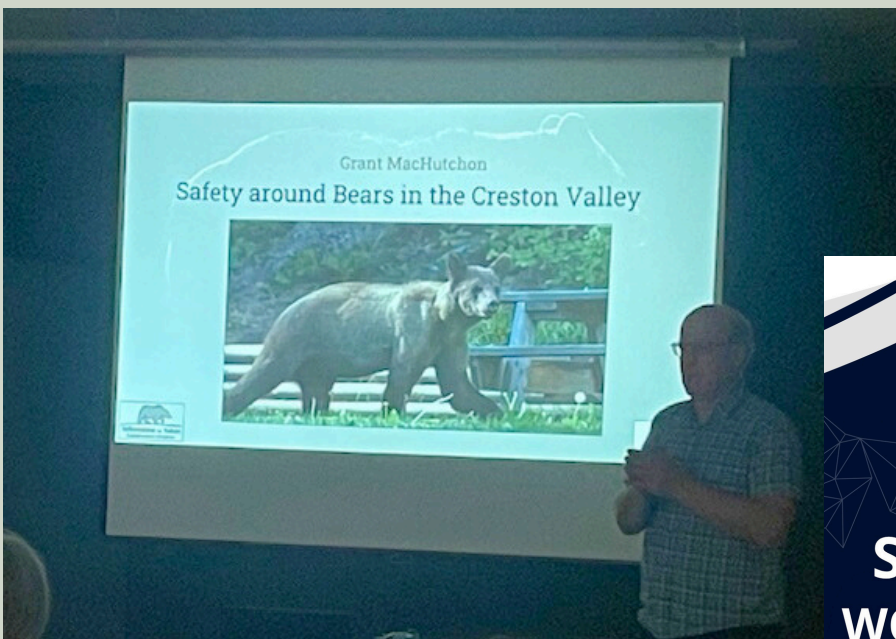
Conservation Officer Service Reports



Community Groups

Along with Grizzly Bear Co-existence Solutions, and the new Creston Co-existence joint program with Yellow to Yukon Conservation Foundation (Y2Y) and BC Conservation Foundation (BCCF), WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell's was invited to 2 events on bear safety and bear spray workshops. These events consisted of a range of local residents interested in reducing conflict with bears and how to use bear spray safely. Local bear biologist, Grant MacHutchon hosted one event and provided valuable research on the local grizzly bear population.

Many attendee's work in the great outdoors and shared insightful knowledge on safety and wildlife behaviour. Presentations always began with covering responsible wildlife attractant management at home.

A poster for a "BEAR SAFETY WORKSHOP". The poster features a large image of a brown bear's head in the top right corner. Below the title, it states "August 6th 7-9pm" and "West Creston Hall". A calendar icon is next to the date. Below this, it says "FREE - EVERYONE WELCOME!". There are two circular inset images: one showing a person in a red jacket and blue pants walking through a field, and another showing a person using bear spray. The bottom section of the poster lists the workshop's goals: "LEARN HOW TO PREVENT CONFLICTS AND HOW TO RESPOND SAFELY IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR" and "SAFETY TRAINING INCLUDES HANDS ON PRACTICE WITH INERT BEAR SPRAY". At the bottom, it provides contact information: "FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DEE @ CRESTONCOEXISTENCE@GMAIL.COM". The logo for the "Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative" is in the bottom right corner.

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 2025, 122 people visited the WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell display booth at the Creston Bear Fair. This day was well attended and many great discussions about bears took place. Our local BC COS Officer Day was also in attendance.

Unfortunately, due to acute illness, this coordinator was unable to attend, as scheduled, the Creston Valley Fall Fair weekend. This was a huge disappointment, as the community outreach would have been significant.

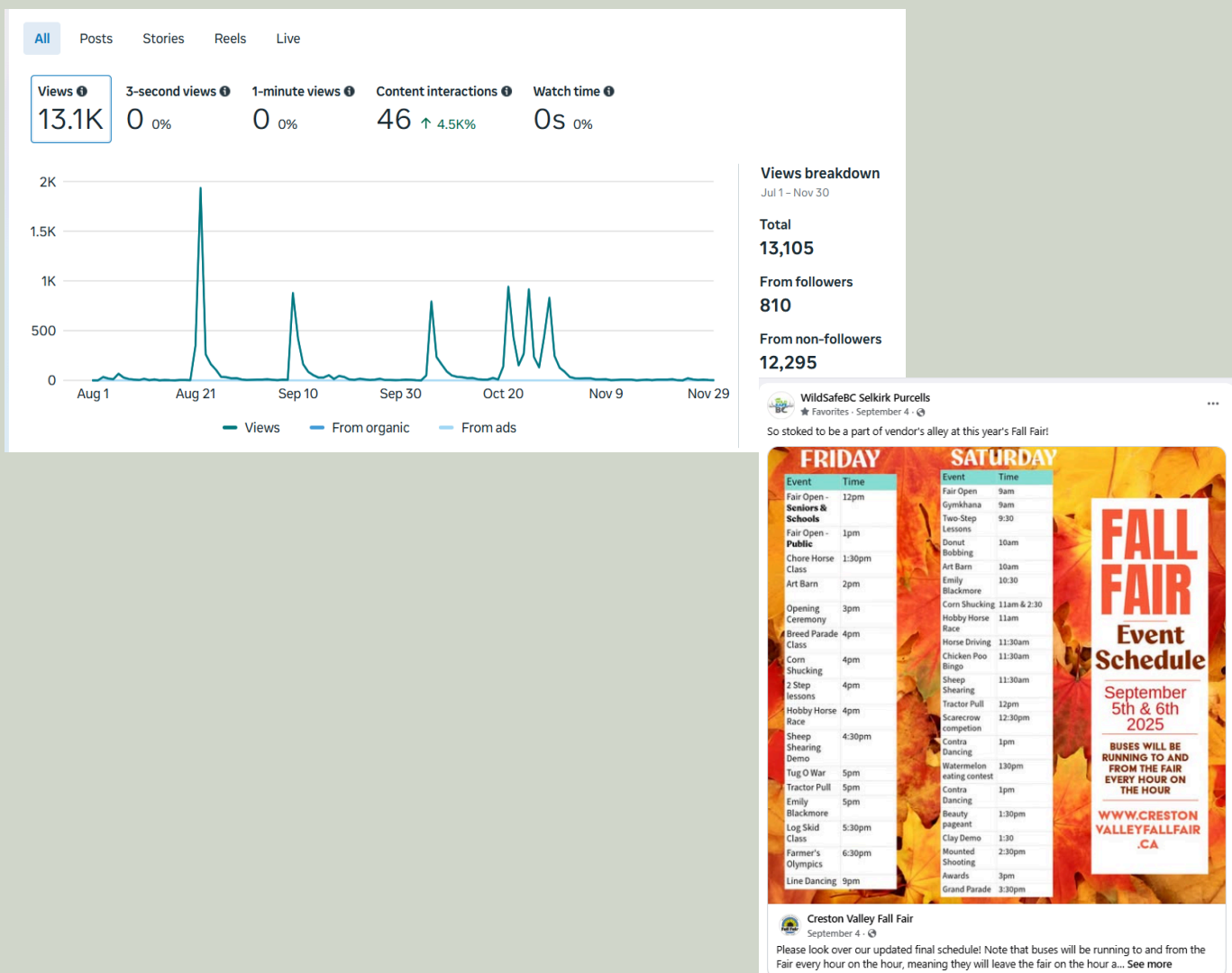


Social Media

The WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell Facebook page came out of hibernation on in August. Due to there not being any activity on the page in 2024, there was a large spike in activity in August when posts began being regularly made. The page currently has 518 followers.

Throughout the season, the WildSafe 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. 34 posts were made.

Many posts advertising events WildSafe would be present at such as the Bear Safety Workshop and the Fall fair were created to drum up interest from residents to attend.



Challenges and Future Goals

The Selkirk-Purcell coverage zone is large and contains a unique mix of communities, with most of them within a rural setting. The vast area that the Selkirk-Purcell zone covers, poses some challenges in ensuring that WildSafeBC messaging, education, and events could reach as many residents and communities as possible. More specifically, the East Kootenay Lake area (Crawford Bay, Riondel, Wynndel) is a hotspot for bear conflict, yet historically these communities have not had as much access to WildSafeBC programming. As a result, the WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell Coordinator should aim to increase outreach efforts in those communities. Given the complexities and logistics of performing door-to-door campaigns in the region, perhaps consider using the Canada Postal Service to deliver educational materials to community post boxes.

Additionally, a notable number of residents within the Selkirk-Purcell coverage zone do not connect with WildSafeBC social media accounts, which affected resident participation in some WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell programming conducted or promoted on social media. Perhaps, future events should be promoted in local news sources, like newspapers, radio and local community event boards.

The WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell Coordinator recommends the following activities for 2026:

- Continue to work in collaboration with Creston Co-existence and Grizzly Bear Co-existence Solutions.
- Continue education on attractant management and wildlife safety through hybrid door-to-door outreach, presentations, display booths, social media, and the press.
- Increase the knowledge and comfort with using bear spray through hosting bear spray workshops.
- Increase outreach in East Kootenay Lake communities (Crawford Bay, Riondel, and Wynndel).

Acknowledgements

The WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell Coordinator would like to thank the the Regional District of Central Kootenay, the Columbia Basin Trust, the Province of British Columbia, and the BC Conservation Foundation for funding the WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell program. Thank you to BC Conservation Officer's Blake Day and Michaela Rhees for their dedication, and support of the program. Much gratitude to Gillian Sanders of Grizzly Bear Co-existence Solutions for continued support towards this Coordinator's professional growth and collaboration. To Dee Howard of the newly formed Creston Coexistence program by BCCF and Y2Y. Lastly, the WildSafeBC Selkirk-Purcell 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***