



Keeping Wild Things Wild

As the snow finally recedes from our yards and gardens and new leaves emerge, our wild neighbours are also on the move. WildsafeBC works with residents and communities in nearly 100 communities around the Basin to reduce human-wildlife conflict through education, collaboration and community solutions. With renewed funding from the Trust, even more communities will benefit from their programming this year...[full story](#)



More Affordable Housing Coming

In Cranbrook, Fernie, Nelson, Trail and Valemount, more affordable housing is coming - and soon. The Trust is providing \$1.5 million to these five projects to create 118 new units...[full story](#)



Beyond Great Beer

There's a whole new vibe in downtown Trail and beer might have something to do with it. The Trail Beer Refinery - celebrating its second anniversary - brought jobs to the community, revitalized vacant commercial property and helped bring a new sense of vibrancy to Trail's downtown core...[full story](#)



A Safe Space

After nearly 40 years in operation, the Golden Women's Resource Centre was in need of an update. New paint and flooring have created an inviting space for women and their children to get support, access services and to just socialize and unwind...[full story](#)



Feeding Families, Reducing Food Waste

From turning unwanted produce into fruit leather for kids to connecting local stores with food banks, healthy food is being redirected to those who need it most while reducing waste in the Basin...[full story](#)



Strengthening Child Care in your Community

Join the Trust on **Facebook** or **Instagram** on **May 2 at 12 p.m. PT/ 1 p.m. MT** for a LIVE question and answer session about our Child Care Capital Grants program. Applications for the program close July 31...[learn more](#)

Events & Deadlines

Deadline: April 30

[Basin PLAYS Training Grants](#)

Deadline: April 30

[Apprentice and Co-op Wage Subsidies](#)

Deadline: April 30

[Environment Small Grants](#)

Deadline: April 30

[Social Small Grants](#)

Deadline: May 6

[Community Technology Program EOI](#)

May 7

[Child Care Capital Grants Information Meeting](#)

Deadline: May 14

[Trail Enhancement Grants](#)

May 24

[Board of Directors Meeting in Kaslo](#)

Deadline: June 14

[Community Outdoor Revitalization Grants](#)

Deadline: July 31

[Child Care Capital Grants](#)

September 26-28, 2019

[Columbia River Basin Transboundary Conference](#)

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Keeping Wild Things Wild

BASIN WIDE, ENVIRONMENT

Wildlife like cougars and bears are impressive, and usually spend their time doing their own things and going their own ways. But add an unexpected human, or possible temptations like unsecured garbage or fruit trees, and the results could be terrible.

That's where WildSafeBC comes in. To minimize attractants and human-wildlife contact—and therefore human-wildlife conflicts—the Trust has been partnering with the British Columbia Conservation Foundation since 2009.

The Foundation's WildSafeBC program "is designed to reduce human and wildlife conflict through collaboration, education and community solutions," says Jen Bellhouse, the Foundation's Regional Manager. This means that people in the region get the tools and knowledge they need to keep themselves safe and ensure wildlife stays wild.

Last year saw many successes. For the second year in a row, Basin communities had fewer human-bear conflicts. In 2016, people reported 2,300 black bear incidents. In 2018, this was down to 1,032. Significantly fewer bears had to be relocated or destroyed.

WildSafeBC helped influence these numbers through its community coordinators. Up to 12 coordinators around the Basin provided workshops, knocked on doors, tagged wildlife-tempting garbage cans, set up booths at farmers' markets, provided support with electric fencing, and more. In 2018 alone, these coordinators spoke directly to over 31,000 people in the Basin—and many others through social media—and supported residents in nearly 100 Basin communities.

One particularly successful community has been New Denver. "We support communities working on becoming certified by the Province as a Bear Smart Community," says Vanessa Isnardy, the Provincial Coordinator for WildSafeBC. This Provincial program sets out 6 criteria that support the reduction of human-bear conflicts. "New Denver is one of only about eight communities in the province that have achieved this status, however there are over 20 which are working towards meeting these criteria." As part of their commitment to being a Bear Smart Community, New Denver council updated their bylaws and over \$30,000 was spent on bear-resistant containers on municipal property. The Village of New Denver has also supported electric fencing workshops and has been a model for their proactive approaches.

With the Trust's continued support, in 2018 WildSafeBC also collaborated with more partners and local governments. It brought coordinators to new communities, including Valemount, Warfield, Fruitvale and Montrose. It reached out more to people in many of the smaller communities around Koochanusa Reservoir, the Elk Valley and the rural areas outside Kimberley and Cranbrook.

Reducing wildlife attractants continued to be a key focus. In Sparwood, the coordinator helped residents obtain 1,700 bear-resistant garbage bins. In Invermere, the coordinator worked with the Groundswell Network Society to implement a pilot program to pick fruit—reducing attractants, diverting waste from the landfill and educating people about food systems. In Kaslo, the coordinator worked with Kootenay Waste Services to develop a plan to provide household garbage pickup for residents in the Lardeau Valley.

The program is now gearing up for an equally notable 2019. Ever want to learn how to safely use bear spray? Now's the time. Along with all their other efforts, this year WildSafeBC coordinators will be helping people in the Basin become more familiar and comfortable with this effective bear deterrent.

Already, community coordinators are resuming their programs throughout the region. Expect to see them in Castlegar, Cranbrook/Kimberley, Creston/Selkirk Purcells, Fernie/Elk Valley, Golden, Invermere, Kaslo, Nelson, New Denver, Radium/Fairmont and Rossland/Trail.

To support this work in the Basin, the Trust recently committed \$240,000 over three years to WildSafeBC. Other major funders include the Province's Ministry of Environment and municipal and regional governments.

"With our funding from the Trust, we are able to start our season early—mid-April—and end later in the fall," says Bellhouse. "Our community coordinators will be able to work more hours to reach more people in the Basin. It also means we can be flexible in how we tailor our activities for the needs of individual communities. It means a lot for the program."

As the snow finally recedes from our yards and gardens and new leaves emerge, our wild neighbours are also on the move. Stay safe and keep the animals safe by connecting with your local WildSafeBC community coordinator. What you learn and do could positively impact a life.

To learn more, visit wildsafebc.com or find WildSafeBC on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

More Affordable Housing Options Coming Soon

News: April 25, 2019



The Trust supports five projects with \$1.5 million to build 118 new units

Columbia Basin Trust is providing nearly \$1.5 million to help build 118 new affordable housing units in Cranbrook, Fernie, Nelson, Trail and Valemount.

“These units are a vital addition to the range of housing options in these five communities,” said Johnny Strilaeff, Columbia Basin Trust President and Chief Executive Officer. “We know that communities are healthier and more resilient when residents can access and afford suitable places to live, and we’re eager to see these projects become tangible spaces that will soon make a difference in people’s daily lives.”

In Cranbrook, the Aqanttanam Housing Society will be significantly growing the number of affordable housing units it owns and manages. Adding to its current stock of 56 units, it will be building a new 39-unit apartment building on a property it owns. This building will offer a range of affordable housing options for individuals, single parents with children, families and seniors, most of whom will be Indigenous.

“Our waiting list has been growing each month by two to four individuals and families, despite our efforts to place them. If the trend continues, we will have an additional 30+ on our waiting list by the time our building is complete,” said Executive Director Austin Parisien, who mentions that many of these people are currently homeless or staying with friends and family in overcrowded homes. “We are excited we will be able to offer more affordable housing in Cranbrook.”

In Trail, Lower Columbia Affordable Housing will be developing new independent rental housing for low income families and seniors. The new building will house nine, one to three-bedroom units in a three-storey building that includes an elevator. The building will be located in East Trail by the Columbia River, a central location that will offer residents an easy walking distance to downtown, Gyro Park and many services. The building is being designed to a high level of energy efficiency which will keep the cost of utilities to a minimum. Applications for those interested in becoming tenants will be available in the fall.

“People in our community are having trouble finding safe and affordable housing as the market tightens up,” said Janet Morton, President of the Board at Lower Columbia Affordable Housing. “Future residents of this building may be currently living in situations that are too expensive, only temporary or don’t work well for their needs. The new units will offer an affordable and safe roof over their head which makes such a difference in their life.”

The Fernie Family Housing Society is building 14 townhouses for families. The Valemount Affordable Rentals Society will be building 13 units for low-income seniors and families. The Nelson CARES Society will be constructing a 43-unit apartment building, providing spaces of varying sizes, from studio units up to three-bedroom units suitable for two licensed group homes. More information about this project can be found in this BC Government [news release](#).

These five projects are also being supported with over \$30 million from the Province through BC Housing. Expressions of Interest were issued by BC Housing in 2018 for affordable housing projects across BC. The Trust is supporting these five projects within the Basin that will commence construction in 2019 and are expected to be complete by 2021.

Since 2002, the Trust has supported the creation of nearly 1,000 affordable housing units in 24 Basin communities through affordable housing initiatives with local housing organizations, the federal and provincial governments, and student housing with local colleges. The Trust has also supported upgrades and repairs to over 1,000 affordable housing units. Over the next two years the Trust will continue to support Basin communities to develop project plans for affordable housing and construct new units. Learn more at ourtrust.org/housing.

Columbia Basin Trust supports the ideas and efforts of the people in the Columbia Basin. To learn more about the Trust’s programs and initiatives, and how it helps deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the Basin, visit ourtrust.org or call 1.800.505.8998.

Quick Facts:

- Aqanttanam Housing Society will build a 39-unit apartment building with \$454,200 from the Trust.
- Fernie Family Housing Society will build 14 townhouses with \$217,000 from the Trust.
- Nelson CARES Society will build a 43-unit apartment building with \$542,400 from the Trust.
- Lower Columbia Affordable Housing will build a 9-unit apartment building with \$115,200 from the Trust.
- Valemount Affordable Rentals Society will build 13 units with \$169,400 from the Trust.

Beyond Great Beer

TRAIL,BUSINESS,INVESTMENTS

This weekend, the Trail Beer Refinery will throw a birthday party. A little over two years ago, this business in downtown Trail started brewing its first batch of beer. It then opened the doors to its restaurant. The grand opening was such an anticipated event that people lined up down the block.

Lineups and full houses continue to happen today. “It’s still going strong,” says Mike Konkin, founder and one of 13 co-owners. In addition to a popular restaurant, the Refinery has several brands of beer available in local liquor stores. It has just introduced a new vodka soda, about to be distributed around the province. And the Refinery’s impacts on the community are larger than ever.

It was in early 2016 that Konkin started realizing his dream of owning a brewery in Trail. After doing market research, he noticed that other breweries often started too small, and then soon had to expand. Wanting to bypass that growth phase, the co-owners decided to go big right from the beginning. “And that entailed some funding,” Konkin says.

Because the Refinery would bring jobs to the community, revitalize vacant commercial property and help bring a new sense of vibrancy to Trail’s downtown core, this opportunity was suited to the Trust’s Impact Investment Funds. This program, delivered by Community Futures and Heritage Credit Union, supports businesses that aren’t able to secure conventional financing but will benefit communities in an impactful way.

Two years later, the Refinery employs over 20 people—and it has helped downtown Trail produce a whole new vibe. “The downtown core, from before we started to now, is night and day,” says Konkin. “There are always new things happening. It’s not just us: it’s the Trail Smoke Eaters; it’s the new library museum; it’s other businesses that have come or updated. There’s a different feeling downtown.”

The Refinery has definitely played its part, from being a fun place to socialize for people of all ages, to hosting events like painting nights and hockey fundraisers. “It’s a really cool, community atmosphere. I think we’ve succeeded in that.”

Even the by-product of beer brewing has wider benefits. Instead of being thrown out, the Refinery’s beer mash goes to farmers for uses like pig feed, and to a local manufacturer of dog biscuits. The Refinery’s next push will be to introduce new beer brands, expand its beer distribution system throughout the province and into Alberta, and continue to promote the success of its new vodka soda.

“It’s been a fun ride,” says Konkin. “We’re now trying to launch new products, continue to innovate and keep on growing.”

A Safe Space

GOLDEN, FAMILY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, COMMUNITY

“You don’t need an appointment. Just drop in for a coffee or tea and a chat,” says Linley McLean, Executive Director of the Golden Women’s Resource Centre. Located in downtown Golden, the centre offers a safe space for women and their children to get support, access services, including a women’s shelter and outreach worker, and even get together just to socialize and unwind.

Last year, after nearly 40 years in operation the facility was in need of an update. It received support through the Trust’s Community Initiatives and Affected Areas Programs, administered by the Town of Golden. The first project involved upgrading the physical building, including painting over its old bright, high-energy colours with softer, more tranquil tones. The second project involved flooring, as the original floors were damaged from years of wear and tear. Not only do these updates make their space look fresher and more inviting, but staff feel the updates have also had a positive emotional impact on the women the centre serves.

The centre has also received funds to support its services. For example, with help from the Trust’s Social Grants it started Girlz Group, an after-school program that aims to empower young women, promote independent thinking and build positive self-esteem, confidence and relationships.

The centre also initiated a third-party reporting program that gives survivors of sexual assault a way to report incidents anonymously. And it has two new programs that focus on reducing social isolation: Creative Thursdays, where women get together for guided art-making sessions, and Mood Walks, which give women facing barriers the opportunity to expand social ties and become more comfortable in social settings through a weekly facilitated group walk.

As McLean mentioned, women can drop in any time they need or want. “I love the sense of community here, the diversity of the women I get to connect with, their ability to connect with each other and the relationships the centre has with other community organizations.”

She also notes resources like a small kitchen and library, and a play area for children when a mother needs to have a private conversation with staff.

“The centre is an inviting and barrier-free space for anyone regardless of economic or social status, or mental or physical health,” she says. “It gives women a sense of community, and invites safe and confidential conversation, friendship and connection.”

Feeding Families, Reducing Food Waste

News: April 4, 2019



The Creston Valley Food Action Coalition and Fields Forward Society are working together to process cherries and provide the products to people in need including cherry juice that will be produced with a mobile presser. Photo credit: Andrew Bibby

More people in the Columbia Basin will have better access to nutritious food and healthy meals as [ten](#) food recovery projects move forward to reduce food waste and help families meet their basic needs. These projects are receiving over \$440,000 from Columbia Basin Trust.

“Communities told us that making essentials like nutritious food more affordable and accessible is a priority for improving well-being in our region,” said Aimee Ambrosone, Director, Delivery of Benefits at Columbia Basin Trust. “Food recovery is one way that we can meet the needs of children and families, while also helping to reduce food waste and loss.”

In addition to redirecting food, the projects may involve upgrading technology or infrastructure to improve or expand food recovery operations, and building public knowledge about food preparation, growing, preservation and storage, especially amongst children, youth and their families.

Here are a few of the projects:

Everything Cherries

Nutritious and Fresh

Targeting Health and Resilience

One of the objectives of the Trust’s Social Strategic Plan is to help people afford and meet basic needs like food. The Trust is also partnering with the BC Association of Farmers’ Markets to expand its Nutrition Coupon Program within the Basin. Learn about all the ways the Trust is supporting social well-being at ourtrust.org/social.