



Reflecting and Looking Forward

Trust CEO, Johnny Strilaeff, looks back on all the hard work staff, partners, community groups and people like you have put into making 2018 such an amazing year, and looks ahead to the possibilities this new year brings...[full story](#)

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Get your Summer Works application ready!

Receive a wage subsidy to hire a summer student. The Summer Works Program fills up fast - fill out your worksheet today! Applications available February 14...[full story](#)



Bringing Art into Public Spaces

Public Art adds vibrancy to our communities and brings people together. Public Art Grants are now open with \$250,000 available this year. [Apply online.](#)



Financial Aid for College Students

We're proud to partner with Basin colleges to provide bursaries to students. This year, close to 100 students from College of the Rockies and 54 students from Selkirk College are receiving Trust bursaries. These students are Basin residents and active volunteers in their communities...[full story](#)



Students "Do and Learn"

Environmental education engages students through in-class studies, outdoor experiences and in-depth projects to build their personal connections with nature. The Trust is renewing its commitment to environmental education programs in the region, with nearly \$1.3 million over the next three years...[full story](#)



Join Our Team

Join our team to support the ideas and efforts of Basin residents. Two positions are currently available: Accounting Technician (Cranbrook or Castlegar) and Research Assistant (Golden). [Apply online.](#)

Events & Deadlines

Various Deadlines

[Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Programs](#)

January 18

[Webinar: Grant Writing for Success](#)

January 25

[Board of Directors Meeting - Montrose](#)

January 28

[Heritage, Museum and Archive Grants Opens](#)

Deadline: January 31

[Food Recovery EOI Closes](#)

Deadline: January 31

[Social Connections EOI Closes](#)

Deadline: January 31

[Environment Small Grants Closes](#)

Deadline: January 31

[Social Small Grants Closes](#)

February 4

[Built Heritage Grants Opens](#)

February 14

[Summer Works Program Opens](#)

[Go to events page.](#)

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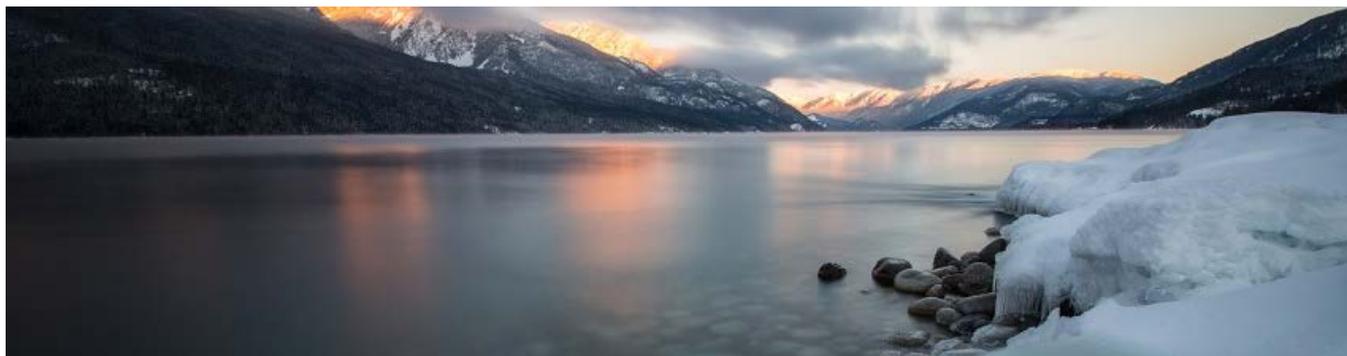
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Reflections from our CEO

News: January 14, 2019



As 2019 begins, I find myself reflecting on all the hard work staff, partners and community groups put into making 2018 such an amazing year.

In 2018 we redefined what it means to be busy. We took inspiration from Astronaut Col. Chris Hadfield, who visited the Basin in 2017, and told us to THINK BIG and that the only limit to our accomplishments is the expectations we set for ourselves. Last year, we delivered \$57 million in funding benefits and commercial investments to Basin communities, through 1,600 projects and partnerships and 65 programs and initiatives. That's more than any other year!

The Trust focuses on supporting regional priorities that enhance residents' quality of life and make this region a desirable place to live. Significant investments in affordable housing, broadband, recreation infrastructure, ecosystem enhancement, childcare, and arts, culture, and heritage are only a few examples of the work we are doing to meet community needs.

This progress was made possible by hardworking organizations and community members like you. We are here to support your ideas and efforts, to help you aim higher and achieve more.

Together, I know we'll make 2019 even better. Along with many new programming and investment announcements, residents can expect to hear more about a transboundary conference, the renewal of our Columbia Basin Management Plan, plans for the next Columbia Basin symposium and the celebration of our 25th anniversary in 2020. It will be an incredible year.



The Trust also focuses on balancing our supports to benefit all current and future residents of the region. What is critically important today may become less of a priority tomorrow. We need to continually engage with residents to ensure our programs, initiatives and investments continue to deliver the benefits residents desire.

We are entering the fourth year of our five-year Columbia Basin Management Plan. This plan sets out 13 primary strategic priorities and has shaped our new programming and initiatives since 2016. While there is still more to do, we are beginning to think about engaging Basin residents to renew the plan which expires in 2020.

What will this plan look like? What are we hoping to achieve? What can we learn from the past that will inform how we work in the future? What do we want our region to look like 5, 10, 15, even 20 years from now? These questions will form the basis of our discussions with residents in 2019/20.

On behalf of all the Trust Board and staff, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. We look forward to working together to make our Basin an even better place to live.

Johnny Strilaeff

President and Chief Executive Officer

Get a Head Start on your Summer Works Application

News: January 17, 2019



Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce office manager Laura Kennedy and student Alicia Leasak

Columbia Basin Trust's Summer Works program helps small businesses meet their seasonal employment needs and helps students gain meaningful work experience.

Summer Works provides wage subsidies to hire full-time high school and post-secondary students for entry-level and career-related jobs over the summer.

By supporting the creation of up to 150 positions across the Basin, Summer Works also helps students find employment and gain experience.

Review our program guide to see if your business qualifies for a wage subsidy.

The program fills quickly so get ready by filling out the application worksheet now at ourtrust.org/summerworks. Apply on February 14, 2019 1:00 p.m. PT/2:00 p.m. MT.

Summer Works is one of three programs the Trust offers to help connect Basin businesses and students. Learn more about our wage subsidy programs at ourtrust.org/programs.



Financial Aid for COTR Students

News: December 20, 2018



Close to 100 College of the Rockies students received news in November that they are the beneficiaries of Columbia Basin Trust bursaries. The bursaries range from \$250-\$1,500 and are awarded to full-time students who have lived in the Basin for at least three years and have demonstrated financial need. Many are active volunteers in their communities.

“We’re proud to partner with local colleges to deliver this funding to students in our region,” said Aimee Ambrosone, Director of Delivery of Benefits at Columbia Basin Trust. “Our bursary program supports students in continuing their studies right here at home.”



College of the Rockies has campuses in several Basin communities: Cranbrook, Creston, Fernie, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley.

Learn more about the Trust’s [bursary program](#), offered at schools around the Basin. Read the [full story here](#).



Students "Do and Learn" in their Wild Backyards

CRANBROOK, ROSSLAND, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, ENVIRONMENT

With patches of snow on the ground, it's a day for jackets and hoods up to protect ears from the cold. It's Wednesday, November 14, 2018, and a group of ninth graders is traipsing across an abandoned hay field outside Cranbrook with loppers and shovels in hand.

The kids have taken tree cuttings, known as live stakes—of willow, cottonwood and more—and are planting some now and leaving some to plant next spring. The goal: to help restore the field into a functioning wetland.

This group is doing its final project after participating in Know Your Watershed, an environmental education program Columbia Basin Trust developed in partnership with Wildsight. Not only are the students learning what makes a healthy watershed—one of the program's goals—but the tree-planting day also ties into what they've been studying in biology class.

This is the fifth year teacher Dawn Hildebrandt has taken advantage of the free program for her students—and she says the students are always overwhelmingly positive about the experience. "Over the years, when we get back together in the classroom, almost every kid has something to say, because they actually participated in everything. It's not a watch and learn—it's a do and learn."



RENEWED PARTNERSHIPS

To increase opportunities like these, the Trust is renewing its commitment to environmental education programs in the region, with nearly \$1.3 million over the next three years. It's one of the ways the Trust is delivering on its Environment Strategic Plan goal to engage Basin residents in learning about the Basin's diverse landscapes, waterways and ecosystems, and how to care for them.

"We're partnering with the Columbia Basin Environment Education Network and Wildsight to engage students through in-class studies, outdoor experiences and in-depth projects to build their personal connections with nature," said Johnny Strilaeff, Trust President and Chief Executive Officer. "The more that Columbia Basin residents of all ages know about the outdoors and spend time in it, the more they will take care of it now and in the future."

The funding will support three things. First is the Trust's Know Your Watershed program, delivered by Wildsight, which helps grade nine students in the Basin understand where their water comes from, how it is used and where it goes after it's used. Last school year alone, this program reached 1,300 students.

Second are the four Education in the Wild programs run by Wildsight, which teach about 3,600 students a year about the ecology of their "wild backyards." Activities include dip-netting for bugs, discovering the web of life on the forest floor, examining snow crystals and following animal tracks in the snow.

Third is the Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN), which encourages environmental stewardship and sustainability in the Basin by supporting environmental educators. In the past year alone, CBEEN has provided a variety of training opportunities and resources to 750 educators. CBEEN also runs the Wild Voices for Kids program, which teaches about 5,000 students a year about the environment, natural history and culture of the Basin.



INSPIRED

Laura Jackman teaches second and third graders at Rossland Summit School. She's been accessing Wild Voices for Kids for years—and also other resources that CBEEN offers. In fact, she and four other teachers in her school were so inspired at CBEEN's leadership clinic that they've committed to taking their students out of the classroom one day a week to engage with either the community or the natural environment.

"I'm a really strong believer that when kids know the names of the flora and fauna that live in their place, they'll be more likely to protect them in the future and become stewards of the environment," she says.

But not every teacher has the expertise to provide these experiences themselves. That's where outside environmental educators and programs like Wild Voices are important. "They really provide a connection for the students by giving the environmental knowledge and context," she says. They enable teachers to go beyond the direct outdoors right around them and expand the education they offer students.

Sonja Seher manages Wild Voices for Kids. "Some students may have never visited a field site or connected with mentors other than their teachers or parents," she says. "An experience like this can really build their world and deepen their connection to place. For older or more experienced students, a Wild Voices program could get them to look at a familiar landscape through a different lens, ask deeper or more specific questions and consider themselves—and their role—within an ecosystem."

As for Jackman, she now provides this education to her own students—"because of CBEEN essentially," she says. "It inspired me so much that I went out and I looked for the background information and now I'm providing that education for my students."

She also mentors other teachers in environmental education. She has helped form an association of environmental educators in her school district, which provides opportunities for professional development. And she helps run Rossland's BioBlitz, which brings together about 450 students from all of the community's schools to learn about the environment.



IMPACTFUL

The students benefit—along with other community members for programs and events that extend beyond schools—but what are the greater impacts?

Lindsay Cuff is Wildsight's Communications and Development Manager. She says their programs "instill a sense of connection and place, and give students the tools to face the challenges of sustainability with knowledge and inspiration. Research shows that if we develop a strong connection to the natural world as children, we are more likely to cherish and try to protect it as adults."

CBEEN's Executive Director, Duncan Whittick, says, "The overall benefit is that we will all enjoy healthier and more resilient communities to live in. We will also better understand our local natural environment and become more empowered to take steps to support and sustain healthier ecosystems, which in turn support human health."

After speaking enthusiastically about the tree-planting experience, Hildebrandt lists two important effects. "One, we've actually done something, like planting the trees. Second, the social responsibility: the kids are seeing that, 'Hey, no one else is responsible to do this. I'm responsible to do this. And if we don't do it, who's going to do it?' I love it."