

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1 2024 - March 31 2025

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Dear friends, members, and supporters,

As we gather for our Annual General Meeting, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your continued dedication to conservation in the Yukon. Over the past year, our team at CPAWS Yukon has been hard at work, and we've seen meaningful strides in protecting the land, water, and wildlife that define our home—progress that would not have been possible without your support.

As political landscapes shift, we face increased uncertainty about the future of environmental policy and land protection. However, these are not times to retreat—they are times to strengthen our resolve. We must work collaboratively and boldly. That means standing with our partners, speaking truth to power, and ensuring that conservation remains a top priority for decision-makers. It means recognizing the wisdom of Indigenous knowledge systems and supporting long-term, sustainable solutions rooted in respect and reciprocity.

Despite some challenges, we celebrated significant milestones. This past year we've continued our efforts to Care for the Creek by hosting a series of learning walks and workshops. We rallied alongside the communities of Dawson, Mayo, and Fort McPherson as Tr'ondek Hwech'in and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun stood in court to Protect the Peel Plan against a judicial review against YESAB's recommendation against a proposed exploration project within the Peel Watershed. We also celebrated as the Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a parks feasibility study as RRDC continues working towards an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area. From advancing protections in the Peel Watershed to engaging youth in environmental education, our efforts reflect a deep and shared respect for the natural world and those who have cared for it since time immemorial.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and passion of the people who've helped us including our staff, board, and supporters. With your help, our team works alongside First Nations partners, local communities, and the public to uphold stewardship values and support Indigenous-led conservation initiatives. This year we welcomed our new Community Outreach Coordinator, Nicole Schafenacker, and Conservation Coordinator, Dakota Tomah, to the CPAWS Yukon team. We also welcomed Jim Boyde to our Board of Directors, and are saying a fond farewell to Joel Luet, who has served on our board for decades. Thank you for your passion, dedication, and commitment to conservation in the Yukon.

In the year ahead, CPAWS Yukon will continue to advocate for the land, waters, and wild spaces of Yukon. We will continue to support community-led conservation, and provide sound policy recommendations. But we cannot do it alone. Now more than ever, we need your voices, your energy, and your commitment.

Thank you for walking with us. Let's continue this journey — together.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Chris Pinkerton".

Chris Pinkerton
Executive Director, CPAWS Yukon



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

This past year has been another busy one for the CPAWS Yukon Board. As part of a network of CPAWS chapters across the country, we are proud to be part of a movement that protects Canada's lands and waters. Here in the Yukon, our board plays a crucial role in conservation efforts—providing strong governance, financial stability, and building meaningful relationships with our partners, especially First Nations, who have long been stewards of these lands.

Keeping CPAWS Yukon Financially Strong

One of our biggest priorities this year has been ensuring CPAWS Yukon remains financially healthy. Our Investment Committee worked hard to find ethical and secure ways to manage reserve funds, helping us stay strong even as political shifts may impact funding sources. The board approved new long-term savings and investments, giving CPAWS Yukon a stable foundation to continue its conservation advocacy for years to come.

Strengthening the Board

Board recruitment has been a key focus. A huge shout-out to our incredible current board members, Barb, Sandy, Jill, and Joel. Thank you for your dedication and hard work! We also welcomed Jim Boyde as a new board member this year, and we're excited about four prospective board members running for election at our upcoming Annual General Meeting. A special thank you goes to Joel Luet for an incredible 20 years of service. His leadership and commitment have been invaluable, and we are so grateful for his contribution. With experienced and new members joining forces, our board remains strong and ready for the challenges ahead.

Supporting Our Amazing Staff

Ensuring staff retention is another top priority. This year, our HR committee strengthened policies to promote long-term sustainability, including increasing wages and benefits to keep CPAWS competitive with other local non-profits. We also explored creative ways to improve working conditions, including flexible work arrangements, better travel policies, and a wellness bonus when funds allow.

Engaging the Public

The board has been busy connecting with the community! From the Voices from the Wind River celebration to the Hut-to-Hut Ski Event, we've helped our members and supporters engage with conservation in meaningful ways. We also remained actively involved in mining policy discussions, ensuring the environmental impacts of key projects—like Victoria Gold cyanide spill, Eagle Mine disaster, Minto Mine closure, Wolverine Mine tailings leakage, and exploration at Michelle Creek, Gladiator, Kudze Kayah, and Casino Mine—stay part of the public conversation.

Indigenous-Led Conservation at the Heart of Our Work

A massive thank-you to our fantastic staff team. CPAWS Yukon continues to work closely with First Nations partners to build strong, lasting relationships that protect and steward the land. This year, we supported the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Ross River Dena Council in youth-focused on-the-land trips and conservation projects. We worked with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council to help clean up Chasàn Chùà (McIntyre Creek). We closely tracked the Peel Special Management Areas designations and backed the Ross River Dena Council's proposal for an Indigenous Protected Conservation Area. We kept updated on the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan process and helped share important updates about the latest threats to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Porcupine Caribou herd in Old Crow.

On-the-Land Experiences for Indigenous Youth

Providing on-the-land experiences for Indigenous youth continues to be a high priority. These trips, led in collaboration with First Nations, are an incredible way to strengthen cultural connections, preserve traditional knowledge, and inspire the next generation of conservation leaders. To ensure the highest safety standards, the board has worked hard to update CPAWS Yukon's tripping approval policy, ensuring trip leaders meet or exceed outdoor leadership standards in the Yukon.

Looking Ahead

Our Strategic Planning Committee is gearing up for the next five-year strategic plan, ensuring that CPAWS Yukon continues to lead with vision and strong governance. As a board, we remain committed to advancing Indigenous-led conservation, finalizing a long-term strategy, advocating for land protections, ensuring financial stability, and expanding board capacity to meet the growing conservation needs in the Yukon.

A huge thank you to our members, supporters, and First Nations partners—you make this work possible! Your dedication ensures that Yukon's lands remain healthy and protected for generations to come. We look forward to continuing this journey with you in 2025 and beyond.



Heather Swystun
Chair, CPAWS Yukon

OUR 2024-2025 TEAM

Staff

Chris Pinkerton, Executive Director
Judith van Gulick, Operations Manager
Joti Overduin, Outreach Manager
Nicole Schafenacker, Community Outreach Coordinator
Adil Darvesh, Communications Manager
Paula Gomez Villalba, Communications Coordinator
Randi Newton, Conservation Manager
Stephanie Woods, Conservation Coordinator
Malkolm Boothroyd, Campaign Coordinator
Laurence Fox, Conservation Coordinator
Yataya van Kampen, Conservation Intern

Board of Directors

Heather Swystun, Chair
Joel Luet, Vice Chair
Barb Buyck, Treasurer
Sandy Johnston, Secretary
Jill Pangman, Director
Jim Boyde, Director

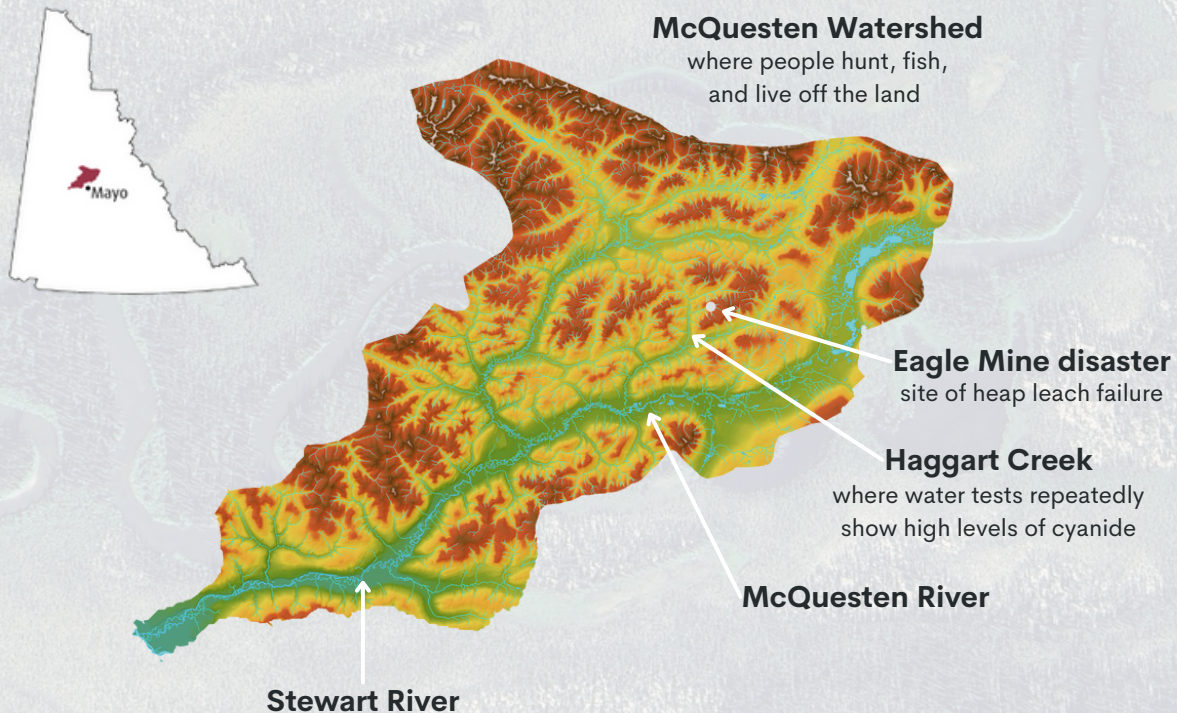


CONSERVATION

Overshadowing much of the amazing work that occurred this past year was the monumental environmental disaster at Victoria Gold's Eagle Mine.

In late June 2024, a massive heap leach failure saw hundreds of millions of litres of cyanide-solution escape containment and bleed into the surrounding ecosystem. As work began to contain the failure, CPAWS Yukon joined the chorus of voices looking for answers.

Our conservation team pivoted to address the disaster and help share information as it became available. On top of sharing and translating the information, we joined the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun's calls for a public inquiry so we can learn from this disaster and avoid future catastrophes.



Earlier in the year, we launched a new Care for the Creek initiative, geared towards amplifying and creating opportunities for you to connect with and help safeguard Chasàn Chùà (McIntyre Creek).

In the heart of Whitehorse, this wildlife corridor was used long before settlers came to the area but has since been impacted heavily by various other uses. Care for the Creek is about repairing that damage and taking action.



We teamed up with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, in partnership with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation, for a large-scale clean up at Dàmäwtän (The Point), the mouth of Chasàn Chuà. For one week in June 2024, we worked alongside many organizations to pull out tonnes of scrap metal, used tires, and other trash from this sensitive area. In total, we removed 13,000 pounds of scrap metal and steel, and 17,000 pounds of tires from the creek and surrounding bank!

Funding support from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Trust made this event possible.

In addition to this cleanup effort, we hosted public events throughout the week as a way to highlight our learnings, and to appreciate the importance of the creek and surrounding area. These public events were hosted in collaboration with Friends of McIntyre Creek, Yukon Conservation Society, Yukon Invasive Species Council, Yukon Fish and Game Association, and Yukon Wildlife Viewing.

Chasàn Chuà is also the backdrop of the important question, “Do we want mining within city limits?” About one-third of Chasàn Chuà is covered by mining claims, most of which are controlled by Gladiator Metals Corp. Mining activity on these claims could bring disturbances to the more remote parts of the creek, some of which are outside the proposed park boundaries.

Through Tales and Trails of the Copper Belt, free guided hikes by Tim Green, we’ve been able to get people to learn about the history of mining in this area, what it looks like now, and provide ideas on what it could look like in the future. These discussions tie closely with territory-wide conversations around mining legislation as CPAWS Yukon continues to participate in the ENGO-Industry Advisory Table for the Yukon’s long overdue new mining legislation.

In addition to these large projects, our conservation team keeps tabs on what happens in the Yukon Legislative Assembly and projects going through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board (YESAB) to ensure we're on top of environmental concerns across the territory.

As we look to the future, significant work will continue as we support Ross River Dena Council in establishing an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, as well as ensuring the Porcupine caribou herd continue to have healthy calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach plays a significant role in helping us achieve conservation in the Yukon. From building partnerships and collaborating on projects like on-the-land trips, to amplifying and sharing stories about the lands, water, and wildlife that we love so dearly.



CPAWS Yukon has a long relationship with the First Nation Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (FNNND), and we continue to focus much of our time and energy working together on the many issues interconnected to the environment.

This year, we helped bring the community together to experience a film following youth as they travelled the same routes as their ancestors on the Wind River in 2023. The feedback to our work was so positive, and we were invited to showcase the film once more at the annual May Gathering of Northern Tutchone Nations later that month. FNNND has been working towards regional land planning, and these trips help provide the nation with important information as they prepare. We followed up with this work by travelling to Mayo in June for a canoe skills day on Five Mile Lake, where community members learned new skills and gained confidence on the water. After this trip, our Outreach Manager, Joti Overduin, and Campaigns Coordinator, Malkolm Boothroyd, spent a week on the Stewart River gathering water samples, gaining photo assets, and preparing for the larger FNNND trip coming up in 2025.

As we continue working closely with FNNND, we are also beginning to foster our relationship with the Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) as they proceed in their work to establish an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area.

In collaboration with RRDC and the Yukon First Nation Education Department (YFNED), we organized a youth canoe trip along Tu Des Des (Pelly River). For 10 days, we travelled with youth and a Land Guardian from the community of Ross River to Pelly Crossing. This was an opportunity to connect with the land and water, while learning important skills. Each participant received an Intro to Tandem Canoe certificate from Paddle Canada upon completion of the trip. We also worked with River Voices Productions to put together the film “Paddling Tu Des Des,” which premiered in the community of Ross River and at the Qathet International Film Festival.



Our outreach team also spent significant time fostering relationships in and around Whitehorse, with strong support for Care for the Creek events, as well as returning to our roots and organizing yet another rally for the Peel Watershed.

When YESAB recommended that an exploration project not proceed in the Peel Watershed – due to lack of data and not meeting the thresholds of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan – Yukon government decided that was unacceptable and took YESAB to court for a judicial review.

Many of you joined us in our displeasure, as this is a direct contradiction to the intention of the Umbrella Final Agreements and the Peel Plan that we fought so hard to achieve. From Whitehorse to Mayo, Dawson City, and Tsiigehtchic, hundreds gathered to call on the Yukon government to honour the process of consultations before going into courtrooms. After hearing the cases presented in the court, the judge agreed that the court system was not an appropriate avenue for Yukon government to use in this matter.

As we look ahead, we aim to continue working on fostering relationships with different communities, and strengthening ones we have already established. With the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan still in the works, our work with Ross River Dena Council, and a potential Northern Tutchone Land Use Plan in the very early stages, we anticipate many community visits and events in the near future.



People of Chasàn Chùà

ART EXHIBITION



This year, we were joined by Yataya van Kampen as our Conservation Intern. Yataya is Crow clan and a member of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Born and raised in Whitehorse, Yukon, she grew up surrounded by nature and the many memories of exploring nature and communities. In summer 2024, Yataya worked on a project to merge her background in art, sociology, and Indigenous perspectives and create an art exhibit showcasing the faces of Chasàn Chùà. She spent the summer painting watercolour portraits of First Nations who are connected to Chasàn Chùà.

People of Chasàn Chùà officially opened at the Kwanlin Dūn Cultural Centre in August 2024, and was also used by the Chasàn Chùà Steering Committee during their public consultations for Chasàn Chuà / McIntyre Creek protected area in the Fall.

Today, you can view Yataya's art around the CPAWS Yukon office and learn a little bit more about her process on our website at cpawsyukon.org/celebrating-people-and-nature.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for events, workshops, and rallies. Here are a few highlights from the year.



Voices from the Wind River included the Whitehorse premiere of “Connections,” a film by Bethanny Paquette that highlighted the journey of Northern Tutchone youth down the Wind River in 2023. This event was also a fundraiser for future on-the-land trips to connect people to the land, water, and wildlife we hold so dear.

Rally for the Peel Watershed was held in late November in response to Yukon government asking for a judicial review on a mining exploration project in the Peel Watershed. Instead of consulting with First Nations, the Yukon government decided to take YESAB to court over their recommendation against the Michelle Creek project, sparking rallies from Whitehorse, Dawson City, Mayo, and Tsiigehtchic.



Our **Life of the Boreal** series was a huge success with numerous free guided walks and talks throughout the year. So many of you joined us throughout the summer, rain or shine, to listen to guest speakers share their knowledge and passion for the boreal forest. From medicinal plant walks to invasive species pulls, so many of you showed up to listen, learn, and participate with us this summer. Thank you!

Hut to Hut was a community event organized by the Whitehorse Nordic Centre where groups, like CPAWS Yukon, host a hut along the Mt. McIntyre Trail Network. With the help of volunteers and Board members, we provided warm beverages to skiers and snowshoers as they travelled along the route. It was an awesome chance to meet new people, talk about our work, and foster relationships in the Whitehorse area.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

This year, we hosted our first ever auction to help raise funds for our work. In total, you helped us raise \$9,500 from this auction and from tickets to Voices from the Wind River. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated items to support our work:

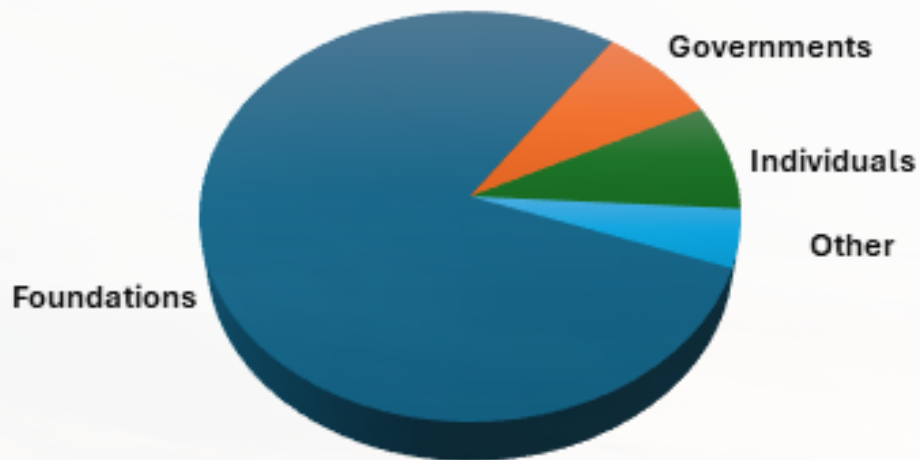
Air North, Yukon's Airline – Arctic Media Creation/Atsushi Sugimoto Photography – Baked Café – Barb Buyck – Bostan Skrlj – Bullet Hole Bagels – Coast Mountain Sports – Cultured Fine Cheese – Hinterland Flour Mill – Icycle Sports – Karen Nicloux – Lumel Studios – Misha Donohoe – Murdoch's Gem Shop – Peter Mather Photography – Robert Postma Photography – Sharon Vittrekwa – Sky High Wilderness Ranch – Trinita Technology – Whitehorse Nordic Centre – Winterlong Brewing Co. – Yukon First Nation Education Directorate – Yukon Film Society – Yukon Hiking – Yukon Wildlife Preserve

Our organization can thrive thanks to the support of the following foundations and grants:

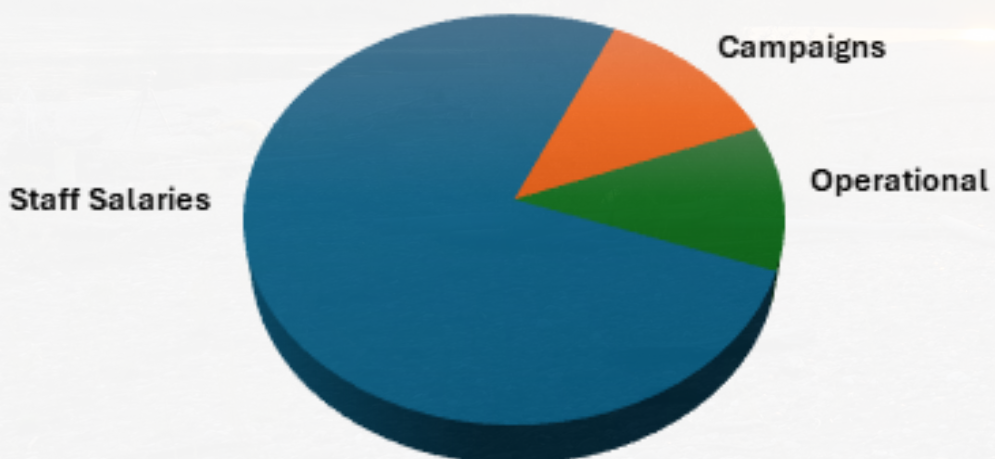
444S Foundation – Anonymous Trust – Canada Summer Jobs – CJ Foundation – Environment and Climate Change Canada, Government of Canada – MakeWay Foundation – Patagonia.org Impact Fund – Nahanni Wilderness Adventures – National Audubon Society – Staffing UP & Summer Career Placement Program, Government of Yukon – The Rossy Foundation – Wilburforce Foundation – Wyss Foundation – Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) Conservation Initiative – Yukon Fish & Wildlife Enhancement Trust – and many anonymous donors!

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2024-25 Revenues \$944,380



2024-25 Expenses \$898,010



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

ASSETS	
Cash	405,698
Term Deposits	100,000
Marketable Securities	188,941
Accounts Receivable & Prepaid Expenses	363,015
Property, Plant, and Equipment	638,287
Total Assets	\$1,695,941

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	54,745
Deferred Revenue	365,910
Internally Restricted Fund – Reserve Fund	425,043
Property, Plant, and Equipment	638,287
Other Net Assets	211,956
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$1,695,941

LEARN MORE



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