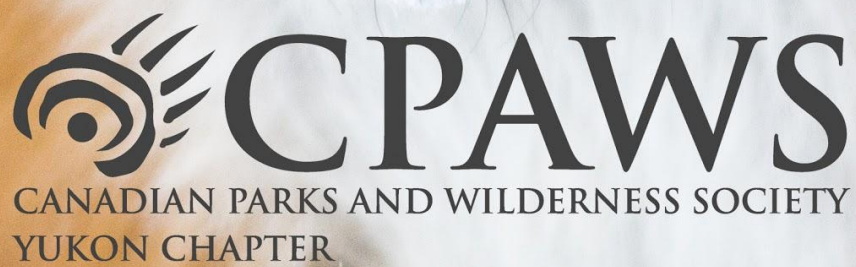


# Annual Report

2020 - 2021





Welcome to our first annual report! We're excited to give you a glimpse of everything that's been going on within CPAWS Yukon for the past year, and hope you find this a helpful resource.



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## UPDATE FROM PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

2020-2021 has been a year like no other. CPAWS Yukon has responded and adapted our operations to the COVID 19 pandemic in a manner that has kept our staff and those we work with safe and healthy, while continuing to make progress on our conservation campaigns and projects.

The last year has showed us the dark side of our colonial past and the on-going oppression that Indigenous and Racialized Peoples in Canada face daily. CPAWS Yukon has and will continue to learn and reflect on what this means for us and our relationships, and to identify the commitments and actions that we must make to Reconciliation and to being a more Just, Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive organization. In collaboration with the Yukon Conservation Society, we have prepared a document that clearly describes our Commitment to Reconciliation by pledging what actions we will take and how we will hold ourselves accountable for our promises: [cpawsyukon.org/reconciliation/](https://cpawsyukon.org/reconciliation/)

Also, I am happy to report that this past year we prepared our Strategic Plan for 2021-2024. The plan builds on the progress we have made in the previous 5 years and it lays out a path forward to help us plan our work.

Furthermore, I can also report that our chapter finances for the last year were solid, and provided us the resources to continue doing our work. This was primarily due to the excellent relations that we have fostered with the foundations that fund us, the great work that staff have consistently done both in the communities and in the field, and the careful management of our budgets and administration of the office.

As I step down as President this year, I would like to say what a privilege and honour it has been over the last 6 years to have chaired our incredibly dedicated Board of Directors, and to have worked with Chris Rider, our very capable and committed Executive Director, who has led so well our highly qualified and hardworking staff.

I also want thank all of you who support our conservation efforts in the Yukon. I have all the confidence in the world that CPAWS Yukon will continue to succeed and advance the protection of Yukon's natural legacy and wild spaces.



Erik Val, President of the Board of Directors



## UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Like almost everyone around the world, our organization was impacted by COVID-19 in ways that were both large and small. Trips and events had to be cancelled, and we missed the day to day interactions that come from sharing an office - you know, the kind of quick conversation in the kitchen that so often leads to the best ideas.

Highlights of the past year include the two on-the-land trips that we were able to complete alongside Na-Cho Nyäk Dun & Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nations, despite the challenges of organizing in the midst of a pandemic. I am also so proud of our work, together with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, to convince Canada's largest banks to commit to never funding drilling in the Arctic Refuge. When we set out to do this in December 2019 we had no idea if we could achieve it; to have every major bank committed less than a year later. That was unbelievable!

We want to inspire people to be part of the conservation movement through relentless positivity and problem solving, and I think it's something we mostly achieve. That became clear recently when we commissioned some polling during the election, together with our friends at YCS, which showed incredible support from Yukoners for the environment. You can check out the results later in this report.

I want to thank our outgoing Board President Erik Val for everything he's done to support me since I started with CPAWS Yukon five years ago. From the day I started he's been a brilliant sounding board, who is endlessly patient and a great source of advice. Thank you Erik!

Also, thank you to Karen McKenna, our long-time Vice President, who is leaving the board this year. Karen has been a big part of our board for a decade, and will be missed. Thank you Karen!

Someone recently said to me, "CPAWS seems like a really put-together organization" and it's true. It's thanks to the brilliant, dedicated and passionate team of people I am lucky enough to call my team. It is a privilege to work with them every day.

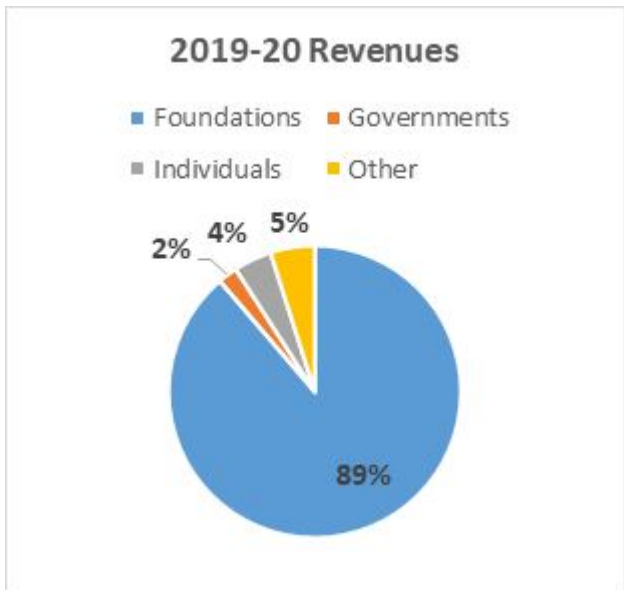
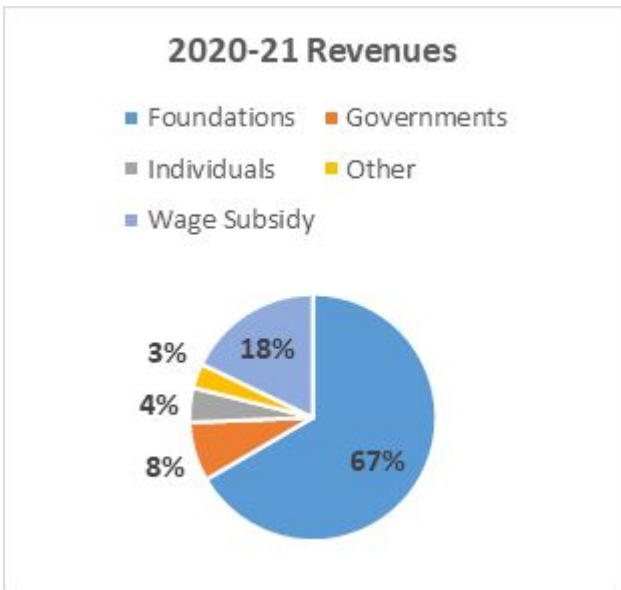
I want to thank you – our supporters - for being part of our success. The strength of an organization like CPAWS is our members and everything we achieve is thanks to you. I'm excited to see what we can achieve together in the next year!



Chris Rider, Executive Director of CPAWS Yukon



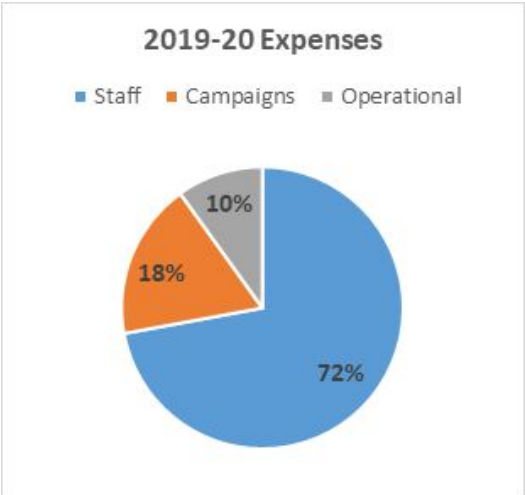
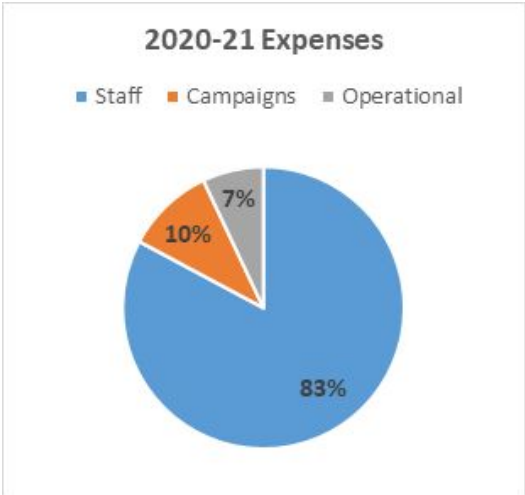
# FINANCIAL UPDATES



As in past years, the majority of our revenue exists of foundation grants. Some of our major grants come from Wilburforce Foundation, 444S Foundation, Wyss Foundation, and Conservation Alliance. The wage subsidy was provided by the Government of Canada due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is a one-time subsidy only. The increase in Government Funds allowed us to take on some special projects this year – an on-the-land trip with NND citizens and the digitization of our archives.



# FINANCIAL UPDATES



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we had to adjust our campaign delivery and this led to lower expenses as we made fewer visits to the communities, didn't travel outside, and were unable to host in-person events. Our staff expenses increased slightly due to a newly hired term-position for the archiving project and because we were able to extend our summer intern's contract until the end of December.



## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

### Dawson Regional Land Use Plan

CPAWS Yukon is supporting Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in their efforts to protect their land and waters through the Dawson regional land use planning process. This year, we saw the vice-chair of the Planning Commission step down due to the lack of a moratorium on mineral staking during planning; a call for a moratorium has long been echoed by CPAWS Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. The draft land use plan will be released on June 15th and, throughout the coming year, we will work to ensure that it adequately protects culturally and ecologically important lands and waters throughout the region.

### Beaver River Sub-regional Land Use Plan

In late November 2020, the Yukon Government rejected the proposed 65 km exploration road that would cut through the Beaver River Watershed. This was an important decision, and we are hopeful that the ongoing sub-regional land use planning process will now fully consider the best use of the land, including whether or not a road is appropriate at all.

CPAWS Yukon hosted a 13-day river trip through the watershed with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens to experience, document and share the watershed with others, and provide youth with the confidence and skills to be on the land. These trips helped highlight the cultural importance of places like the Beaver River Watershed and helped equip youth with a better understanding of the area. We look forward to sharing a new short film about this journey in the very near future.

### McIntyre Creek

As part of our ongoing work to defend McIntyre Creek from development, Conservation Coordinator Maegan McCaw wrote an important report that explored the cultural history and ecological importance of this very special place, right in the heart of Whitehorse. This year, we have been setting up camera traps, bat detectors, and autonomic recording units (ARUs) to help identify the different species that pass through McIntyre Creek. This data will help the City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and Yukon Government as they work on a plan for the area.





## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

### Porcupine Caribou & Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

A lot has changed for the Arctic Refuge in the past year. Last August the Trump administration released its Record of Decision on oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge, setting off a race to sell leases. Fortunately, the lease sale on January 6th was a bust. Not one major oil company showed up, and the State of Alaska's development corporation was the main bidder. The oil industry's lack of interest is in part due to a campaign that convinced banks from around the world not to fund Arctic Refuge drilling. CPAWS Yukon is proud to be a part of this work, including our successful campaign - together with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Gwich'in Tribal Council - to push Canada's big five banks to adopt finance exclusions for the Arctic Refuge.

President Biden took office on January 20th and, within hours of inauguration, signed an executive order that paused the previous administration's leasing program. This was followed with an order from Interior Secretary Deb Haaland to suspend the leases sold on January 6th, and to review the previous administration's faulty environmental review on Arctic Refuge drilling. President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau also highlighted the importance of protecting the Arctic Refuge in their first bilateral meeting. There's still a long way to go to restore the protections that the previous administration stripped away, and a top priority this year is to get the U.S. Congress to pass legislation to close the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas leasing.

### Yukon Mineral Development Strategy

The Yukon Mineral Development Strategy is an opportunity to reshape how exploration and mining takes place in the Yukon. The public comment period for the draft plan concluded in early 2021, and CPAWS Yukon helped people submit comments through our website, as well as virtual and in-person events, which included two showings of the documentary "The Shadow of Gold" at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

The final strategy was released in April 2021, and while it wasn't as strong as we would have liked, the process itself is cause for optimism. We will continue to work to see key aspects of the strategy implemented, including modern mining legislation that respects First Nation rights and the environment.



## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

### Wetlands

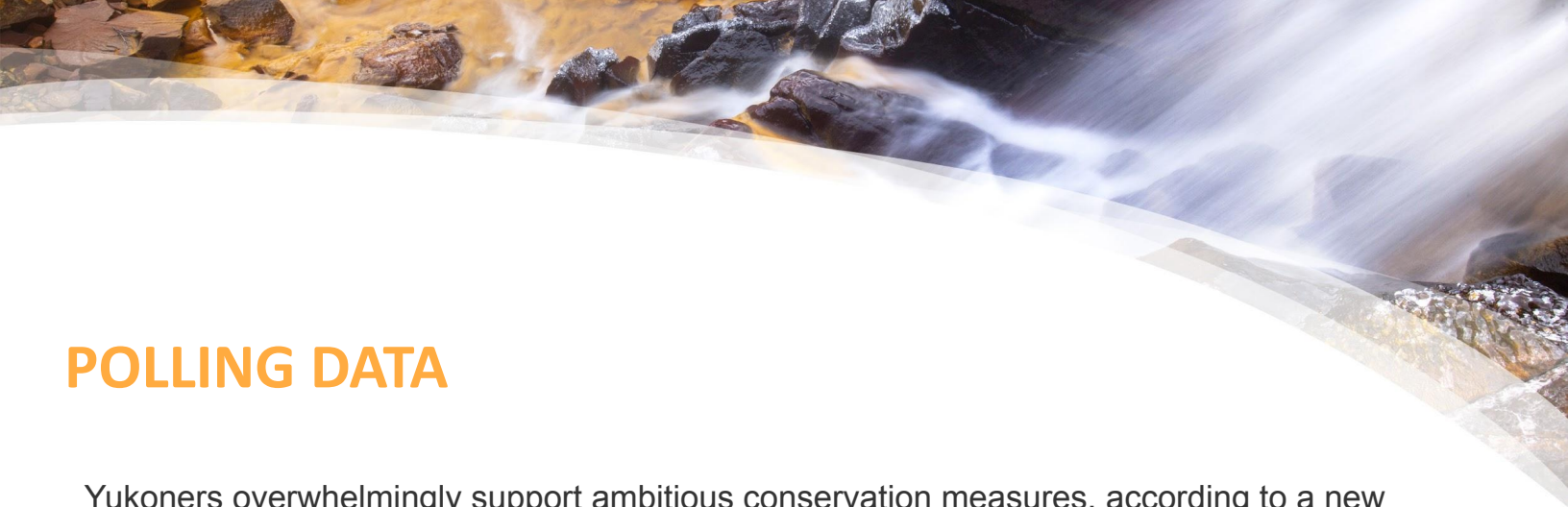
The topic of placer mining in wetlands was on display at the Yukon Water Board public interest hearing in October 2020. Two questions were at the heart of the conversation: Should placer mining be allowed to continue transforming wetlands in the Yukon? And under what conditions would this be acceptable? Conservation Manager, Randi Newton, presented at the hearing and Campaigns Coordinator, Malcolm Boothroyd, created a short film “You Almost Forget Where You Are” documenting his canoe trip with Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in youth in the Indian River Watershed; an area that is heavily impacted by placer mining. This film will be released online shortly.

### Vote Wild! Yukon Territorial Election

Together with the Yukon Conservation Society, we encouraged Yukoners to “Vote Wild” during the 2021 territorial election. Before the election was called, we drafted a set of platform recommendations with other environmental organizations and distributed them to each party. We also sent out a questionnaire to each party on key environmental topics and published the results in the Yukon News and online. Our Vote Wild website displayed party platforms on environmental issues. We also hosted a virtual Environmental Forum, where party candidates responded to questions from Yukon environmental organizations and the public. Finally, we commissioned a poll to gather information about how Yukoners feel about climate change and environmental protection. This poll affirmed our work to protect wild spaces, with 78% of respondents

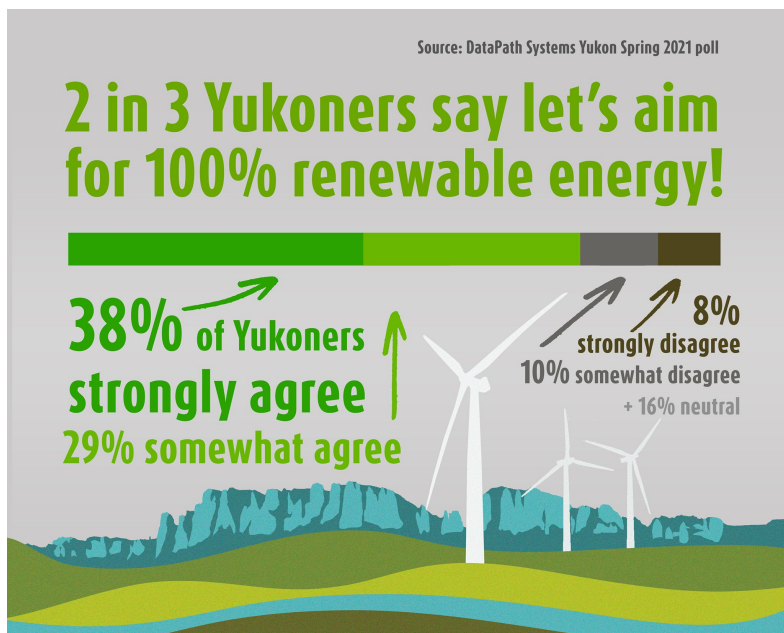
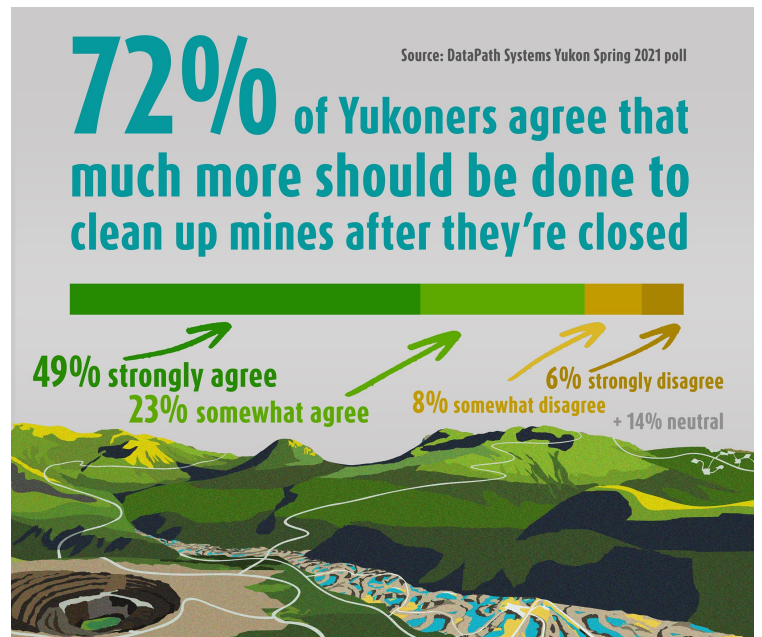
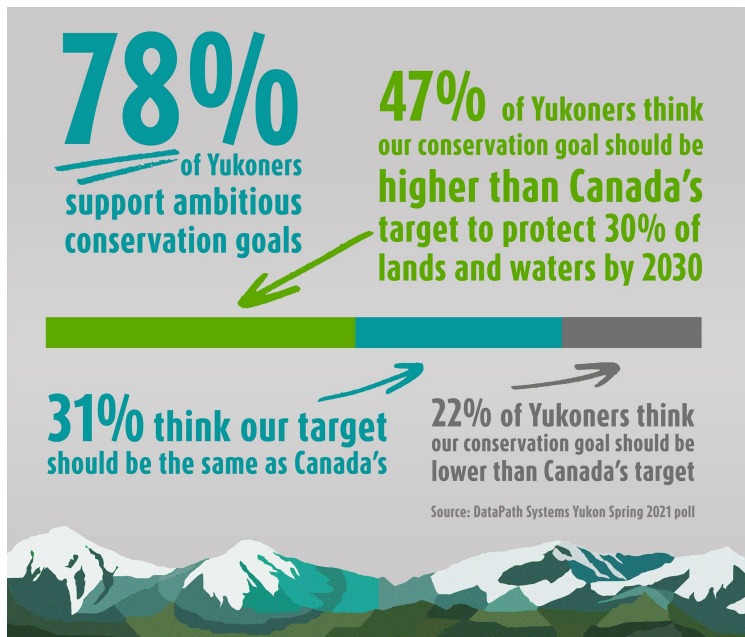
### Alaska to Alberta (A2A) Railway

The proposal for a railway connecting Alaska to Alberta ramped up again this year, with the previous U.S. administration issuing a presidential permit that will allow the project to cross the U.S. border if it is approved. We are continuing to monitor the project however it faces numerous hurdles, including environmental assessments in both Canada and the U.S..



## POLLING DATA

Yukoners overwhelmingly support ambitious conservation measures, according to a new DataPath poll. The results affirm Yukoners' concern for the environment, and are a reminder to the territory's next government that issues like climate change, conservation, and mining reform must be priorities.



# POLLING DATA

Question	Options	Total	Yukon Region		Age Group			Job Type	
		Spring 2021	Whitehorse	Communities	Under 35	35-49	50+	Government	Private Sector
Much more needs to be done to ensure satisfactory mine clean-up after a mine closes.	Completely Disagree	6%	7%	2%	10%	3%	7%	8%	4%
	Somewhat Disagree	8%	10%	4%	19%	8%	2%	2%	16%
	Neither Agree or Disagree	14%	16%	11%	27%	14%	10%	11%	24%
	Somewhat Agree	23%	19%	35%	15%	26%	24%	29%	14%
	Completely Agree	49%	49%	49%	28%	49%	56%	50%	42%
The current laws that regulate the mining industry are sufficient as they are.	Completely Disagree	25%	22%	32%	29%	30%	17%	31%	14%
	Somewhat Disagree	35%	39%	21%	48%	41%	26%	31%	44%
	Neither Agree or Disagree	18%	20%	11%	12%	17%	21%	16%	21%
	Somewhat Agree	16%	15%	19%	8%	11%	26%	17%	13%
	Completely Agree	6%	3%	16%	3%	1%	10%	4%	8%
Having all energy generation in the Yukon coming from renewable sources should be a Yukon target.	Completely Disagree	8%	9%	3%	13%	10%	6%	3%	10%
	Somewhat Disagree	10%	11%	7%	8%	10%	11%	5%	16%
	Neither Agree or Disagree	16%	18%	9%	26%	11%	14%	15%	20%
	Somewhat Agree	29%	27%	37%	28%	25%	30%	36%	25%
	Completely Agree	38%	36%	44%	25%	44%	40%	42%	30%
The Federal government's target is to permanently protect 25% of Canada's land and waters by 2025 and 30% of land and waters by 2030. Do you think this target is:	Too low (more land and water than that should be protected)	31.10%	29.9%	35.3%	17.70%	40.0%	34.0%	38.80%	21.70%
	About right	45.70%	46.6%	42.7%	45.30%	46.2%	43.8%	49.50%	46.30%
	Too high (less land and water than that should be protected)	23.10%	23.5%	22.0%	37.00%	13.7%	22.2%	11.70%	32.00%
Do you think the Yukon government should set a target that is:	Lower than the Federal target	21.60%	23.1%	16.5%	35.10%	13.8%	20.7%	11.00%	29.50%
	The same as the Federal target	31.20%	29.8%	36.1%	31.20%	25.3%	30.0%	33.60%	30.40%
	Higher than the Federal target	47.10%	47.1%	47.3%	33.70%	60.9%	49.3%	55.40%	40.10%

## STAFF



Chris Rider, Executive Director

Judith van Gulick, Operations Manager



Randi Newton, Conservation Manager

Joti Overduin, Outreach Manager



Adil Darvesh, Communications Coordinator

## STAFF

Malkolm Boothroyd, Campaigns Coordinator



Anne Mease, Outreach Coordinator



Maegan McCaw, Conservation Coordinator



Asad Chishti, Junior Digital Archivist



Preet Dhillon, Conservation Intern





**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT THIS YEAR!**

