



Alberta Wilderness Association

Wishing you all the best for 2023!

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Happy New Year to all our friends, supporters, and volunteers! We are all looking forward to engaging more with our communities and members. We hope this year you will take the time to lead a hike, attend an adventure or a talk, write a letter to a Member of Parliament to support the environment, or spend some time volunteering with us. There are endless ways you can participate. You can help with our garden in the spring, write an article for the Wilds Lands Advocate, share your wildlife photography for our use (with credit), help out at an event, or reshare our newsletters and social media posts for our voice to attain a bigger reach. Either way, I hope to get to meet more of you this year. Feel free to drop by our historic site in NW Calgary and say hello. Wishing you and yours the best for 2023!

Current Issues



Action Alert: Banff People Moving Strategy

On December 5, 2022, Parks Canada released the final [report](#) from the Expert Advisory Panel on Moving People Sustainably in the Banff Bow Valley. The report outlines eight strategies to reduce traffic congestion and move people sustainably in Banff. You can submit your comments on this report to Parks Canada until February 5, 2023 by sending an email to opinion@pc.gc.ca or by filling out their online survey, which can be found [here](#). Here are some of AWA's main comments:

- The importance of maintaining ecological integrity is mentioned in the report, but is not a theme that underpins the suggested strategies, despite the fact that ecological integrity is the legislated first priority of Banff National Park. This is abundantly clear in the suggestions to develop gondolas, mobility hubs, and trains without analysis of whether new

- AWA is supportive of the creation of a singular system for transportation, booking, and associated user and visitor experiences, in addition to using pricing tools to incentivize the use of mass transportation.
- The suggestions in the report often don't align with the Banff Management Plan, which indicates that any new developments must not "compromise the scenic splendor for which the park has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, nor the distinctive natural, cultural and wilderness qualities that draw people to Banff".

COP15 Update: Adoption of an International Framework on Biodiversity

Last month, nations from around the world gathered for COP15. Commonly known as the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, the meeting resulted in the adoption of the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

Some key points from the framework include:

- Conserve 30% of lands and waters and restore 30% of degraded areas by 2030
- Reduce harmful subsidies by US\$500 billion per year by 2030
- Mobilize US\$ 200 billion for the implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans
- Reduce loss of high biodiversity areas to near zero by 2030
- Significantly reduce waste generation, pollution, and invasive species introduction
- Encourage and enable businesses to monitor and report impacts on biodiversity

Upcoming Events

Planners

January 31, 2023, 7 p.m.

free

Are you interested to know more about how development is planned in our city? How decisions are made around what gets built where? What you can do to influence these decisions?

With the [Ricardo Ranch development](#) in process, many of our members wanted to know more about the planning process at the city. Join Josh White and Matthew Sheldrake from the City of Calgary for a look behind the scenes at how planners attempt to balance numerous factors in a fast-growing city.

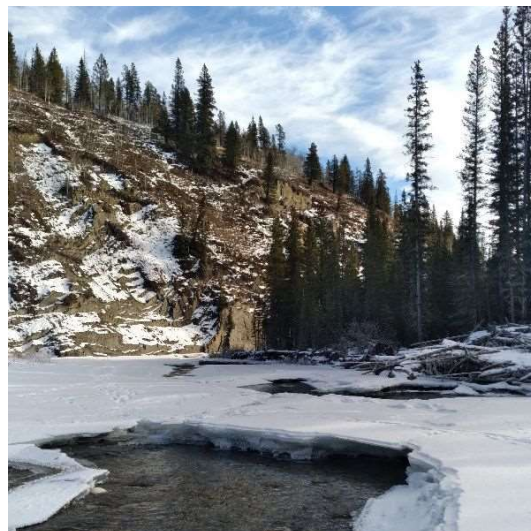
The presentation will focus on growth in Calgary – specifically, looking at the best ways to balance environmental conservation, housing markets, climate change, and economic development. Josh and Matthew will present information on how The City endeavors to make these decisions in ways that achieve multiple city building objectives, and move our city towards the goals of the Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan. There will be time to answer questions and have a discussion after the presentation.

[Click here to register](#)

Adventures for Wilderness: Ice Walk on Waiparous Creek

January 28, 2023

Join local residents Kris and Heinz Unger for an ice walk adventure through the frozen Waiparous 'canyon'. The creek is a tributary of the Ghost River and we will start just upstream from the confluence in the Village of Waiparous. We will get some rays of sunshine into the steep-walled valley to provide contrasting light and shade as we hike up the frozen creek. Often you can hear or even see the water flowing under the ice and snow



easily accessed most of the year.
We'll return to the parked vehicles in
Waiparous Village via an easy,
groomed trail on the top of the south
embankment with some dramatic
views down into the 'canyon'.

[Click here to register](#)

AWA in the News

Parks Canada buyout of Jasper Park backcountry lodges praised by environmental group

by Bob Weber

An environmental group is welcoming Parks Canada's buyout of two businesses in Jasper National Park's Tonquin Valley, a scenic and heavily visited destination also used by vanishing caribou herds.

"That's a good step forward," said Carolyn Campbell of the Alberta Wilderness Association. "It's really positive to reduce recreation pressures year-round for caribou."

[Click here to read the full article](#)

Conservation group opposes oilsands mining project on northern Alberta wetland

by Jamie Malbeuf

An Alberta conservation group is raising concerns about the potential for environmental damage from an approved oilsands mining operation on an important wetland in northern Alberta.

The Alberta Energy Regulator approved Suncor's plan for work in the McClelland Lake Wetland Complex last year. The project is part of the company's current Fort Hills oilsands operation.

Phillip Meintzer, conservation specialist with the AWA, had been trying to get a copy of the letter of authorization for the McClelland Lakeland project for about two months before finally getting one last week.

After reading the letter of authorization, Meintzer is concerned.

"We just don't think that it's possible to ... have a mine in one half and say that there's going to be no impact to the other half," Meintzer said.

[Click here to read the full article](#)

Dedicated to the conservation of wilderness and completion of a protected areas network, AWA inspires communities to care for Alberta's wild spaces through awareness and action.

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