SWEAT EQUITY!
TRAIL-MAINTENANCE GEAR
PG. 14

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BATTLE HARBOUR

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LIVE THE ADVENTURE

SPECIAL REPORT
RECONCILIATION & RECREATION IN OUR NATIONAL PARKS

WE ASK
IS OUTDOOR GEAR TOO EXPENSIVE?

CANADA NEEDS (A LOT) MORE PARKS

This is how we start
PG. 28

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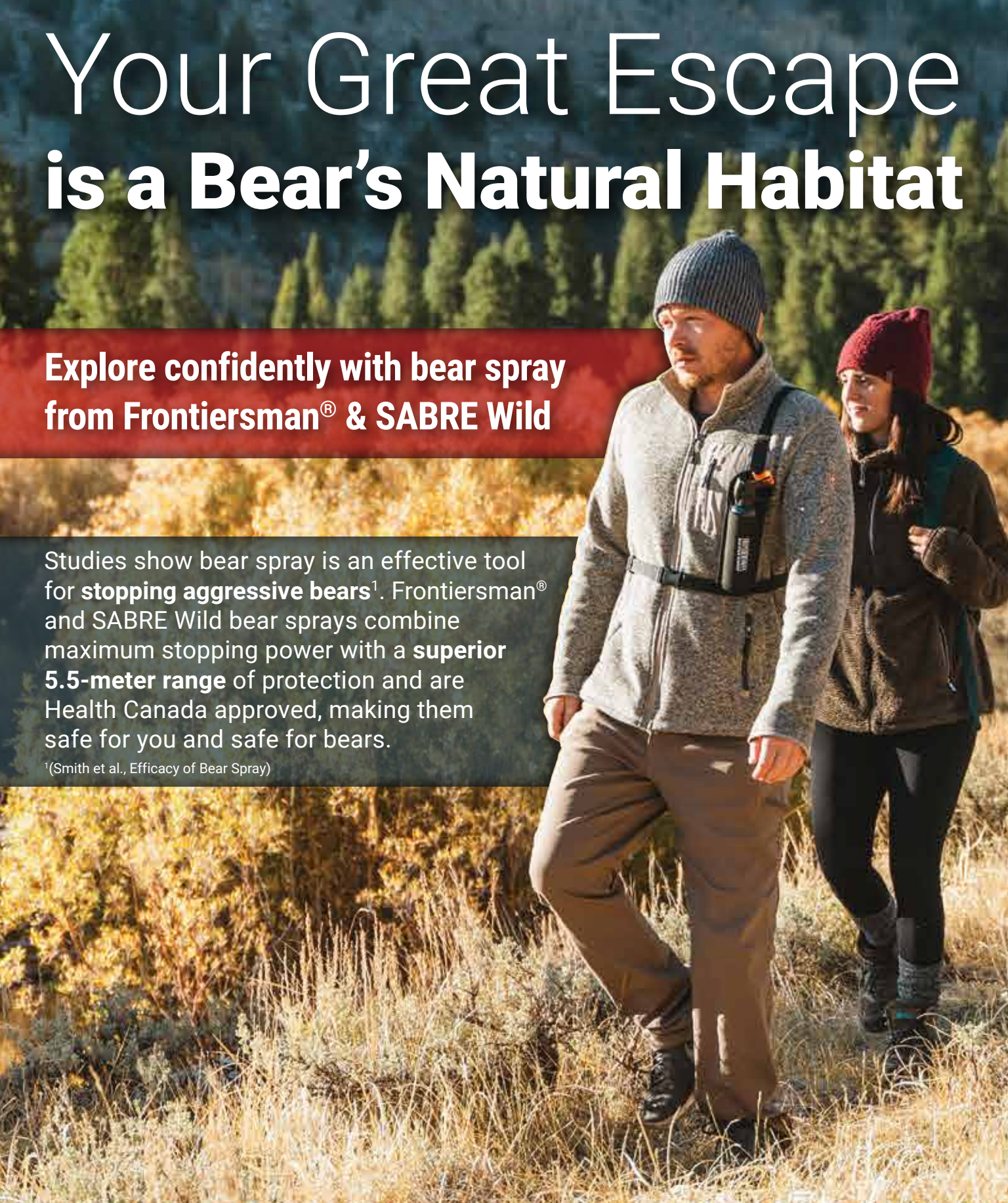

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[1](Smith et al., Efficacy of Bear Spray)

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FALL 2022 #216

DEPARTMENTS

Multi-day backpacking, no tent required, page 18.

ON THE COVER

Ethan Krueger charges downhill on a Sport-On Handcycles adaptive mountain bike; Mt. Abriel, Nakusp, British Columbia.
Photo by Ryan Creary

FEATURES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ACORN ART PHOTOGRAPHY; ISTOCK; PARKS CANADA/SCOTT MUNN; PATRICK BATES

TRAILHEAD

BY DAVID WEBB
@davidebwebb

AT WHAT COST?

I'm writing this with a clear view of The Lions, those 1,600-metre-tall twin peaks overlooking Vancouver, British Columbia, from across the Burrard Inlet. It's incredible to think that I can get to The Lions' trailhead in about 30 minutes' drive and grind my way to the lookouts for an inspiring outdoor experience… *for free*. That's what makes our passions so great—the accessibility.

Except that's not true. Not entirely. For starters, fuel is about $2 per litre right now. And you gotta buy the car to put it in, with all those associated costs. (Or at least a bus pass or an Uber account.) Hiking The Lions requires proper boots (a couple hundred bucks). And a day-pack with the 10 essentials (another couple hundred). You'll need proper apparel too (a few hundred more). And of course, the hike itself is not entirely accessible to many people, due to its stout climb and exposure.

So that's not exactly free, is it? It's too easy for a lot of people—like myself, and perhaps you—to forget about such barriers. After all, I've had all my gear for years. The cost has been long since amortized into nothingness. So hiking and camping feels *free*. And since I have no other barriers holding me back—why wouldn't I hike The Lions?

Outdoor recreation can be costly. Think about this: if you walked into Canadian Tire and priced out a full campsite setup from scratch, you'd quickly realize it may be cheaper to take your family to a hotel instead. (And we haven't even talked about campsite crowding and reservations.)

This is why we tasked our online editor/community manager, Alison Karlene Hodgins, to delve into these barriers to adventure with her feature, "Price of Entry," on page 44. What began as a look at cost-barriers soon unveiled multiple layers of accessibility concerns on what should be the easiest thing on Earth: going outside. I hope you enjoy it and I look forward to reading your letters.

Speaking of Earth, we kinda need it intact if we want to keep having our inspiring outdoor experiences. I hike, cycle, paddle and camp to immerse myself in places that bring me joy. But we outdoors-people would have to be wearing blindfolds to not see warning signs in our joyful places. Habitat loss. Climate change. Species-at-risk. Even in Canada, where wilderness abounds at a level most of the world can't fathom, these concerns are front-and-centre.

Straight to the point—we need to protect more of our country. And this is not abstract. There's actually a hard number—at least 30 per cent. That's the amount of water and land that needs to have provincial and/or federal protection on some level to slow the effects of biodiversity loss. So how are we going to do it? And what will the country look like when it's done? We asked writer Ryan Stuart to find out. Flip to page 28 to learn more.

Yup, we're exploring some serious topics in this issue. But I promise you'll be left inspired, not disheartened. Because even when the load is heavy, our core purpose of Inspiring Outdoor Experiences will buoy your spirits and encourage forward momentum, adventure and fun in Canada's out-of-doors.

Glad to have you here. ✖

LIVE THE ADVENTURE explore

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GENUINE CANADIAN MAGAZINE

CCAB

BIRDING OR BOARDING?

Birds are smart. First sign of cooler temps and poof, they take wing and head to South Padre Island.
So, I'll do the same.

While I'm there, I'll point my binoculars in their direction, thank them for the good idea and be on my merry way. Because there's paddleboarding, fishing and sightseeing to do. I wonder if they'll watch me as well?

That's as hard as it gets.

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LETTERS

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:
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If It's Too Loud...

I read the letter about generators in your Summer 2022 issue ("Letters," page 7) and I have some advice. Go camp in the backcountry. Front-country campgrounds are for people with cars and motorhomes. Yeah, it'll be loud. But you can always paddle a canoe to a backcountry site, and I guarantee nobody will have carried in a gas generator. Some of us do like comforts—in the front-country.

—S. Marshall

At What Cost?

Although I really enjoyed the Summer issue, I was taken aback by some of the gear in your article starting on page 26 ("Best of Summer: Gear Guide 2022"). I read about a tent that cost $1,375 and a sleeping bag that cost $999. There was a $200 tote bag and a $375 dry bag.

Who is buying this stuff? Certainly not me. I appreciate that there was other gear, some under $10, in the article but I gasped out loud at the nearly $1,400 tent in particular.

Maybe even it out a bit more, please? Or am I reading the wrong magazine?

—Pat Rogers

I think you're reading the right magazine—and I hope you enjoy the feature in this issue on page 44. We talk about gear cost—and other barriers to entry. —Ed

Who Are These People?

Just a quick note to tell you how much I enjoy the "Profiles" in every issue. (*By Nora O'Malley. —Ed*) But a teenager who won a 400-kilometre race through the Arctic in winter? (Summer 2022, page 19) I honestly don't understand how this is possible! Where do you find these people?! Wow. Just wow.

—Ed Chang

And the Profiles column on page 22 of this issue is just as incredible. Enjoy! —Ed

THE LOW DOWN

GO HERE

BATTLE HARBOUR, NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Raising the dead in Labrador's historic island outport

BY TIM JOHNSON

There's a specific time of day—a brief one, that passes quickly—when Battle Harbour truly touches you. Supper's done—the cod cakes all cleaned up by hungry tables of guests—and a long, warm summer's day starts to fade. Looking out over the sweep of the village, the walkway to the bunkhouse, the Merchant's House crowning the hill, the steeple of the church and the sprawl of the old cemetery just beyond, the sky gives up its blue for shades of amber, then pink, then the purple of a deep, dark bruise.

Maybe the sound of an old sea shanty is coming up, over there in the Loft, guitar and accordion coming to life. Perhaps a few have risen, beers in hand, to dance.

But you hear them—the voices of the dead. Or maybe it's better to say, you feel them, in a deeply sensory way. The laughs, the tears, the happiness and hardship. The triumphs and bitter disappointments of cod fishers who came "down to Labrador," like gold miners looking for a lucky strike, seeking their fortune.

Alive again, through their descendants, and those who make the effort to take a trip here, to a place where ships once filled the tickle so tightly that, people say, you could walk clear across to Caribou Island without getting your feet wet.

BATTLE HARBOUR IS very remote—and, truth be told, takes a special effort to reach. Coming from the island of Newfoundland in my rental car, headed to Battle Harbour for a four-night stay, I drive onto the *MV Qajac*, the Trans-Labrador Ferry crossing the Strait of Belle Isle. Back on dry land, I roll north, up and down on a road cut through the giant headlands of The Big Land, like being raised and lowered on the thick shoulders of burly men. Little villages nestle at the bottom.

A few hours later, I park my car in the dirt lot at Mary's Harbour, and proceed on foot onto the *MV Iceberg Hunter* for a 45-minute trip, sailing past a series of islands, barren and stark and uninhabited. Rounding the final corner, a small but bustling village reveals itself before us, wharves full of boats and visitors and residents filling the wooden footpaths.

Around 1990, this "outport" town was ready to fall into the sea. After the school closed in the 1960s, there was little to keep families here, and the community was "resettled," with houses, in some cases, floated across the water to nearby villages connected to the road.

"It would've been all gone by now, if someone hadn't stepped in," says Peter Bull, executive director of the non-profit trust that brought this place back and maintains it now. A government official named Gordon Slade, a former deputy fisheries minister, championed the cause, formed the Battle Harbour Historic Trust and started raising money.

Fishermen became restoration carpenters. The village rose again and became a National Historic District, home to the only two national historic buildings (the bunkhouse and Smith Cottage) where you can sleep overnight.


LOCATED ON
NUNATUKAVUT
(INUIT) LAND.

Once known as the "unofficial capital" of Labrador, today, Battle Harbour offers an intimate nature-meets-culture experience. BELOW: Gentle hikes, berry-picking and cod-fishing excursions are on the docket.

Years ago, this was the heart and soul of a thriving, profitable industry, in a time when people mostly travelled by water. Reaching its peak in the middle of the 19th century, migratory men and women—"floaters"—came here from around the world to haul in cod all summer, salt and cure them, then head home. A permanent population—"livyers"—supplied them, and did some fishing themselves. By the middle of the 19th century, this was the most important city in all of Labrador and its unofficial capital.

Now, it's a place where people come to play, and stay a couple nights. Rooms are comfortable, unfussy but lovely, outfitted with thoughtful amenities, like plush robes. Rates include meals, which are taken three times a day at long tables, simple, delicious, honest food like moose and salmon, all paired with the best dinner rolls you'll eat, anywhere.

THE LOW DOWN

ACTIVITIES ARE SIMPLE, and fun. You can pick cloud berries (known locally as "bake apples") with Bull out on the green flanks of Caribou Island ("I was born to be a berry-picker," he tells me as we embark on our half-day there). You can download an app and walk a path that circumnavigates Battle Island, clicking on locations along the way to hear stories from the past, told in the voices of doctors, nurses, ministers, fishermen, policemen.

And you can hear so many stories first-hand, too. The beauty of this place is that almost all of the workers are also former residents. And a number of those who were resettled still maintain cabins here, interspersed with the guest buildings; spots where they love to spend their summers.

I head to the kitchen to bake those legendary rolls with Daphne Smith. As we roll and knead, she tells me about her childhood here. When she was a kid, in addition to their textbooks, each child had to bring to school a stick of firewood, the work of keeping the furnace going a collective effort.

"We had to grow up fast, do all the chores, clean the dishes, put the clothes on the line, mop the floors, because mom and dad were always out there in a fishing boat," she tells me, as we get those flaky, mouth-watering buns ready for the oven. Life was challenging, back then—the last supply boat came in October, then no more arrived until the next summer—but it was lived together. Remoteness is relative. They had all they needed, she said, including each other.

And, like so many before me, I go fishing, guided by a former pro named Calvin Trimm. "Let 'er go until she brings up," he says, noting that using rods like we are today is a bit strange, to him—they always jigged with hand lines.

Trimm reels off stories as quickly and effortlessly as he does fishing line. The times they would take out a team of sled dogs to cut wood, stacking it next to the sea. In spring, when the ice broke up, they would go in a boat to bring it back. "We didn't have a supermarket, so we had to hunt, or fish or pick all our food," he remembers. "Rabbit, geese, herring, capelin."

Today, the cod hit early, and often, and it's easy to see the draw for all those fishermen over the centuries, when these waters teemed with easy catches. Reeling hard and taking out our limit, we return to the village, and Trimm cleans the big, meaty fish, which Smith will cook for dinner tonight, pairing it with halibut for a beautiful "surf and surf" combination.

Later, dinner done, bowls of rolls consumed, I make my way to the Loft. And I hear it. I feel it. It's all there. The sun waning, Battle Harbour presses in around me. So many stories, right there in the air. The voices of ghosts, but the animate, too, history very much a living thing here on this small island.

I hear the keys going on the accordion, the crowd in the Loft starting to get a little loud. Tomorrow, I'll be a "floater" again, just passing through, but happy to be among the modern "livyers," keeping Battle Harbour going. Until then, a whiskey, some song and a good sleep up in the Merchant's House, until a new day breaks over the tickle. ✖

IF YOU GO

GETTING THERE: While you can also fly to Happy Valley-Goose Bay, most will reach Battle Harbour via a flight to Deer Lake, in Western Newfoundland, and then drive north, riding across on the Trans-Labrador ferry. (Of course, you can also drive your own car—the Labrador Highway is now fully paved, all the way from Quebec).

STAY: Rates include three meals a day, eaten promptly in the dining room at 8:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., as well as an introductory walking tour led by a local. Rooms are comfortable, all include en-suite bathrooms, and are in a number of historic buildings across the property. battleharbour.com

EXPLORE: This is a destination where you can choose your own adventure. Take a hike, go for a boat ride or fishing trip, join Peter for a day of berry picking. Or just hang around the village—it won't be long until you bump into someone willing to sit down and tell you a good story. newfoundlandlabrador.com/top-destinations/battle-harbour

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR TOURISM (2X)

A return of Indigenous place-names moves toward correcting historical wrongs.

NEWS

PLACE NAMES MATTER

Across Canada, Indigenous place names are making a comeback

BY RYAN STUART

THE LOW DOWN

Most historians give Alexander Mackenzie credit for the "first descent" of Canada's longest river. But while his feat of paddling down, and then back up, the Mackenzie River in 1789 is admirable, 10,000 years of Indigenous history preceded his expedition. The river already had at least five names, including Dehcho, long before Mackenzie's contemporaries named it after him.

Renaming places that already had Indigenous names was a common practice when colonial powers were settling Canada. Sometimes they mispronounced or misunderstood the Indigenous name. But many scholars think renaming was more systemic and part of an effort to strip the land of Indigenous culture, knowledge and language. Assigning English or French names legitimized the idea that Canada was empty and free for the taking.

Today, the process is going in reverse. First Nations governments are working with city, provincial and federal governments to return Indigenous names to the land as an act of cultural revival and reconciliation.

"It's important to restore Indigenous place names because it recognizes Indigenous people were here prior to settlers," says Christina Gray, an Indigenous lawyer of Tsimshian descent who advocates for re-establishing traditional names. "It helps preserve Indigenous language and culture."

North American Indigenous societies were oral, so place names often connected the people to the land and their history, says Gray, "They had meaning."

In comparison, settlers sometimes used sexist or racist names and often assigned them on a whim, she says, pointing to early surveyors like Otto Klotz. As he mapped huge areas of Western Canada he left behind several "Mt. Klotz's" and a series of lakes in Manitoba's Turtle Mountain area named for his children, pets and employees.

It's insulting because it erased the Indigenous history and isn't that different than calling someone by the wrong name, says Gray. "No one likes it when someone calls them by the wrong name," she says.

Indigenous groups across the country are pushing back. Motivated by cultural rediscovery, the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, they are working to re-establish traditional names.

One of the largest efforts is the Cree Place Names Program. The Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee have identified 20,000 Cree names for places in Quebec and are now looking at how to start legally changing them on official maps.

The British Columbia government has changed the names of several provincial parks in the last 15 years to reflect the Indigenous history in the area, says Jamie Hilbert, a senior planner with BC Parks. First Nations initiate the change request and BC Parks supports them to find the right name through consultation with elders and nation members.

"It's a slow process, but it's slow purposefully," Hilbert says.

So far, the changes have been well received. When BC Parks proposed changing Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park, near Kamloops, to Tsútswecw Provincial Park, in recognition of the Secwepemc history in the area, Hilbert thought the Haig-Brown family might object. Instead, they were fully supportive.

Unfamiliar letter combinations and the use of symbols in some dialects can make the pronunciations tricky, admits Gray. But she thinks those instances present an opportunity to learn more about the culture and further reconciliation. A good first step, she says, is to learn local Indigenous place names and to use them.

"We don't always have to rely on the law to fix past injustices," she says. "Sometimes social change happens before the legal process."

As for Dehcho, the NWT government now recognizes seven names for the "big river:" Dehcho, Deho, Nagwichoonjik, Kuukpak, Grande Rivière—plus the newer French and English names. ✕

GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWS

DO WE NEED A TRAIL TAX?

Our parks and natural areas are facing a sustainable funding conundrum

BY RYAN STUART

From the Goat Creek trailhead, you can hike, mountain bike, scramble, rock climb and even paddle. Just eight minutes from Canmore, Alberta, and a little more than an hour from Calgary, the multi-sport jumping off spot was always popular. Now, it's overflowing.

Goat Creek sits within Kananaskis Country and today more than 20 per cent more visitors are coming to this amalgamation of provincial parks than they did in 2019. To manage the impact of one million extra people on the outhouses, trails and parking lots, Alberta Parks implemented a K-Country trail pass system in 2021. In its first year, the $15 day pass and $90 annual pass generated $13.3 million. Alberta Parks says it will all go back into K-Country, including $4 million to upgrade day use areas like Goat Creek.

Everyone agrees investments in outdoor recreation like this are long overdue. What's more controversial is where that money should come from. It's a question recreation clubs and governments are wrestling with from one side of the country to the other.

"We need to entertain all the ideas of how to fund trails," says Louise Petersen, the executive director of the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia. "The status quo isn't working. We have to find a new model."

In BC, like a lot of provinces, volunteer clubs and groups play an important role in maintaining trails, even in parks. Their workload is increasing.

"Our member organizations tell us they are exhausted," Petersen says. "Especially when the need is relentless with more people on the trails, more floods, more fires."

Petersen would like to see the provincial government provide leadership. First, by adequately funding the agencies that run and maintain parks and trails. For instance—clubs are eager to help BC Parks with trail maintenance, but the organization doesn't have the capacity to even sign volunteer partnership agreements.

Next, she'd like to see new funding streams. It could be a user pay model. Most national parks require a pass or charge for parking and it's not uncommon to pay to access trails or backroads in many jurisdictions. (For example, hunting licenses in BC generate $9 to $10 million a year for wildlife conservation projects.)

But extra fees are controversial, especially because they increase inequalities, particularly for low-income families. That's why Alberta's opposition NDP wants to scrap the K-Country pass. "These parks, they belong to all Albertans, and we won't put up barriers for Albertans, regardless of their income, to experiencing this outdoor gem," said Rachel Notley, the NDP leader.

A more equitable model is for tourism organizations, like Travel Alberta or Destination BC, to chip in, says Petersen. Often trails, parks and outdoor recreation are what these tourism marketing organizations are selling. Hotels, restaurants, guiding companies and other businesses benefit—she estimates outdoor recreation contributes $6 billion a year to BC's GDP—but most do not contribute to trail maintenance or development.

"There's no mechanism for value generated by tourist visits to go back into the local community," notes Petersen.

Another potential model is government making a direct investment. "Governments are responsible for other infrastructure," she says. "Why not trails? With Covid, we saw how essential recreation infrastructure is."

It's been done. The provincial government of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Foundation invested $10 million in 2020 and 2021 to create the Trails Grant for Manitoba. Half of the funding will pay out over the next few years to boost the province's trail network, says Tim Coffin, the executive director of Trails Manitoba, which administers the grants. The rest is in endowments designed to fund trail maintenance and improvements in perpetuity.

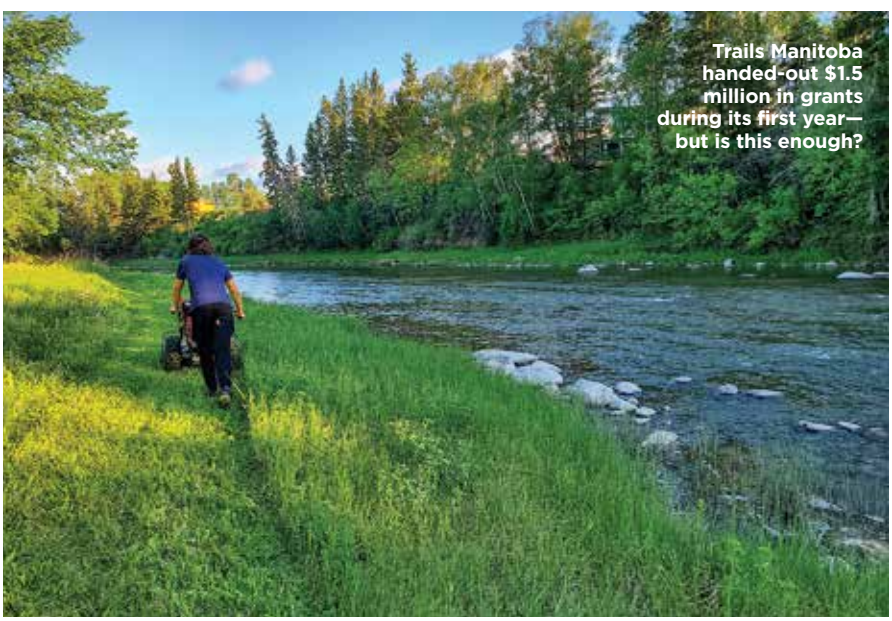
"In the past, trail organizations had to consistently scramble to find funding dollars for projects," Coffin says. "Now, the province has created a sustainable framework that will ensure consistent trail funding well into the future."

THE LOW DOWN

In its first year, Trails Manitoba handed out $1.5 million to 41 trail projects, everything from new multi-use paths to maintaining existing trails.

Most jurisdictions look on with jealousy. But Coffin recognizes even $10 million won't be enough to meet the rising demand for trails and continual maintenance.

He's already out looking for new funding sources. ✖



Trails Manitoba handed-out $1.5 million in grants during its first year—but is this enough?

TRAILS MANITOBA

TRAIL BUILDING & SERVICE GEAR

Let's hit the trails, get our hands dirty and put in some sweat equity—because someone has to do it

THE LOW DOWN

They should clear the deadfall. *They* should fill the puddles. *They* should repair the bridge and clean up the garbage. "*They*" obviously have a lot of work to do, but what's less clear is who "*they*" are.

Maybe it should be you? The places we play have never been so busy and all those people have an impact. We probably need new trails, campgrounds and climbing crags. But we also need to take care of the ones we've got. Increasingly, the burden is falling on volunteers. That means everyone can play a role. All you need to do is find a local club or group that looks after your favourite play-places, gear up with the essentials below, and then show up for work parties.

If everyone volunteered one day to maintenance for every 10 days of recreation, we wouldn't have to complain about "they" anymore.

Silky Saws BigBoy Outback
($130; silkysaws.com)
Ask any woodworker: the best handsaws are made in Japan. And Silky Saws shows that applies to the backwoods as much as the wood shop. The 24-centimetre BigBoy is the brand's biggest folding saw. The hardened nickel and titanium plated blade is durable, while its curved shape and multi-angled teeth rip through wood with shocking ease. And it only weighs a pound.

Dakine Builder Pack 40L
($240; ce.dakine.com)
Dakine designed the Builder Pack for lugging awkward and heavy loads. It holds a five-gallon bucket for lugging rocks or dirt. There's a sleeve for loppers and an expandable pocket for a chainsaw. Straps hold long tools off the sides. Other pockets are perfect for water, gloves, layers and snacks. An internal frame and well-padded hips and shoulders make the heavy loads bearable and Dakine used tough fabric and reinforced materials so it will hold up to the abuse.

Worx 5" Cordless Pruning Saw
($200; shopworx.ca)
Sawing through lots of branches is slow and hard work. Full-size chainsaws are heavy and require experience. This is the perfect tool for in between. Weighing less than half as much as a standard chainsaw and much more compact, it's easier and safer to haul into the bush. The five-inch saw still melts its way through surprising diameters and the battery last for hours.

Backslope Tools Clyde
($110; ctbsupply.com)
Shovel, rake, tamper, hoe and axe—or just grab the Clyde, one of the only tools designed specifically for trail-building. One edge hacks into dirt like a hoe, moves it like a shovel and whacks through roots like an axe. The other side is an oversized rake, ideal for flattening and grading. Turn it upright and the flat face becomes an earth-packer. And a fibreglass handle keeps it light.

Kinco Gloves 50 Suede Cowhide Driver
($13; kinco.com)
We've used a lot of inexpensive work gloves and normally we get what we pay for. These are the exception. The design actually seems to be based on a human hand, not five sausages. An out-seam on the index finger creates a smooth interior at the most critical point for chafing. Elastic in the wrist holds the gloves snug and prevents debris from falling inside. The suede is thick enough to deflect thorns and the craftsmanship is solid—after months of use, still no holes.

Rocky Mountain Altitude Powerplay Alloy 50
(from $8,399; ca.bikes.com)
Sure, you could pedal to the top of the trail network with all your tools on your back. Instead, smart builders are using e-bikes, like the Altitude Powerplay. It's faster and easier than pedal-power alone and it can get to places no vehicle could and without contravening non-motorized trail rules. Best of all, e-bikes are fun to ride. This one borrows the freeride Altitude platform: it rides up smooth and charges downhill.

Black Diamond Bosun's Chair
($85; blackdiamondequipment.com)
Some call it torture. Others call it quits. It doesn't take long sitting in a harness to realize that's no way to clean or bolt a climb. The Bosun's Chair is the solution. Clip its top loop into a belay device or prusik, pull the adjustable straps, and then sit back and hang a while. The system transfers your weight from the leg straps (which otherwise bite into glutes cutting off circulation) and onto the seat. A daisy chain makes it easy to keep tools handy.

DRESS THE PART

Helly Hansen Workwear Chelsea Evolution BRZ Service Pant ($165; hhworkwear.com) feel as comfortable as any soft-shell pant—even beading rain —but are way tougher. The upper half of the pant is a heavy, but breathable, four-way stretch fabric. We could high-step over logs and crouch low to lift rocks. From the knees down it's a tougher denim. And with mechanical venting built in, we could work in them even in warm summer weather

Dovetail Workwear ($140; dovetailworkwear.ca) makes women-specific workwear and the Britt X Ultralight is one of their lightest pants. The straight leg design uses a stretchy and micro-ripstop fabric that's also water-resistant. It's tough enough to deflect wayward sharp bits and reinforced knees won't wear out early. The design doesn't restrict range of movement or feel like a canvas on the hike in. Somehow, Dovetail squeezed in 13 pockets and two tool loops.

DON'T FORGET DESSERT!

Cooking at the campsite doesn't mean forgoing sweets

BY KEVIN CALLAN

At times, making a tasty dessert at camp seems too time-consuming. It's not. Don't fall into the routine of just handing out chocolate bars. That's not dessert. Besides, desserts can be quite simple to make. Even something as simple as caramel pudding served with a shot of Grand Marnier is better than a stale cookie. Here are six of my all-time favourites:

CINNAMON ROLLS & BACON

Something sweet with something salty. Yum!

Ingredients
- ½ lb bacon
- 3 cups Bisquick (or Tea-Bisk) mix
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tbs cinnamon
- ¼ cup raisins
- 3 tbs margarine
- 1 tbs olive oil
- ¼ cup water
- Flour for rolling

Directions (in camp)
Fry up the bacon, making sure there's a little bit of soft fat remaining. Then, to make the cinnamon rolls, slowly add water to the Bisquick/Tea-Bisk to form a dough and roll it out on a floured flat surface. Spread the margarine onto the flattened dough, sprinkling on the cinnamon, brown sugar and raisins. Roll it all into a log, adding the bacon strips perpendicular to the end of the roll. Slice one-inch rolls and place them in oiled frying pan. Cover and bake over low heat for seven to eight minutes.

THE LOW DOWN

PEACH COBBLER W/ DEHYDRATED PEACHES

This makes a quick—and lightweight—dessert.

Ingredients
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup dehydrated peaches
- ¼ cup granola
- ¼ cup cranberries (or raisins)
- 2 tsp sugar
- ¼ tsp nutmeg

Directions (in camp)
Heat up two cups of water in a cook pot and place the peaches in to rehydrate. Cover and let sit for 30 minutes. Place the rehydrated peaches and water into a frying pan and add the granola, cranberries (or raisins), sugar and nutmeg. Warm everything up on the stove and serve.

MOCHA MOUSSE CAKE

This dark-chocolate dessert has a mellow flavour and the aroma of rich milk chocolate with a splash of coffee.

Ingredients
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup granulated sugar, divided
- ¾ cup strong coffee
- ½ semisweet or bittersweet chocolate chips
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 eggs (can be powdered eggs)

Directions (at home or in camp)
Line an eight-inch foil baking pan with parchment paper; lightly oil sides of pan. In a heavy saucepan, combine cocoa, flour and half the sugar. Stir in enough coffee to form a smooth paste. Mix in remaining coffee, cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture begins to thicken. Simmer for two minutes. Immediately stir in chocolate chips, stirring until chocolate has melted and is very smooth. Stir in vanilla.

With wire whisk, beat the eggs with remaining sugar for about five minutes or until the volume has doubled and the eggs are light and fluffy. One-third at a time, fold the eggs into chocolate mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan, set the pan in Dutch Oven (or use a reflector over placed beside the campfire) and add boiling water to halfway up the sides of baking pan.

Bake for 30 minutes or until the cake has risen and the surface springs back when lightly touched. The cake will still jiggle in the centre and the inside will be quite gooey. Remove pan from hot water and cool.

To unfold the cake, slide a thin knife around sides of cake then invert onto a plate. Remove the paper and when you can no longer wait, dig in and enjoy.

KEVIN CALLAN (4X)

LOGAN BREAD

One of my all-time favourite desserts is Logan Bread. It contains everything needed on a rugged trip: calories, nutrition, long shelf-life and great taste.

Logan Bread derived from an expedition team who set out to summit Mount Logan, Alaska, in 1950. Rather than the usual hardtack, the climbers created a kind of do-it-yourself energy-bar. Like any recipe, however, there's some debate over what the initial ingredients were. However, the common components stayed the same. It's the added bonuses like raisins vs. chocolate chips that have been altered.

Ingredients

- 1½ cups whole wheat flour
- 1½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour (rye flour was thought to be originally used)
- 1¼ cups rolled oats
- 3/4 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup applesauce
- ½ cup liquid honey
- ½ cup canola oil
- ⅔ cup molasses
- 1 cup raisins
- ⅔ cup sunflower seeds

Directions (at home or in camp)

Most prepare this at home, taking advantage of using the fresh ingredients (eggs) and not having the hassle of carrying separate containers of the liquid ingredients (honey, molasses, apple sauce). It's a wise choice, and the bread has a long shelf-life. But it's all still doable to make it fresh while in the interior. Here's how.

In a large pot, combine flours, rolled oats, sugar, baking powder and salt. In a second pot, stir together eggs (powdered eggs will do or substitute with ½ cup of powdered milk), applesauce, honey, oil and molasses. Pour liquid ingredients into dry ingredients; stir just until well blended. Stir in raisins and sunflower seeds. Divide batter into two greased nine-inch square pans. Bake in a reflector oven, against hot coals, or use a Dutch Oven. Bake for 45 minutes or until the top springs back when lightly pressed. Remove and allow to cool for 10 minutes before cutting into squares or bars.

Dare to be different: rather then raisins or sunflower seeds, add cranberries, almonds, walnuts or chocolate chips. Try substituting canola oil with coconut oil.

COCONUT, LIME, MACADAMIA ENERGY BITES

These make a tasty, and zesty, pre-made dessert. I got this recipe off outdoor blogger Cobi Sharpe (**sparkadventurephotog.com**).

Ingredients

- 1 cup almonds, unsalted
- ½ cup cashews, unsalted
- ½ cup unsalted macadamia nuts
- 11 medjool dates, pitted
- 1 tsp good quality vanilla
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 tsp lime zest
- A good pinch or two of sea salt
- Shredded coconut

Directions (at home)

Add almonds, cashews and macadamia nuts into a food processor and blend until you get a crumbly mixture. Add dates, vanilla, lime juice, lime zest and salt. Pulse until all blended together.

The mixture should be sticky enough that you can form balls that are bite-sized, then roll them in shredded coconut.

Chill for 30 minutes before eating or put them in the freezer until you're heading out on your trip.

PEANUT "BETTER" S'MORE

Forget Graham crackers that crumble in your pack and chocolate that never seems to fully melt. Try this alternative S'more recipe I got from Julia, partner of YouTuber Chris Prouse.

Ingredients

- 1 Two-Bite Brownie
- Smooth Peanut Butter
- 1 large marshmallow

Directions (in camp)

Smear the peanut butter on top of the Two Bite Brownie. Toast the marshmallow over hot coals until golden brown. Then squish the toasted marshmallow on top of the peanut butter. Enjoy. ✖

HUT-TO-HUT HIKING

Ditch the tent and hoof it along one of Canada's best hut-hopping hiker's routes

BY "POWDER" MATT MOSTELLER

THE LOW DOWN

Hut to what? No tent needed? Oh yeah! This is the coolest way to go—hiking a set distance each day to a purpose-built shelter, lodge or hut (sometimes called a cabin) that provides you protection from the elements. Most include all you need to prepare the meals you brought with you—stoves, cookware, plates, bowls and cutlery. (Sometimes, though, you may need to bring fuel.) Many supply a sleep pad, but you'll need to bring your own sleeping bag. (Specific hut info will tell you what you need to know.) You'll get the hang of this. It's backcountry luxury.

FEATURED ROUTE

ICEFALL TRAVERSE, GOLDEN, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Canada's Guided Four-Day Gem

Alaska-like you could say; a Land of the Lost with water cascading down 300-metre rock walls into a giant horseshoe fortress. This is Icefall Canyon, with its towering peaks rising over 3,300 metres above and an awe-inspiring puzzle-style glacier complex within.

Details

Unless you are super experienced at glacier travel, this one is best done guided. Connect in advance with the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides' (ACMG) certified owner of Icefall Lodge, Larry Dolecki, to confirm details and book your trip. Ready for the rev up? Buckle in with the mountain pilots at Golden's Whitetooth Helicopters, who will follow rapid-filled rivers, weaving through valleys wedged between enormous pillars of rocks en route to the first hut.

Finally, you come into view of this jaw-dropping Canadian utopia. The pilot settles the bird down on a rock outcropping above Mons Hut, your first stay on this multi-hut traverse. Dormitory style bunks await, and your crew can huddle around a central table to study the map.

The next day, you'll welcome peaks that stretch 3,000-metres-plus toward the sky. This includes the tallest peak within Banff National Park, a Goliath, the 3,611-metre Mount Forbes. Once this day's hike is done, settle into a classic and comfortable climbers' style hut as you gawk at the mountains and rest.

You'll have an early departure the next morning. As you head out, sleuthing your way through a rocky rubble slope, there are a couple of options, both of which can make for a long days. One lower, likely faster, or another way, which is up, up and away.

Straddling the BC/Alberta border, the hike takes a steep descent to the climate-ravaged Lyell Glacier. (Don't forget to tip your guide at trip's end—they'll lead you safely through this crevice-riddled gong-show.) Soon, you will reach the entrance to the prow on which the Lyell Hut sits prominently.

Welcome to 9,400 feet—Lyell is one of the highest huts in Canada. Fear not, it's well-built and kitted-out inside. Plus, you can become familiar with Canada's arguably most iconic outhouse, standing like a beacon, a short but scenic walk away from the hut.

PATRICK BATES (5X)

Icefall Traverse, near Golden, BC, is one of Canada's most incredible hut-to-hut hikes, with mountain views, waterfalls, glaciers and plenty of challenging (and rewarding) terrain. Go guided for the best experience.

The next day starts easy, downhill along the glacier, navigating around crevice areas to a technical section known as famed White Ledge. This is a short goat-route with exposure, rigged up with bolts and a cable handrail, as you skirt along and up to rocky knob. Descend a short steep trail to the remnants of Tivoli Glacier, crossing up to the pass on the left and downhill again. Rambling through high ridges, steep sections and then the stunning, flower-filled alpine basin below, you will reach Icefall Lodge. Mission accomplished! Enjoy scrumptious prepared meals, the sauna, hot showers and comfy beds in private rooms. icefall.ca

EPIC HUT-TO-HUT HIKES

Alberta

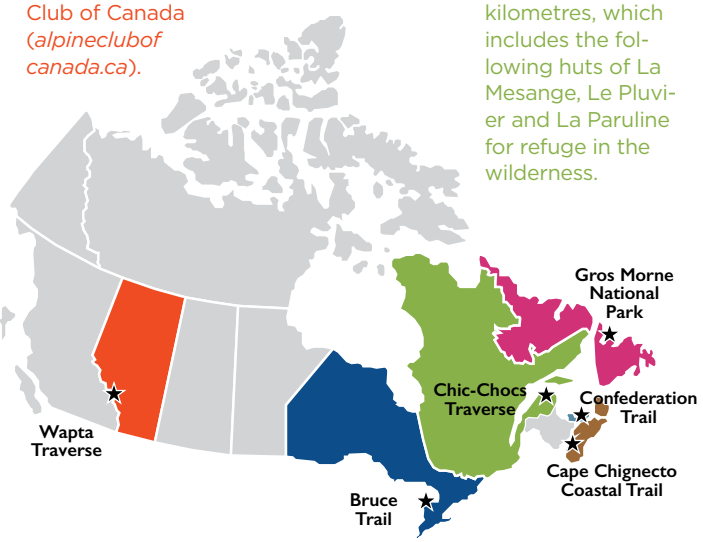
The Wapta Traverse is a classic, but you may want to try the less-known route from Banff National Park to Yoho National Park, known as the Bow Yoho Traverse. This must-do hut-to-hut spring ski-tour route has you stay in the Bow Hut, Louise and Richard Guy Hut and the Stanley Mitchell Hut, all operated by the Alpine Club of Canada (*alpineclubofcanada.ca*).

Ontario

Check out the Bruce Trail (*brucetrail.org*), Canada's oldest and longest marked footpath, stretching more than 900 kilometres from Niagara to Tobermory. Break it down into sections, find inns, bed-and-breakfasts and home-stays along the way to link your own unique "hut-to-hut" experience.

Quebec

This is a show-stopper and one of Canada's finest multi-hut journeys. We're talking about the full 100-kilometre plus Chic-Chocs Traverse (*sepaq.com*), exploring the Parc National de la Gaspésie's mountain region, complete with mountain lakes and wildlife. Shorter on time? Try the four-day and three-night sampler of 55 kilometres, which includes the following huts of La Mesange, Le Pluvier and La Paruline for refuge in the wilderness.



Nova Scotia

The Cape Chignecto Coastal Trail (*parks.novascotia.ca/cape-chignecto-hiking-trails*), is a coastal delight with two of my favourite ingredients—beaches and an extra helping of spectacular ocean views. Total distance of 52 kilometres, it includes three cabins and one bunkhouse, so it's possible to do the entire trip staying only in huts.

Prince Edward Island

Historic Confederation Trail (*tourismpei.com/trip-ideas/itineraries/confederation-trail-cycling-itineraries*) spans virtually the entire island, 470 kilometres of rail-to-trail, where you can take in the ocean and history along the way. Stay at inns like Cable Head Cottage, you can map out a hut-to-hut experience with total comfort each night.

Newfoundland & Labrador

Try something different—venturing off-trail in Gros Morne National Park on a guided hut-to-hut adventure, experiencing a vast wilderness that most don't see with incredible fiord scenery (*newfoundlandlabrador.com/plan-and-book/travel-offers/3570*).

Boldly going where few have gone before—this Kamloops company is delving into onshore production of carbon fibre bike frames.

WE ARE ONE

Homegrown success is that much sweeter

Six years ago, ex pro-downhill mountain biker Dustin Adams decided to mortgage the family house and start a business designing, manufacturing and assembling high-end carbon fibre bike wheels.

What could possibly go wrong?

"Pretty much every person including my wife told me I was crazy and that it would never work," Adams tells me over the phone from the Kamloops, British Columbia, headquarters of We Are One Composites.

Not only did he want to build quality wheels, but Adams also wanted to disrupt the Canadian outdoor gear sector's conventional business model. Carbon fibre, or composite, wasn't new to the biking world as a material. Far from it. But most North American companies do the designing domestically then outsource manufacturing to factories in Taiwan and China that make wheels and frames for numerous brands.

Adams' leap of faith proved to be a wise one. In 2017, We Are One released its flagship wheel, *The Agent*. Since then, sales have grown between 100 and 130 per cent annually. The company now has a fleet of five different rim models, and last year introduced its first carbon fibre bike frame, *The Arrival*, to critical acclaim.

"When we launched our first bike, we got a lot of attention," Adams says.

We Are One now produces four bike frames per day, has two other models in the works and another two on the horizon. This past summer, the company moved into a 25,000 square-foot facility in Kamloops that will enable a boost in daily bike rim production from 100 to 300.

During his World Cup racing days Adams was known as a gritty competitor. At his peak, he was the top-ranked North American downhiller in the world. In 2004, he abruptly quit competition and eventually started a business, Quattro Stone and Tile, in Kamloops. But he always kept a foot in the bike world, and became a minor shareholder in NOBL Wheels, a composite wheel brand then-based in British Columbia's Lower Mainland. While visiting NOBL's manufacturer in China in 2016, Adams says he started to ponder the challenges of quality control and dealing with offshore factories.

Adams posed the question, why don't we do everything here in Canada? Domestic brands like Quebec-based Devinci, the now defunct Balfa and Rocky Mountain—when it was still making its own frames in Vancouver—inspired him as a young man.

Shortly after, he left NOBL with a vision of launching his own Canadian designed and built composite wheel company. When he started approaching banks for financing, the doors slammed in his face.

"Nobody would give me any money," Adams says.

But he was convinced that if he got his hands dirty and fully understood the material and process of molding carbon fibre into wheels, he could do it better—and make money at it.

At first, the only people who believed in the idea were his machinist and his first

DUSTIN ADAMS

engineer, a Scotsman named Fraser Andrews who he met through bike industry connections and was looking for an interesting project after a gig with Rolls Royce. Adams dove in.

In hindsight, his business idea seems particularly inspired. The past two years of the Covid-19 pandemic has everybody in the bike and outdoor gear industry talking about supply chain unreliability and disruption and wondering whether it still makes sense to offshore manufacturing to third-party factories on the other side of the ocean. There's also the issue of carbon footprint, something that Adams thinks about a lot.

"We have a 500-mile diet for our company," Adams says, adding that almost 100 per cent of the raw materials used to build their bike frames come from within that radius.

The company's ethos says it all, "Fighting to keep it local."

"People want to connect with a product that has a strong local story and I think we have a unique story," Adams says.

Her certainly does—and it's also a story about homegrown success that should be celebrated. ✖

Saskatchewan-born Tanelle Bolt is inspiring adaptive-sport athletes right across the country.

TANELLE BOLT

This adaptive athlete and accessibility advocate uses her radical acceptance to excel at a new chapter of life

Tanelle Bolt promotes universal access to outdoor recreation like Maverick taking off in a fighter plane.

Slow is not an option.

"It shouldn't be considered a privilege to go outside. It's a human right," says Bolt. "There is no proactive action in Canada when it comes to health and wellness. It's all reactive. And I never ever once needed the system. I've never broken a bone. I'm not allergic to anything. I don't have asthma. I don't have glasses. My teeth aren't falling out. Now, I'm in it every day and it is horrendous, the state that everybody has allowed us to get to."

A self-proclaimed "prairie kid" born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 35-year-old Bolt has called British Columbia home for the last 16 years. On August 10, 2014, the former fitness competitor sustained a spinal cord injury after jumping feet first off a bridge into a river to cool off from the summer heat. (In her 2020 TEDx talk "Jumping into Adversity," she describes the moment with riveting detail.)

"Seven-and-a-half hours after I broke my back, I was under the knife in the operating table and four hours after that I was out in post-op. So, within 12 hours I was broken and pinned back together and recovering, which in any health care system is astonishing how quick that happened," she recalls, noting her gratitude for Vancouver's Rick Hansen Institute.

Eight years later, Bolt is full-tilt down a path centred on shifting stereotypes and championing solutions that shape a better world for people with disabilities. For starters, she transformed her experience as an interior designer into becoming a barrier-free recreation design consultant.

"When it comes to trails, just don't put the rock in the way. We need 36 inches to get through," she says. "Thresholds and door swings being too heavy are obstacles as well. Just switch the tension on the door and keep in mind when you are building that anything over a quarter-inch can knock somebody on their face. Why make a bump instead of skirting it smooth?"

In 2017, Bolt founded Rad Recreation Adapted Society, a Canadian charity that focuses on inclusive outdoors by providing an inventory of adapted outdoor recreation equipment for low-cost rental fees. She says she started the non-profit because, "she didn't know any better."

"And I was 27. How can I pay tens of thousands of dollars going to university at school in Canada and never be taught this? Nobody is taught [this] in elementary school. Nobody gets in a wheelchair and plays and learns wheelchair basketball. Why not? Why don't you have the entire able-body class? Why is there such a gap? How has the government left this out of everything?"

Bolt says the RAD Society is all about building physical literacy and bringing back radical times. A new 20-foot shipping container—or RAD Gear Box—was recently installed at the Langford Lake boat launch on Vancouver Island, BC, to house adaptive outdoor toys like all-terrain wheelchairs, hand cycles, wave skis and adaptive kayaks. The society has a by-donation policy and Bolt says some pieces of equipment basically live in someone's possession until someone else wants it. She even personally delivers pieces of equipment when requested.

"It blows my mind that it has never existed and that nobody has done it. Again, it's that disability is seen as liability," she says. "When you see the RAD logo with the lightning bolt, I want that to trigger something in someone's mind that says, 'Oh that is totally accessible and barrier-free.'"

Talks are already underway about bringing accessibility to the beaches in Nova Scotia and outdoor adaptive recreation programming in Nunavut, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Bolt's YouTube channel "Pro Tips for Paras" boasts 15,000 subscribers and more than 3.2 million views.

"Jumping into the gap in the system as an independent-living adult with a disability, I discovered very quickly that there was no help for anybody, realistically. Thank goodness for the Internet that helps us connect and educate us on this thing called life," she says.

With RAD Society taking off, Bolt is gliding into another project that involves creating barrier-free travel packages. The company, SoulFly Experiences, is hell bent on bridging the accessibility gap in Canada's tourism industry.

"Nobody is bound to a wheelchair. It's a tool that allows us independence and freedom," says Bolt.

SoulFly Experiences's 2022-2023 offerings include: exploring the Yukon, relaxing seaside in Victoria on Vancouver Island or touring the wineries and culinary delights of BC's Thompson-Okanagan. The packages are designed for individuals or groups.

"Wheelchairs are more fun with friends. Radical times are back," she says.

Can you dig it? ✖

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FORGET THE HATERS

Listen. Learn. Support. And above all—don't be a troll

"Idiots, morons! Mountains need policing for jokers like this! I'd never do that! People must be stupider than the rocks they climb!" In the aftermath of any outdoor accident, the online comments from the public are often nasty—but so are those from other supposed outdoor enthusiasts. I don't think the people writing or saying them really understand the impact (I have said similar things without thinking), but after 40 years of post-accident experiences I'm less tolerant of the haters and I know we need to do better.

First, those comments are often as self-delusional as they are nasty. "We" can be safe because "we" would never do "that." If we can look at an accident and say, "Well, that was avoidable idiocy, I don't climb/paddle/fly like that," then we can pretend we are still somehow always "safe."

But here's the thing: in hindsight, we are all idiots to one degree or another and infinitely capable of screwing things up in ways we never see coming. I've yet to talk to a person who had an accident who said, "Yep, I saw that coming and did it anyhow!"

Everybody makes mistakes—and we need to talk about them more openly.

RED BULL CONTENT POOL

TO PARAPHRASE NOTED rock-climbing free-soloist Alex Honnold, everyone thinks they are making great decisions right up until they get hurt or killed. When I hear that someone thinks they would never have done, "that," then I know they just haven't been out in the mountains enough to know the other 10 zillion instances of "that" waiting for them. I can't always see myself having a specific accident, but I've had enough wrecks to know it could have been me. I never have a day where I get home and think, "No errors were made." To err is human, and the mountains do not care.

The second reason I hate the "idiot!" comments is because they are read by the family and community of the injured or dead person. It's like telling the family of someone who died at war that their son, daughter, wife, dad, died in vain because of their personal idiocy. Even if this were true, it's cruel to throw it at a grieving person. When someone posts or says something awful, I think of the victim's family. I highly doubt anyone with such a self-assured opinion would say it to the bereaved family. That's the test for such comments: would you say it to their mom? And to those who say people in mourning shouldn't read online comments, that's idiotic. They are looking for something, anything, to understand the impossible.

Third, in most cases it may take weeks or even months to gain a more-than-superficial understanding of a poor outcome. I have seen so many wannabe-experts mouthing off about something completely erroneous after accidents. In the words of Lou Reed, "Don't believe half of what you see, and none of what you hear." I don't see the real experts on Facebook; they know better than to offer opinions right away. I don't know what compels people to speculate about accidents publicly; maybe to feel self-important, or convince others that they have inside knowledge and therefore special access to facts?

There are some situations where immediate information needs to get out, and there are channels for that, but most of

the time the quality of information and understanding improves with time. Erroneous speculation may actually cause poor information to spread—and take emphasis off the real factors. Rumours fly, facts walk slowly.

Finally, how we respond to accidents has a profound effect on our own future safety. While there are a zillion ways to screw up in the mountains, there are patterns and I have definitely saved my own life after reading about other accidents. But I have had friends, fellow guides and partners say, "Well, I'd like to share what happened to me, but I don't want to deal with all the attacks."

This is a great loss. No one wants to share anything personal or difficult if the response is a chorus of keyboard warriors firing missiles into an already painful experience. Within all the good safety cultures I know, people share their accidents with the knowledge that the goal is to improve safety for all, not attack those who have incidents. Because in open safety cultures, everyone has the humility to know it could have been them, or someone they work with. Sharing is caring, but only possible if the share is received with humility and understanding.

WHEN I WAS younger, I always assumed that after any sort of major accident, mountain or otherwise, there were designated people to help, tell us what to do, offer resources and provide structure. But, broadly, across North America, there's not much beyond a quick interview with a version of "victim services," which are useful but far from what many people need. There are a few great groups such as Mountain Muskox and the American Alpine Club's Grief Fund, but mostly, we, as friends, family and community, are the real support system even if we don't know it. And, while many of us know our ABC system for first-aid, we don't have any training for the aftermath of a traumatic event. I don't either, but I've lived through the aftermath of a lot of mountain wrecks, and here's what I've learned.

Search-and-rescue groups and Emergency Medical Services have professional structures to deal with the aftermaths of critical incidents, but they also know what to do for their own: support the people involved. We need to do the same. For friends or family, all we need to say is, "So sorry this happened to you. Can I bring over a lasagna or a six-pack? This sucks, and I care about you." The aftermath of an accident is often a dark-and-lonely hell (even without the trolls), but just as nasty words can make it worse, a few kind words and slice of pizza can be a ladder out of this darkness.

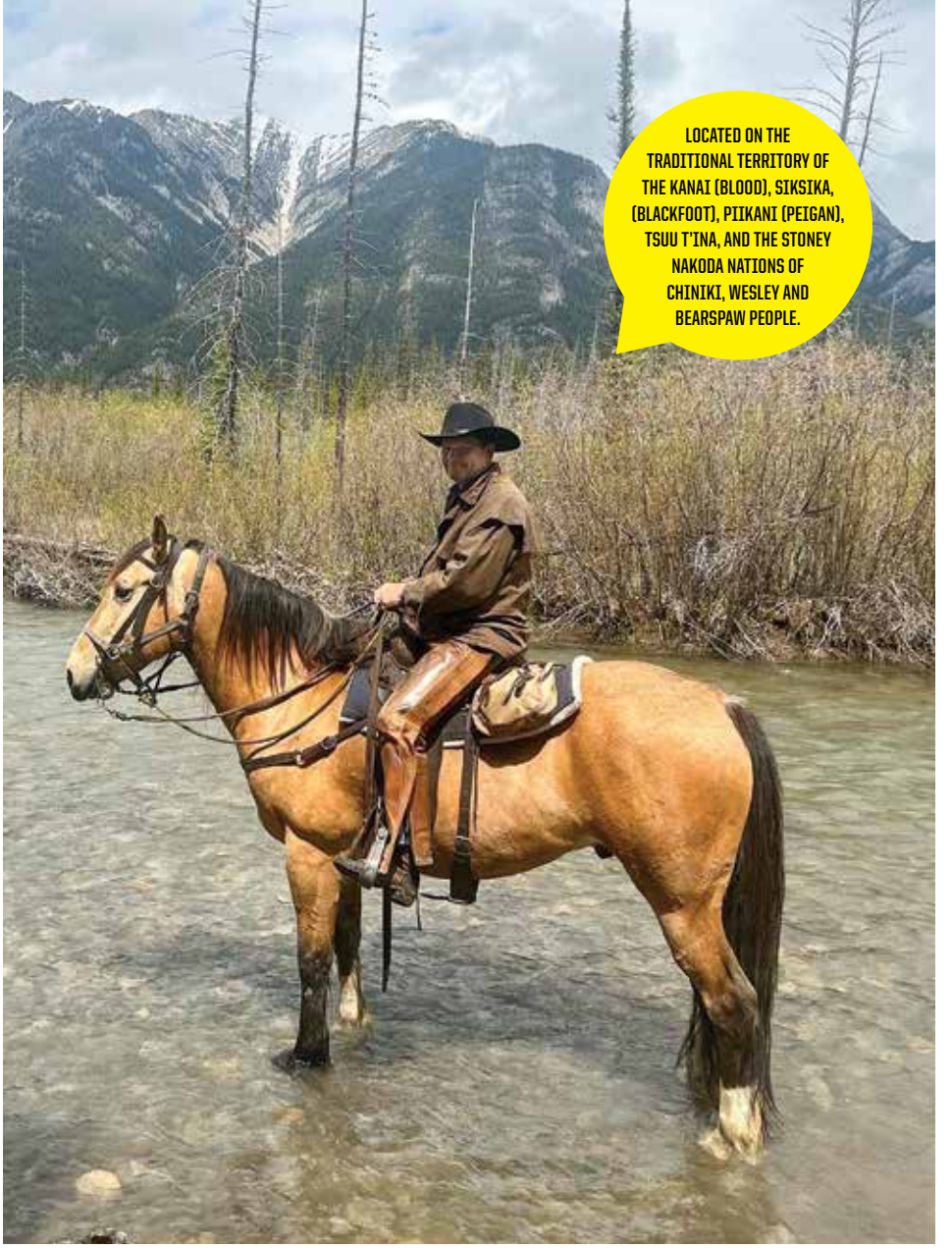
No words will really fix something unimaginably difficult or help make sense of chaos right away, but the sense of human connection goes beyond mere words. Reach out, not to question or learn more right away, but to be there for the hurting person or group. Offer specifics: food, an ear, money, child-care. The minutia of life is often a mountain range after an accident.

Listen without judgement. A big part of processing a traumatic event is personal understanding, and people need to talk about it to integrate it. Don't solve it. Just be there with the person.

And, just as the professionals have their critical incident debriefs and therapists on retainer, survivors may need professional help to put things in place. I wish I had done that in my twenties after working on my first fatality, but I didn't know it was even an option. Maybe that's part of why I'm writing this piece: yes, the online haters do real damage, but if enough of us reach out then we can not only shut the trolls down, but we can also make a hard time a little better and move our outdoor culture toward better outcomes for all. ✖

DUSTING OFF MY MEMORIES

A father and daughter reconnect on a Banff backcountry horse trip



Apparently, time travel is possible.

A cowboy sits on a hewn log chair with a guitar cradled in his arms. He strums and sings. His yodelling and sad country ballads are offered out to a starry mountain night. A few guests sitting around the bonfire join in—as do several of the pack mules, hanging their huge heads over the corral rails and braying comically like backup chorus singers.

It is a fitting way to spend our evening after a long day in the saddle. Brion Holland is a horse wrangler and guitar-picker working for Banff Trail Riders. He, along with fellow guide Courtney Gardiner, has led our group of 12 riders down the dusty trail to our backcountry sanctuary, Sundance Lodge in Alberta's Banff National Park. For me, it is like a journey back in time.

It was in the spring of 1983 when, with a fresh journalism degree in my back pocket, I hopped on a passenger train heading westward from Ontario to the Rockies and Banff. I felt I had earned a summer break before buckling down. Apparently "getting serious" was not in my immediate future though, as I found comfort and a quirky niche in this mountain town and put down roots for a time, wiling away a decade playing cowboy.

Now, I have decided to test the adage—can you go back? I have read recently of a new travel trend coming out of our prolonged shutdown. Not only is travel being concentrated closer to home, but also focused on trips where memories and nostalgia might drive us to return to familiar destinations, perhaps to a place where we travelled as kids with family. For me, Banff was the embodiment of my most idyllic young adult memories, all bundled into one place, a place where I transformed myself from boy to man.

MY OLDEST DAUGHTER Kayla, who I have brought with me on this return to Banff adventure, was born 29 years ago while I was in the backcountry guiding a six-day pack trip. It was always to be my final ride, but she entered the world three weeks early and I had a busy day; finding out by camp radio that my wife was in labour, and then riding (in a hurry) 24 kilometres to town, arriving just a bit too late to be by my wife's side. Suddenly, "getting serious" had found me.

So, three decades since family obligations had taken me away from this place, I was back. For my horse-crazy daughter, this was her first Banff experience. Our group of 12 riders had met in the morning at Warner's Stables and set off westward alongside the tranquil Bow River. Often people will comment that Banff is just too

JAMIE ROSS (7X)

LEFT: Nearly 40 years has passed since the author guided horse-packing trips in Banff National Park; now he returns to be guided himself, along with his daughter, for a memorable re-creation. ABOVE: On this trip, the author (top) and his daughter (bottom) re-create a snapshot from the author's horseback-guiding days (middle).

busy nowadays. Well, as always, when you venture a short distance from the townsite on a hike, bike or horse, the people disappear and you are left with only quiet and sheer awe-inspiring beauty.

We stop on the bank of the Bow River, unpack Tanya the lunch mule, boil up some cowboy coffee and grill some steaks over the fire. After lunch, the trail takes us high along the valley wall for splendid views, before dropping back down to Healey Creek. Our sure-footed horses criss-cross the turbulent, boulder-strewn river, before clamouring up the bank to our destination.

SUNDANCE LODGE WAS built during my watch, a beautiful log lodge constructed in 1991, a 16-kilometre ride southwest of Banff. With 10 guest rooms, two bathrooms, living room with fireplace, kitchen with communal dining table and a large inviting porch—this is backcountry luxury, with handmade furniture, log beds, solar panels and thus, for weary riders, plenty of hot water in the showers. I loved the family-like energy as we sat around a long dinner table enjoying salmon served by camp cook Zachary Blease.

For me it feels different being a guest rather than a guide. Previously, I would have unrolled my bedroll in the bunky/saddle shed across the creek, to be lulled to sleep listening to the horses and scurrying mice. I wonder if the guides would mind me knocking on their door tonight, but decide instead to enjoy the lodge's comfortable bed—I am getting older.

Although it is the equine adventure that has called us back to Banff National Park, my daughter and I plan to stay awhile after the ride to enjoy some different mountain experiences. In a pilot project implemented from 2022 to 2024, Parks Canada has closed the Bow Valley Parkway in spring and fall to vehicle traffic. So, we exchange horses for e-bikes and set off on a 60-kilometre cycle from Banff to Lake Louise. Without the rabble of automobiles, the parkway is very wildlife friendly. We stop to view elk, mule deer and even a black bear and cubs who play amongst the sun-bleached stumps and logs on an open grassy slope. Sheep gather along the line where vegetation meets rock. A young bull moose with velvet covering his new antlers plods through a marshy section below us. At Lake Louise, we load our bikes on public transport for our return journey.

Banff itself has grown slightly, matured in luxurious ways and invited in a few more visitors. The reasons the people come, however, have not changed. Its spectacular setting remains the same. There are also some thoughtful innovations meant to alleviate congestion in the townsite's bustling core. The downtown blocks are now closed to vehicle traffic, so cafés and patios have spread out into the street. Hybrid busses shuttle guests efficiently to anywhere they want to go, thus encouraging visitors to park their vehicles.

We take advantage of the transit to enjoy some touristy things. On a drizzly morning we take the Sulphur Mountain gondola on an eight-minute ascent through swirling mist and low-hanging clouds, taking a chance that we will see anything from the summit. The inclement weather means we almost have the mountain to ourselves—and when the wispy clouds disperse, we are left with dramatic vistas down to the townsite. We tour the Banff Springs Hotel, Bow Falls, the Cave and Basin where this National Park (Canada's first) was born and the wonderful Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, which tells the stories of the early guides and outfitters who essentially opened the park.

I MUST ADMIT, I had returned to Banff a bit smug—convincing myself that the town and park would not be the same, not as "cool" or with the same adventurous vibe as the Banff of my youth. It would have grown too big, become too commercial, would not be as wild or carefree. I was wrong. I saw my mistake in the eyes of my daughter, awe-struck seeing Banff for the first time. I realized if she wasn't married, I might be heading home alone. I know how that works. I saw it in Brion, our horse guide—he was a young me.

He asked me, contemplatively, how I knew when it was time to leave and move on with life. "You will know," I told him. "Don't be in a hurry."

The townsite might have matured, but it is that evolution that makes it worth revisiting. Banff still has its magic and allure on full display. I was happy to be back—with my daughter—in the place where it all began. ✖

30 -BY- 30

CANADA HAS PLEDGED TO PROTECT 30 PER CENT OF ITS LAND AND WATER BY THE YEAR 2030. SO WHAT MUST WE DO TO MEET THIS VITAL BIODIVERSITY GOAL?

By Ryan Stuart

Biodiversity is the variety of living things in each given area. It is essential for human life on Earth. A diversity of animals, plants and microorganisms supports the healthy ecosystems that provide the air we breathe, the fresh water we drink and the food we eat.

By that measure, we're under threat from ourselves. Like in the rest of the world, Canada is in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. More than half of the 900 most heavily studied species in Canada have declined in the last decades due to urban development, farming, forestry, overfishing, climate change, pollution and invasive species. Scientists believe about 20 per cent of all Canadian species are in decline. That has global implications. Canada is home to the world's longest coastline, 25 per cent of the boreal forest, more fresh water than anywhere else and some of the largest areas of wilderness left on the planet.

The good news is we know how to reverse the biodiversity decline. Scientists figure protecting 40 to 70 per cent of the land and water from harmful levels of development would be an important step in halting biodiversity loss. To that end, Canada has voluntarily committed to the United Nations' Global Biodiversity Framework, a goal to protect 25 per cent of a country's land and water by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030.

Currently, our stats are about 14 per cent of land and 14 per cent of marine areas. That's less than a previous goal of 17 percent of land protected by 2020, (though we hit the 10 per cent marine target). Among the provinces and territories, only Quebec has adopted the 30-by-30 goal.

"Reaching 30-by-30 feels like a big jump and seems out of reach," admits Jessie Corey. She's the national senior manager of terrestrial conservation programs at the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. "But if there is the political will from the provinces, territories and federal government, it is something we can do."

ACORN ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

Susies Lake, part of a region that may become Nova Scotia's newest National Urban Park. Read more on page 34.

Momentum is building. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, working with Parks Canada, has committed to creating 15 new National Urban Parks and 10 new National Parks by 2030. Empowered First Nations governments are working on dozens of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas across the country. And in the last five years, the federal government—with Environment and Climate Change Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada taking the lead and Parks Canada supporting—has committed more than $4 billion towards protecting biodiversity, including almost $1 billion for creating protected areas in the 2021 budget. A big focus on most of the efforts is on Indigenous leadership and involvement.

Salome Sane, the nature and food campaigner at Greenpeace Canada, is cautiously optimistic. But to have an impact on biodiversity, just protecting land isn't enough, she says. Along with vast remote regions of wilderness, there must be just as much importance placed on smaller pockets of critical habitat: wildlife corridors between bigger parks, new lands near urban areas and especially endangered habitats and ecosystems, like grasslands and old-growth forests in southern Canada.

> "Reaching 30-by-30 feels like a big jump and seems out of reach. But if there is the political will from the provinces, territories and federal government, it is something we can do"

Not all of it must be parks or exclude all industrial activity, says Dr. Jodi Hilty, president and chief scientist at the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative.

"If we think it through and do a good job of planning, it doesn't have to be one or the other, jobs or nature conservation," she says. "We need them both."

With less than eight years left to meet the biodiversity goal the big question now is where to create these various areas. With the help of CPAWS, Greenpeace Canada, Yellowstone to Yukon and Parks Canada and others, we've identified some of the most important, exciting and likely new parks and protected areas across the country.

Pituamkek

WHERE IT IS: 50 kilometres of sand islands and forests that separate Malpeque Bay—on Prince Edward Island's north shore—from the Gulf of St. Lawrence
WHAT'S PROPOSED: National Park Reserve
WHY & HOW: Pituamkek is the latest example of Parks Canada's collaborations with Indigenous people. Instead of its historic practice of drawing lines on the map and ignoring Indigenous history, the national park agency is taking a relationship approach and stepping back to allow First Nations to lead the park creation process. At Pituamkek, the Mi'kmaq want to preserve one of the last wilderness areas on Prince Edward Island, which also is an area used by their ancestors for thousands of years for fishing and hunting. There are two abandoned village sites within the proposed park boundary. The old-growth sugar maple and oak forest is one of the only stands like it left on the island and the fragile sand islands are vulnerable to overuse and sea level rise.
GET INSPIRED: Pituamkek, or Hog Island, is only accessible by water making it a great sea kayak destination. Put in at many spots along Malpeque Bay and paddle on the protected southern shore of the island or along the more exposed northern coast, where steep grassy dunes rise out of the water.
LEARN MORE: pc.gc.ca

RIGHT: The waters around Les Iles-de-la-Madeleine may see new protection that balances ecological integrity with commercial and cultural interests. BELOW: Pituamkek, on Prince Edward Island's north shore, may be the new site of a National Park Reserve.

LEFT: CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY (CPAWS); TOP: CAROLINE COLIN

Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine

WHERE IT IS: 17,000 square-kilometres of marine area near the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in Quebec
WHAT'S PROPOSED: New protected area (provincial or federal, to be determined)
WHY & HOW: Parks Canada's goal is to protect parts of the 29 marine ecosystem regions it has identified in Canada's three oceans and Great Lakes. That includes the waters around Les Iles-de-la-Madeleine, a region it has—in partnership with Quebec's Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques—considered for protection since 2012. The area includes vast shallows, the deeper Laurentian Channel and coastal waters. All of it is important for marine mammals like seals and commercially important fish species like crabs and lobsters.

The protection proposal will balance conservation and economic activity—recognizing the unique needs of the area. Commercial fishing and shipping will still be allowed, with more controls in specific zones to protect spawning habitat for fish, important sites for bird nesting or culturally significant areas.
GET INSPIRED: Lined with red sea cliffs, the only way to see much of the 12 islands is from the water. Sea kayaks are the ideal vehicles for exploring sea caves and arches and there are eight designated tours around the islands. With consistent winds, the area has become well-known for wind sports like kiteboarding and foiling.
LEARN MORE: tourismeilesdelamadeleine.com

Dene K'éh Kusān

WHERE IT IS: 240,000 square kilometres of northern British Columbia, just south of Yukon
WHAT'S PROPOSED: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area
WHY & HOW: This enormous proposal would protect the largest remaining wilderness area in BC, home to some of the healthiest big mammal populations in the country. The Kaska Dene, who have lived in this area for thousands of years, want to designate it an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, a conservation protection that's Indigenous-led-and-managed and recognized by the U.N. and environmental groups as an important piece of the biodiversity and reconciliation puzzle. This makes IPCAs a powerful tool in meeting the 30-by-30 target. First Nations are proposing them across vast regions of the country as a tool in reviving their people's connection to the land. Studies show there's a link between healthy land and healthy Indigenous people and culture. Each proposal is slightly different, but they typically allow harvesting and economic activity, while protecting the most important cultural and biodiversity elements. The Kaska Dene see Dene K'éh Kusān, which means "always will be there," as a bank for their future. It will allow for cultural and traditional use of the land, while the borders were chosen to avoid existing logging and mining activity.
GET INSPIRED: Dene K'éh Kusān borders several existing protected areas well known for adventures. There are many excellent river trips, including on the Stikine, Spatsizi and Muskwa, and the northern Rocky Mountains are criss-crossed with long distance trails for horseback riding or backpacking.
LEARN MORE: denakayeh.com

8 SPECIAL PLACES

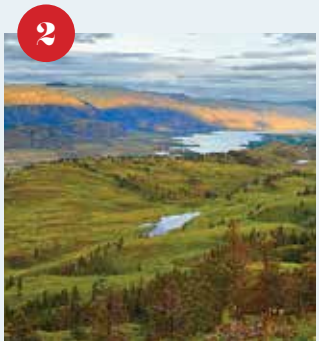
1

Dawson Land Use Plan

Legally, the territorial governments must conduct land-use plans with each region, bringing together all stakeholders to decide on a future direction for how to share the land. The Dawson Land Use Plan is underway providing a voice for First Nations around Dawson City, Yukon, for the first time. Indigenous people are calling for the protection of 15,000 square-kilometres of the region, including the rehabilitation of habitat damaged by more than a century of gold mining activity.

South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve

The Syilx/Okanagan Nation is leading the proposal to create a 273-square-kilometre national park in the arid, rolling hills southeast of Kelowna. The BC interior's shrub steppe ecosystem is one of the most endangered habitats in Canada, home to 35 federally listed species at risk and the only example of semi-arid desert in the country. It's set on the traditional and unceded territory of the Syilx people.



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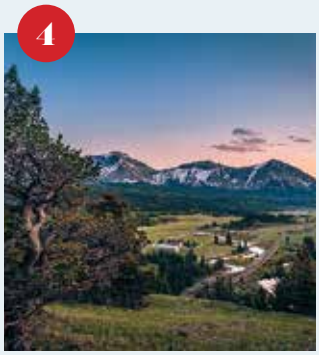
Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve

Among the Southern Gulf Islands of British Columbia, strong tides mix inflows of fresh and nutrient-rich ocean waters creating some of the most productive marine habitats on Earth. Parks Canada already protects some of the islands in the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. Now they're looking to add an even larger area of the marine habitat: approximately 1,400 kilometres stretching from Gabriola Island near Nanaimo to Victoria's Cordova Bay. It is important habitat for orcas and other marine mammals, and world class scuba diving and sea kayaking.



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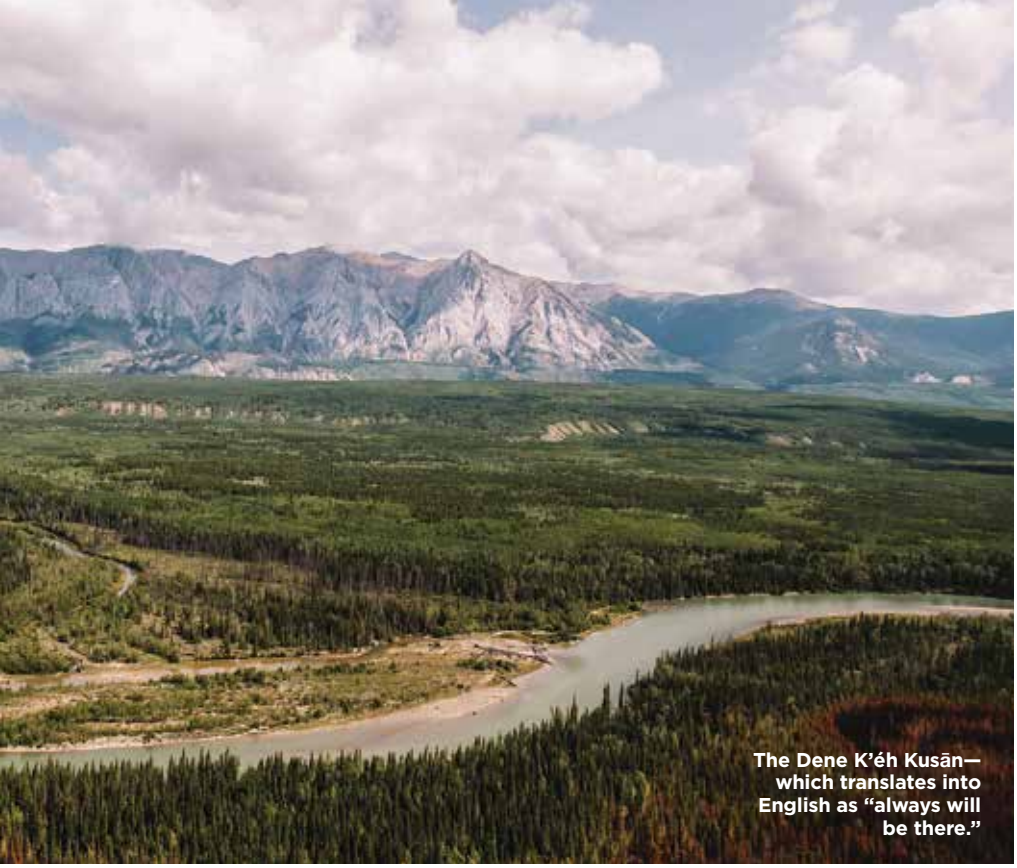
Crowsnest Pass Wildlife Corridor

Conservation easements can do the same job as a park, but are more feasible in developed areas, like the Crowsnest Pass along the southern border of BC and Alberta. The Pass is a busy transportation corridor that cuts through a mountain wilderness that stretches from south of the US border to the Yukon. Working with private landowners, easements would preserve natural habitat for the long term, enabling large mammals to safely traverse the corridor, while allowing for ranching and other activities to continue.

FROM LEFT: DAVID WEBB; TREVOR REEVES; SUSANNE DAVIES; ISTOCK



The Dene K'éh Kusān—which translates into English as "always will be there."

CLIMATE STABILIZATION

The soil under wetlands and peatlands stores huge amounts of carbon. Industrial activity in these areas can release it into the atmosphere, contributing to global carbon emissions and the effects of climate change. Northern Canada has huge peatlands and wetlands that store globally significant amounts of carbon. Many proposed protected areas will keep the carbon locked up as a byproduct. But it's the *raison d'etre* of a large, proposed carbon stabilization zone in northern Quebec.

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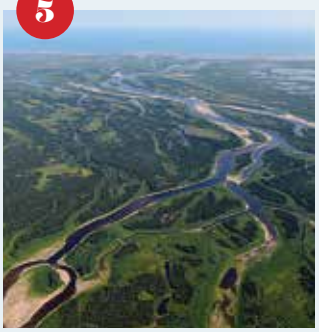
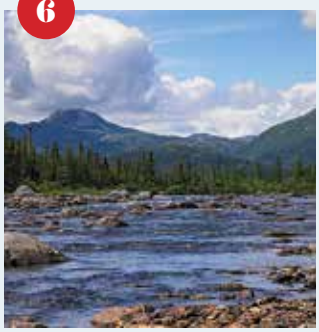


Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area

In northern Manitoba, four First Nations want to protect the Seal River watershed, a 50,000-square-kilometre area equivalent to eight per cent of Manitoba (or all of Nova Scotia). Stretching from Hudson Bay to the interior barren lands, the area has no roads or industrial development, beyond the tiny Sayisi Dene First Nation. The Dene, Cree and Inuit want to keep it that way, protecting their traditional way of life, populations of woodland caribou and polar bear and excellent recreational paddling.

6



Eagle River Waterway Provincial Park

At the same time the federal government promised to create a national park in Labrador's Mealy Mountains, the provincial government pledged to create the adjoining Eagle River Waterway Provincial Park. Parks Canada followed through in 2015 with Akami-Uapishkᵁ-KakKasuak-Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve. The province has yet to designate Eagle River. The park would protect nearly the entire watershed. The 3,000 square-kilometres has important cultural significance to the Labrador Inuit and is vital to sub-Arctic wildlife.

7

Saskatchewan River Delta IPCA

The Cumberland House Cree Nation formally protected Kitaskīnaw, also known as the Saskatchewan River Delta, in June 2010. The IPCA awaits Crown government recognition. The 9,700-square-kilometre area protects the largest inland delta in North America, a maze of shallow lakes, wetlands, river channels, islands and forest where the North and South Saskatchewan rivers meet. The unique habitat is under threat from upstream developments, endangering traditional Cree use of the area.

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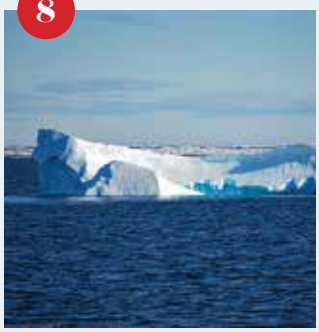


Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area

Between Greenland and Nunavut's Devon and Baffin islands, strong ocean currents bring an abundance of nutrients to the surface and keep the Arctic sea ice at bay year-round in areas named polynyas. The open waters are an ecological engine for the eastern Arctic. It's critical habitat for polar bears, beluga, narwhal and many other species, and a vital harvesting area for Inuit living in the area. Inuit and the federal government are exploring the idea of a 108,000-square-kilometre conservation area, which would protect almost two per cent of Canada's marine area.

FROM RIGHT: CPAWS; GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR; GARTH LENZ; DAVID WEBB

Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes

WHERE IT IS: 1,700 hectares on the outskirts of Halifax, Nova Scotia
WHAT'S PROPOSED: National Urban Park
WHY & HOW: The province of Nova Scotia created a park to protect the woods, barrens, lakes and wetlands on Halifax's western border in 2009. Now, Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, Halifax Regional Municipality, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and Parks Canada are exploring an opportunity to turn it into a National Urban Park.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada has mandated similar goals to all the 15 National Urban Parks slated for creation by 2030. National Urban Parks are important for biodiversity for two reasons. While they aren't large areas, urban wilderness harbours key habitat for birds and insects. And urban parks play a vital role in connecting city-dwellers with nature. Easier to access than most national parks, they are good for mental and physical health and help instill value in protecting wilderness everywhere.
GET INSPIRED: There are many marked and unmarked hiking routes through the wilderness area and mountain biking trails wander into the south portion. But the real attraction here is paddling. The complex shore of Susies Lake is a canoeist's dream with numerous bays and arms to explore. With portage trails it is possible to link it to the other Birch Cove Lakes to circuit around the park.
LEARN MORE: bluemountain-friends.ca

LEFT: ACORN ART & PHOTOGRAPHY BELOW: TOURISM NEW BRUNSWICK
RIGHT: DESTINATION ONTARIO

Restigouche River

WHERE IT IS: 15,000 hectares along the Restigouche River and its tributaries in northern New Brunswick
WHAT'S PROPOSED: Wilderness Corridor
WHY & HOW: In 2019, the New Brunswick government promised to increase its protected area from less than five per cent of the province to 10 per cent. It could get most of the way there by conserving the 235-kilometre length of the Restigouche River and its tributaries the Kedgwick, Patapedia and Upsalquitch.

Nine existing protected areas already conserve some of the riparian habitat. But all are small, making them susceptible to major disturbances like a forest fire or flood. Healthy biodiversity needs connectivity between wilderness areas so animals can move to find suitable habitat and mates. That's particularly true for land and river dependent species.

The Restigouche proposal would connect the nine parks along the rivers, including wetlands, floodplains and old forests. It's important habitat for several species at risk, including the Atlantic salmon, bald eagle and olive-sided flycatcher.
GET INSPIRED: "Running the Restigouche" is a New Brunswick tradition. A couple of outfitters rent canoes and run shuttles on the Restigouche and lower Kedgwick, though all four rivers are canoeable. With plenty of put ins and take outs there are many potential itineraries from half-day floats to multi-day wilderness trips.
LEARN MORE: tourismnewbrunswick.ca, parcsnbparks.info

QUEBEC'S NEW PROTECTIONS

In the rush towards meeting its goal of protecting 17 per cent of its land by 2020, the Quebec government had to shelve more than 80 potential projects, particularly in the southern half of the province. Earlier this year, it got back to work announcing 11 new protected areas, covering more than 2,200 square kilometres south of the 49th parallel. Next up, environmental groups are advocating for the expansion of Chic Chocs National Park and the protection of a further 60 priority areas.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Work is being done to asses the viability of a new National Urban Park on the outskirts of Halifax, Nova Scotia. One of Canada's Crown Jewel provincial parks, Algonquin still sees industrial logging within its boundaries. "Running the Restigouche" may soon involve a trip through a designated Wilderness Corridor.

Algonquin Provincial Park

WHERE IT IS: 7,653 square-kilometres of lakes and forests three hours north of Toronto
WHAT'S PROPOSED: Expanded Protection
WHY & HOW: Most people assume Algonquin, one of the best-known protected areas in the country, is a model of biodiversity conservation. In fact, 65 per cent of the park is open for logging. It's one of only a handful of provincial parks in the country that allow logging and it's not just second-growth. In 2019, researchers discovered a grove of 300- and 400-year-old trees in a region of the park leased to logging companies.

Industrial scale logging, and the 6,000 kilometres of logging roads that go with it, endangers wildlife populations, like wood turtles, brook trout, songbirds and the park's famous moose and wolves. And old-growth forest is better at sequestering carbon than young trees—and is increasingly rare habitat in central and southern Ontario.

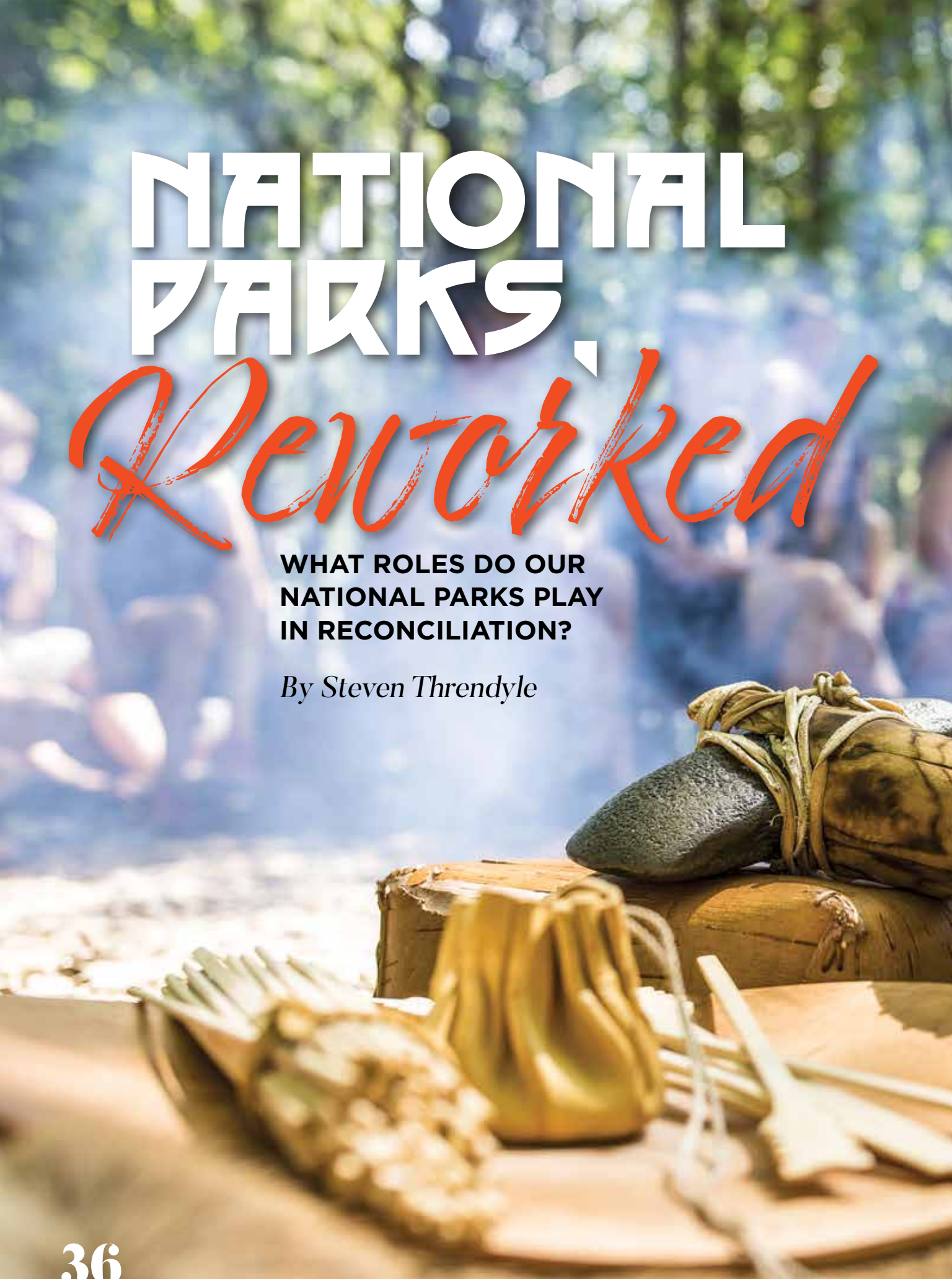
The provincial government's environmental commissioner called for an end to logging in Algonquin in 2014, a recommendation renewed by the auditor general in 2021. Strengthening the protection in parks and protected areas, like Algonquin, is one of the easiest ways to add protected spaces, suggests CPAWS.

GET INSPIRED: Ontario's first provincial park is justifiably famous for its canoe-tripping. The maze of lakes and rivers create nearly infinite itineraries in the park. There are also many excellent hiking and backpacking routes.
LEARN MORE: old growth.ca/algonquin; algonquinpark.on.ca ✖

NATIONAL PARKS, *Reworked*

WHAT ROLES DO OUR NATIONAL PARKS PLAY IN RECONCILIATION?

By Steven Threndyle



PARKS CANADA/SCOTT MUNN

Parks Canada promises "450,000 square kilometres of memories," and, for the tens of millions who have visited its hundreds of parks and historic sites, that can mean anything from hiking the West Coast Trail to canoeing the Nahanni to even playing a round of golf while staying at the Fairmont Banff Springs. For my family, it would be skiing.

Last winter, as part of a family ski trip to Marmot Basin, I booked a night for our group of seven at the Pocahontas Cabins in Jasper National Park. My first thought was, "Isn't Pocahontas considered a racist term?" As it turned out, Parks Canada also operated a nearby campground of the same name.

A month after our stay, I received an e-mail from the lodge telling me that it had been re-named "Miette River Cabins." Then, Parks Canada issued a press release stating, "The Advisory Group of the Jasper Indigenous Forum, composed of over 25 First Nations and Métis groups with historical ties to Jasper National Park, has been working with Parks Canada to find an appropriate name for the former Pocahontas Campground, located in the eastern end of the park."

PARKS CANADA/SCOTT MUNN (2X)

As I found out when we stayed at the cabins, Pocahontas was not named after the child-bride of Virginia colony founder John Smith, nor was it some branding partnership with Disney. On its website, Parks Canada explains that, "While current park sites are named due to their proximity to the historical Pocahontas coal mine, the use of the name 'Pocahontas' is problematic for several reasons . . . 'Pocahontas' is sometimes used as a racial slur . . . 'Pocahontas' as a historical figure bears no direct connection with Jasper National Park or its Indigenous peoples and . . . appropriation of this name reflects many problematic aspects of colonialism, violence against women, and racism."

Problematic, indeed. In 1887, the creation of Canada's first national park in Banff, Alberta, expressly forbade members of the Stoney and Nakoda First Nations—who aided both fur traders and railway surveyors crossing the impenetrable Rocky Mountains—from hunting or fishing in their territory. Indigenous people lost all their hunting rights to so-called 'sportsmen' who had little use for the meat and merely wanted a stuffed animal head over their fireplace to display as a trophy.

As the number and size of parks expanded and tourism flourished, the Dominion Parks Service created a wildly popular series of travel guides written by Mabel Williams in the 1920s. While extolling the virtues of exploring the Rockies by automobile, she wrote about how, "… the Parks are vacant because the Indians [sic] feared the mountains," alternately romanticizing and dismissing Indigenous creation myths as being "… too childish for our rational and scientific minds."

As historian Alan MacEachern points out, "erasing the native presence in the parks allowed Williams to start the parks' history with Europeans and the fur trade."

Canada's parks system expanded dramatically from 1887 until the mid 1950s. Indigenous communities either living or pursuing subsistence-level fishing, hunting and trapping within national parks boundaries were subject to eviction or banishment, as was the case in Jasper (Alberta), Kluane (Yukon) and Riding Mountain (Manitoba) national parks.

BY THE MID-1970S, a sea-change would take place in how Parks Canada's crown jewels were managed

ABOVE: A Parks Canada Cultural Interpreter offers traditional tea to visitors of Nova Scotia's Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site. LEFT: Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site followed the Haida declaration of a heritage site on the Haida Gwaii (then Queen Charlotte Islands) archipelago. PREVIOUS PAGE: The board, counting sticks and sack for the bone-die in a Mi'kmaw game of "Waltes," Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site, Nova Scotia.

and developed. A particularly bourgeois concept of the mountains as an "adventure playground" replaced the industrial tourism model that birthed Chateaux-style grand railway hotels and non-endemic sports like golf and motorized tours. Ski resort expansion plans moved painfully slowly, if they went ahead at all. The wilderness experience became paramount; multi-day backpacking and canoe trips were joined later by more extreme sports such as ice-climbing and whitewater kayaking.

National parks began sprouting up in less likely places, as "under-represented landscapes" achieved protection. Rare natural features like tallgrass prairie grasslands, old-growth forests, high Arctic tundra and even sand dunes were given protected status. This emphasis on science, research and intact ecosystems, however, did not sit much better with some First Nations than the industrial tourism model that preceded it.

Parks Canada's relationship with Indigenous people was altered dramatically during and after an old-growth logging protest in the mid-1980s on Windy Bay on Haida Gwaii; the island archipelago formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands.

The bitter conflicts and cultural genocide that marked earlier treaties and policies around Crown land and parks preservation would tentatively move towards co-operation and reconciliation. Ernie Gladstone, Parks Canada Superintendent for Gwaii Haanas, explains:

"A key moment on the path from conflict to cooperation was the Haida Nation–led standoff at Athlii Gwaii Lyell Island, in the mid 1980s, when the Haida Nation declared Gwaii Haanas a Haida Heritage Site and halted the logging of old-growth forests in the area"

"A key moment on the path from conflict to cooperation was the Haida Nation-led standoff at Athlii Gwaii Lyell Island, in the mid 1980s, when the Haida Nation declared Gwaii Haanas a Haida Heritage Site and halted the logging of old-growth forests in the area."

Canada later designated the same area as a National Park Reserve, aligning it with the Haida Heritage Site.

"Gwaii Haanas is now afforded the highest levels of protection in both Canadian and Haida law. Today, this is what we do with cooperative management through the Gwaii Haanas Archipelago Management Board. We are people working together—representing the Haida Nation, Parks Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada—sometimes holding different values, approaches and worldviews. But we all agree on the need to protect the land and sea and ensure continuity of Haida culture."

In 2001, Gladstone (Nang K̲aa Klaagangs), became the first Haida Superintendent of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site.

The logging jobs lost by Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers alike would have to be replaced, however. Like the early train travellers who "took the cure" in Banff's restorative hot springs, international tourists would soon be seen as vital to the Haida

TOP: Bison in Riding Mountain National Park, Manitoba—Indigenous people were effectively evicted from their lands when this park was formed. RIGHT: Indigenous interpretors are now a part of Jasper's Dark Sky Festival.

LEFT: PARKS CANADA/LAUREN BEATON; TOP: PARKS CANADA/SCOTT MUNN; RIGHT: TOURISM JASPER (2X)

Gwaii economy. Gladstone says, "Gwaii Haanas supports the livelihoods of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen [cultural liaisons in the park], tourism operators, commercial fisherman, researchers, cultural camp employees and Gwaii Haanas staff. The current Gwaii Haanas management plan reflects the commitment to support a living Haida culture and economy."

WHILE PARKS CANADA was painstakingly re-defining its role with the Haida, another opportunity for reconciliation arose in 2000, when the agency was approached by the Lutsel K'e Dene to create a new park on the eastern shores of Great Slave Lake, Northwest Territories.

Historically, the Dene and Parks Canada did not have a great relationship. Twice, in 1970 and again in 1982, the Crown agency paternalistically decided to create a national park to protect flora and fauna of the boreal forest and barren lands. Similar to other national park "agreements," trapping, hunting and fishing would be off-limits to the Lutsel K'e Dene.

As Dene leader Steven Nitah puts it, "Parks Canada has a dark history. As a government agency, they were on the frontlines of colonialism."

Nitah was raised by his grandparents while his mother attended high school in Yellowknife. He was spared the misery and cultural genocide of Canada's

THE WARRIOR WOMEN OF JASPER NATIONAL PARK

Matricia Bauer and her daughter Mackenzie are Warrior Women, who sing, drum, tell stories and guide visitors to Jasper National Park interested in learning how Indigenous peoples lived on the land.

Matricia, an award-winning vocalist and voice teacher, says their tours, "de-emphasize colonizer spaces by using stories and song." While the vast majority of the two million visitors who come to Jasper annually have no connection to the land, Bauer, "wants to hold space for the partners that are from this area and were forced to leave." Indigenous settlements within the park were exiled to very small reserves west and south of the park boundaries.

She says, "Everybody loves Jasper. It's a spiritual place and it must have been very damaging to leave and we have not made it easy for them to come back. For Indigenous people who live a traditional lifestyle, Jasper is not an affordable place to live.

"Not all Indigenous people have a safe space to express themselves, and I hope that as a tour operator, I can offer that. As a businessperson and a public figure, I do experience racism and lateral violence, and know that many Indigenous people

come from a fear-based way of thinking. We had so much taken away from us that we're afraid to put up our hands."

Bauer clearly states, however, that, "I'm not here to talk as a representative of these groups; I'm here to share my lived experience and show how the land sustains us, what our connections are to the animals, lakes and rivers and hopefully inspire my guests to develop, or at least appreciate, a relationship with the natural environment."

Not surprisingly, many Canadians who take Bauer's tours have tough questions.

"But I try to focus on the beautiful parts of our culture," she says. "What we can learn about medicinal herbs, the wisdom passed down from our elders and how the mountains energize our spirit."

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Kluane National Park and Reserve is located on the traditional territory of the Southern Tutchone people, represented in the Kluane region by the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and the Kluane First Nation. A sharing circle in Thaidene Nene National Park, part of this newly formed park's cultural experiences. A Mi'kmaw stone axe, Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic Site. The Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole near the Windy Bay Watchmen Cabin and the Looking Around and Blinking House.

residential school system, an experience that shapes Nitah's outlook on the world profoundly. Nitah had a rich childhood, surrounded by elders who passed down stories while boating on Great Slave Lake. He learned to hunt, trap, fish and forage in the boreal forest and barren lands in Treaty 8 territory. Signed in 1899, and the last of the numbered treaties signed between Indigenous bands and the Canadian government, the wording of Treaty 8 is unequivocal. Hunting, fishing and trapping rights in Denendeh ("The Creator's Spirit Flows Through This Land") would remain unchanged.

Nitah says, "The colonial government basically told us not to go there anymore, and we rejected it. Hunting rights had been taken away from First Nations living adjacent to Wood Buffalo National Park [they were subsequently restored in 1974] and we didn't want the same thing to happen here."

"Mining claims were staked right up to the border of the park," Nitah explains. By now, Indigenous treaty rights were enshrined in the re-patriated Constitution of Canada. "The federal government enacted legislation to protect the area from resource extraction. Our elders considered what might happen if the heart of our homeland was lost. We chose to work with Parks Canada because we wanted an economy based on conservation." And they wanted to ensure their traditional hunting, fishing and trapping rights.

What followed in the next two decades was a complex set of negotiations that elevated the Dene to full partnership with both Parks Canada and the NWT government. "Each of the groups appointed a person to sit on a board that represents the interests of the inside of the park first and foremost," says Nitah.

Thaidene Nene National Park ("Land of Our Ancestors") exists within a larger Indigenous Protected Area and traditional Dene rules apply. In 2020, the United Nations presented all four levels of government with their prestigious Equator Prize which, "recognizes Indigenous peoples and local communities (for) innovating nature-based solutions to climate change and for sustainable development."

IT'S WORTH NOTING that Parks Canada seeks not to revise history, but instead to provide a stage in which all Canadians can speak their truth and tell their stories. Peter Larriviere is the recently retired Policy Manager for Parks Canada`s Indigenous Affairs and, as he's the first to inform you, "a proud Parks Canada employee for the past 30 years."

"First off, it's important to recognize the difference between Indigenous nations across the country," he says.

LEFT: ISTOCK; RIGHT: PARKS CANADA/SCOTT MUNN (3X)

"Right now, the Reconciliation Through Conservation project has identified 27 Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). When you operate a park in one manner, that level of governance should be made available to everyone"

An archaeological Mi'qmaq settlement in Kejimkujik National Park has nothing to do with Haida mortuary poles in Gwaii Haanas. The difference, he says, is "much greater than saying you're from Nova Scotia or British Columbia. It's like saying you're from Canada or from China. Which is why there cannot, and is not, a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to managing, maintaining or creating a national parks system."

Larriviere's role for the past two decades has been to show Indigenous communities that Parks Canada can be a trusted partner. Still, he admits, "we're a long way from reconciliation."

It's clear, however, that Canadians want to learn more about Indigenous culture, especially on the west coast of Vancouver Island, BC, where Pacific Rim National Park Reserve lies fully within the unceded territory of the Nuu-chah-nulth (along the mountains and the sea) people. Pacific Rim NPR is governed by a unique Cooperative Management Group that includes Parks Canada staff and Nuu-chah-nulth members.

Karen Haugen, Superintendent of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, says, "Many visitors have expressed curiosity and want to learn the full scope of Canada's complex past, which includes Indigenous culture, history and perspectives."

Visitors can learn about the history of the area through five active First Nation Guardians and Beach Keepers programs operating in Pacific Rim NPR. Guardians and Beach Keepers monitor their respective ancestral lands within Pacific Rim NPR. They conduct activities related to the visitor experience such as cultural interpretation, human/wildlife coexistence management, species at risk and other related activities that educate and provide visitors with cultural information, language, traditions and history of First Nations. Guardian trail crews also perform crucial maintenance along the 75-kilometre West Coast Trail from Port Renfrew to Bamfield. A formal treaty signed between the federal and BC governments will eventually turn over significant Parks Canada holdings in Pacific Rim to the Pacheedat and Dididaht peoples.

Dene land negotiator Steven Nitah believes the relationship between the Crown and Indigenous communities can go much further. Under the Canada One program, the federal government is committed to protecting 30 per cent of its land mass and coastline (see feature on page 28). Studies from around the world have proven that Indigenous ways of knowledge can more effectively protect the land than merely locking it up behind some arbitrary boundaries.

"It's Indigenous peoples who will get Canada to its 30 per cent commitment, through Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. If Canada is truly intentional in honouring Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and following the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), then we must make the framework that has made Thaidene Nene a successful compromise available to all of the parks across Canada," he says.

"Right now, the Reconciliation Through Conservation project has identified 27 Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). When you operate a park in one manner, that level of governance should be made available to everyone." ✖

PRICE of ENTRY

THERE ARE MANY WAYS PEOPLE ARE DETERRED FROM ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS. THE HIGH COST OF ADVENTURE GEAR IS ONLY ONE FACTOR—FEELING LIKE YOU BELONG IS THE TRUE BOTTOM-LINE

By Alison Karlene Hodgins

The outdoors is for everyone. Some low-cost adventure sports, like hiking, can get you outside with little more than boots, a backpack and a water bottle. But others, such as canoeing, camping and alpine skiing, can limit people from accessing the outdoors due to the cost of the associated gear.

Life is getting more expensive. In June of 2022, Statistics Canada released an infographic revealing nearly three in four Canadians reported rising prices have affected their ability to meet day-to-day expenses. To cope, 50 per cent have sought sales and promotions; 47 per cent have purchased cheaper alternatives, brands or items; and 45 per cent have delayed making a purchase.

Financial gatekeeping in the outdoors isn't simply about the gear. There's also the price of storage for your gear, the cost (and ability) to take those days off work, entrance fees for parks and the price of transportation to get there. And that's still only part of the picture—for many, outdoor gatekeeping goes well beyond the financial and into deeper concepts of belonging, community and access.

There are many other ways people are restricted from accessing outdoor adventure. If the outdoors is for everyone, why isn't it affordable and welcoming for all?

ISTOCK

RYAN STUART, field editor of *explore*, hasn't noticed a massive increase in gear prices, but he says premium products, like airbag backpacks for avalanches, will never get cheaper.

He believes you usually get what you pay for. "I think it's worth spending a little more because it's going to last longer. You're going to get a performance benefit and notice the difference when it counts. It comes down to technology and craftsmanship. You're paying full premium in the beginning, but you won't be repeat buying."

However, you don't always have to purchase your own gear. "You don't really have to buy a tent or a pair of skis—they're very easy to rent and not as personal as a jacket or a sleeping bag," Stuart says. "Think, 'What is the stuff that's going to be touching me?' For the rest, look at rental options and borrow from friends."

For people living with disabilities, gear prices can be prohibitive. "The Bowhead [adaptive mountain bike] is $10,000," Stuart says. "So, for anyone, that's a huge cost to getting out there. Eddie Bauer just came out with a ski outfit for people who use sit skis. It's designed specifically to be comfortable and fit properly. And there are programs, such as Rocky Mountain Adaptive, working to help people with disabilities get into the outdoors.

"I think the gear industry is working really hard on [inclusivity]," continues Stuart. "I see brands like Outdoor Research putting a lot of energy into inclusive sizing . . . breaking down this barrier of the outdoors being hardcore, super fit, doing really difficult things—which is how it was marketed—into how it can just be fun. It can be going for a walk in the park in the city. I think you see it changing in the branding."

When it comes to gear, Stuart says safety is crucial. "The right gear does matter," he says. "You don't need to have the world's best, but you shouldn't be hiking on [Vancouver's] North Shore in slip-on sandals. There's a certain level that needs to be met. You could buy super fancy $300 hiking boots, or you could go in a pair of trail runners. Both are going to do the job, but one will have certain benefits that the other doesn't.

"It's important to be as welcoming as we can, and to include messaging of what you need to be safe out there."

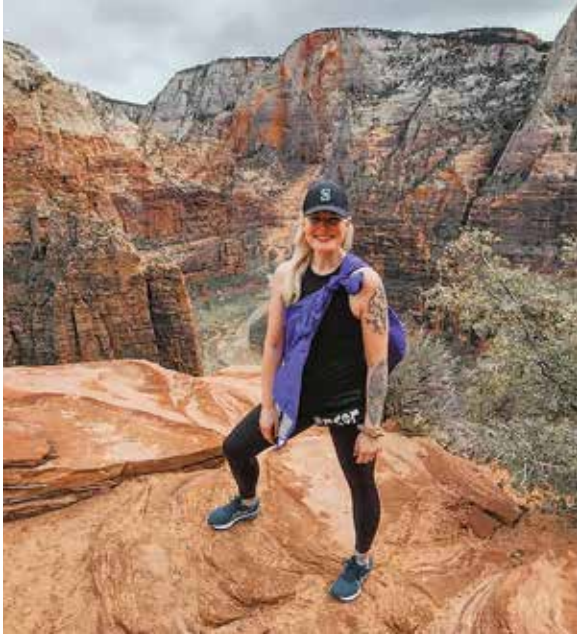
"The right gear does matter. You don't need to have the world's best, but you shouldn't be hiking on [Vancouver's] North Shore in slip-on sandals"

FOR *EXPLORE* STAFFER and mom of three Jennifer Hubbert, growing up in British Columbia's Comox Valley—home of Mount Washington Alpine Resort—didn't mean she participated in snow sports. She says the economics and scheduling of being raised in a single-parent family limited her exposure to outdoor experiences.

"My first time on [cross-country] skis was in grade six," Hubbert says. "It was wild. It was a totally foreign experience. Here I was, on a mountain with a village where people had chalets and condos and embraced the season in a way I didn't at all. That was pretty eye-opening.

"Many years later, in university, I was invited to visit Whistler. When I got to the village, I was a little bit mortified. I was in a world-class setting, right in my backyard, and I had no ability to ski or snowboard. So, I fibbed: I told people that I had torn my ACL and couldn't get on skis. Everybody felt so much pity for me. I was holding onto this secret . . . I was born in BC, Canada and didn't know how to ski."

Hubbert felt like she'd failed, based on stigma and expectations. Her barriers to adventure included socio-economic obstacles, such as not having a car (or tire chains to get up the mountain) and the gear. "Psychologically, it's a big commitment to get set up, especially when you don't have the confidence because you don't have the skills," she says.



LEFT: Ryan Stuart, *explore* field editor, has the privilege of reviewing dozens of items of outdoor gear every year. His advice: borrow what you use sporadically, buy the stuff that "touches your skin." RIGHT: Jennifer Hubbert, another *explore* staffer, saw early on how some people grow up with great access to outdoor recreation—and some people simply don't. BELOW: Frank Wolf depends on his gear to help him complete epic journeys—but admits the simplest of stuff can often suffice.

On the flip side, Hubbert says the high price of accommodation when travelling brought her family closer to the outdoors. "Car-camping was the only option," she says. "It was the most affordable way for us to see places."

If her circumstances were different, Hubbert thinks she would've said yes to a lot more opportunities. "There's this idea that if you haven't done something by the time you're eight [years old], it never comes naturally to you. If you grow up seeing your parents skiing, and they take you, you will probably have a much more relaxed attitude to picking up a new skill."

Now, with her own kids, Hubbert turns to online communities to find gear. "The sharing economy helps shift the burden of cost," she says. "Some resourcefulness [goes] a long way. It's really about the human connection—your parents, brother, the outdoor rec program at your school, or whoever can make the introduction to adventure."

"WE DEFINITELY SAW an increase in gear prices, especially over the last year-and-a-half," says Graeme Stewart, MEC's Toronto general manager. "A lot of things like shortages in aluminum made it hard for people to get parts for stoves, so they couldn't produce it at the rate they needed, so we started to see prices go up."

When MEC transitioned from a co-op to a company, the pricing structure didn't change—except for the introduction of new discounts. There is still a membership, though it's no longer required, and now it's free.

The Rocksolid gear guarantee hasn't changed either. "If you buy something and it doesn't work, you can bring it back. For most things, we don't have a timeline on it," Stewart says. "We want to keep the member happy, get them good gear and make sure they're having a good time." Don't despair—your return isn't likely to end up in a landfill. "Some items will be returned to the manufacturer, some will be resold and some will be donated to places like women's shelters."

In-store sessions are available for people to learn how to camp, take care of their bikes, etc. "Our staff is very well-diversified and always available," Stewart says. "We've all been a first-time camper, climber or cyclist. We know how important it is to find good support and help."

MEC staff can suggest alternative activities to fit your budget. "Outside can be a lot of different things," Stewart says. "Don't be scared to ask. Maybe we can find a better solution for you that's more cost-effective. Don't think you have to rush out and spend thousands of dollars to go camping. You don't."

And if you come into the store, you'll find a gender-neutral washroom. "Inclusivity is a very big thing for us. Right now, within our clothing, we're opening the sizing curve up to 6X by bringing in specialty brands, like alder [outdoor recreation apparel for women], and we're doing it with the MEC label, too."

INTEREST IN THE outdoors climbed exponentially during the pandemic, and a shortage of supply affected adventurers. "I do think manufacturers are taking advantage of the demand," says *explore* contributor Frank Wolf. "This can make being in the outdoors—which should be the simplest thing in the world, you step out your backdoor—into an elitist thing. When it should be the opposite: it should be accessible to everyone."

Similar to the adoption-and-return of pets post-pandemic, Wolf predicts thrift stores and online marketplaces like Facebook and Kijiji will be good places to pick up used gear. "I bought my inReach [satellite communicator] on Craigslist for $150," he says.

"I think people have this idea that you need all this 'stuff' to do a trip… It's almost a paradox of choice: people can get lost in the gear, instead of thinking 'what's the least amount I need to take?' If you find a canoe for $200, you can travel across Canada. It floats, it moves forward. Think about things in the simplest possible way.

"A 30-day or a 60-day expedition is just like a weekend trip, with more food," Wolf continues. "You use the same tent, sleeping bag, pack and clothing… and you have to carry it all. Keep it lean. Having less gear is having a more effective trip."

Wolf suggests fixing your gear, DIY, bartering and borrowing. The gear is out there—probably sitting in someone's garage—so don't be afraid to ask. Connect with people in the local adventure ▸

CLOCKWISE: RYAN CREARY; JENNIFER HUBBERT; FRANK WOLF

"If you don't feel like you belong in this space, there's no reason that you'd go out and spend that money on gear"

TOP: Brown Girl Outdoor World was founded to challenge and change the narrative around what representation looks like in the outdoors—and to create a space for access, opportunity, advocacy and adventure. BELOW: Meg Kelly founded Adventure Report originally as an inclusive information resource—and it continues to grow,

community. "You're going to find people who want to help you out."

Wolf says sometimes you get what you pay for, but "if you [read] reviews, the most expensive thing isn't necessarily the best thing. You can get highly rated, well-built gear from a reputable company that's going to be fabulous. If you're on a budget, you can get away with the more basic model. It's good value, and it works.

"Ultimately, your mental attitude and your passion for the outdoors is way more important than all the bells and whistles. The gear isn't going to propel you through. The key thing is to take care of your body and make sure you're mentally and physically prepared to do it. The gear is just that extra five per cent. It's the icing on the cake."

IF ALL YOU LOOK at is the financial restrictions, you're missing something, says Meg Kelly from Adventure Report. "Reducing the financial barrier is key, but I think if that's the sole focus, that effort would be severely lacking. There are a lot of people who have the means to go camping and spend time outdoors, and still don't feel safe or welcome or confident enough to get out there," she says.

Kelly started her blog, Adventure Report, about five years ago as an information source. The community has grown to include a gear library (called the Camp Kit Program) and by-donation events. All events are located near bus stops, and a volunteer can drive attendees if transportation is an issue. Folks can donate as much or as little as they want, all the gear is provided and proceeds go towards the Camp Kit Program. Events such as intro to backpacking courses and canoe paddling clinics decrease the intimidation factor and the high cost of associated gear.

Kelly was inspired to lend out her own gear after seeing Indigenous Women Hike's outdoor gear library. "I was lucky and privileged enough to have gear to put two full kits together and loan them out to my friends on the Internet." Kelly says the Internet is a great place for making friends and finding a community of outdoorsy folks.

Now in their third season, nine volunteers manage the camp kits, getting them out to people who need them. Half of the volunteers identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of colour). "We try to do what we can to invite people in from groups that have been historically excluded or underrepresented in the outdoors," Kelly says.

The kits contain everything someone would need to go camping to alleviate the stress of forgetting anything. Split into car-camping and backcountry camping, there are also options for plus-size sleeping bags and Halal cookware. And it's all free.

Kelly accepts gently used gear from the community and has partnered with a few brands. She's open to more. "Frankly, it's good business sense. If you use the gear, when it comes time for you to get your own, you're going to be looking for a brand that you feel comfortable with."

TOP: AIADS RYGELIS; BELOW: MEG KELLY

LOOKING

If you need help, here's where you can go:

- Parks Canada offers **Learn-to Camp programs**. All the basics are covered in an inclusive, safe and fun way. pc.gc.ca/en/serapprocher-connect/ltc-dlc
- Admission is free to **national parks and marine conservation areas** for new Canadian citizens. Admission is also free for all youth 17 and under. pc.gc.ca/en/voyage-travel/admission
- Park Ambassadors at 15 Ontario Parks offer **free 30-minute workshops** for specific camping skills. ontarioparks.com/learntocamp
- Montreal-based low-income new Canadians can try **discounted outdoor sports** through the Intercultural Outdoor Program. pleinairinterculturel.com/en/
- Underserved youth, veterans, women survivors of violence and/or abuse, Indigenous youth and adults, and others can access wilderness programs through **Outward Bound Canada**. outwardbound.ca
- **Parkbus** takes adventurers to parks at a low cost or even free. parkbus.ca
- On Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, **Undercurrent Youth Centres** runs programs throughout the year. undercurrentyc.com
- Scouts Canada's **No One Left Behind** program ensures that every youth is provided with the opportunity to join. scouts.ca/programs/no-one-left-behind.html
- Attend **free and by-donation** outdoor events in cities near you. Find details on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram or through your local news.
- Shop for used gear through **trade-in programs**, like ecologyst's Second Life program.
- Take advantage of the **sharing economy**. Kijiji, Facebook marketplace and garage sales are great places to find new (used) gear.

OFFERING

If you can help, here's where you can give:

- **Donate** to outdoor programs, such as Adventure Report's Camp Kits: adventurereport.ca and Outward Bound: outwardbound.ca
- Start a **gear library** in your community.
- Bring your used gear to **thrift stores and donation centres.**
- **Sell gear** you aren't using anymore.
- **Lend** out your gear.
- **Invite** your friends and family on adventures.
- **Volunteer** with outdoor programs in your area.
- **Learn** about what it takes to create a **welcoming space** for people who have been historically underrepresented and left out of the outdoors.

She hopes people realize that you don't need the newest top-tier gear to get outside. "You can have a great experience on a sleeping pad that's 20 years old and was a little dusty before you wiped it off," she says.

"BELONGING TRUMPS GEAR," says Demiesha Dennis, founder of Brown Girl Outdoor World (BGOW). "If you don't feel like you belong in this space, there's no reason that you'd go out and spend that money on gear."

BGOW was established to challenge and change the narrative around what representation looks like in the outdoors and to create a space for access, opportunity, advocacy and adventure.

"We work with partners to reduce cost barriers for folks trying to get into outdoor spaces. Education is also a big piece of BGOW—ensuring we're not just bringing folks into spaces that they will probably have no opportunity to enter again once they leave the event," Dennis says.

BGOW hosts events that are specifically geared towards Black, Indigenous and racialized women. "We focus on that community to establish a space that feels and is safe for women of colour—not only physically, but psychologically—in the outdoors. What I've found with BGOW is that folks feel safer trying things where they see themselves represented."

Officially launched in 2019 with a 12-person camping trip, BGOW has continued to seek out ways to diversify what adventure looks like to communities of colour finding their belonging in the outdoors.

"For a simple overnight camping trip, [it] can be close to $1,000 for a night outside. People say camping is easy, but having proper, safe, reliable, lasting gear is going to cost some money," Dennis says.

"[Gear] doesn't need to be high end, it just needs to be in good condition. If you're renting or borrowing, make sure it's going to keep you safe, dry and comfortable. The worst thing is to go camping and have the experience ruined the first night, and that become your impression of what camping is in its entirety."

Dennis doesn't think getting outside needs to be attached to a grandiose idea of conquering, summiting or bagging peaks. "For me, nature is connection—not just to people but to self and the environment. It's a gateway into knowing, loving and protecting nature. It creates a different sense of belonging," Dennis says.

"Nature for me is simply looking out my balcony being able to see birds feeding on berries growing wild outside my apartment building. Being in nature doesn't have to be the idea that is sold for marketing purposes. It is about your personal relationship and connection to nature in a way that feels good and right to you."

YOUR CONFIDENCE IN outdoor adventure can be bolstered by the right gear, but top-notch equipment isn't necessary. You can still get outside. Everyone I spoke to agreed that nature is about your connection to the world around you and, most importantly, yourself.

And these connections extend to the outdoors community at-large. People want to share their passion for the outdoors. There are so many enthusiasts working tirelessly—often as volunteers—to help others get outside.

That's beautiful. That's what outdoor adventure is truly all about. ✖

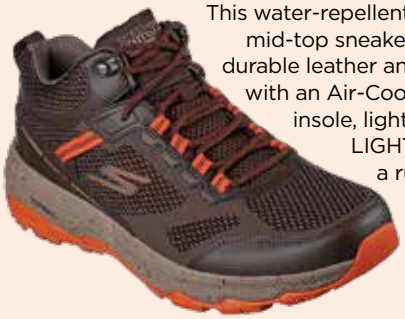
Fall ESSENTIALS

These 17 must-haves will help you make the most of the shoulder season

To-Go Ware Premium Bamboo Utensil Sets
($21.25; chicobag1.odoo.com)
Premium Bamboo utensils are great alternatives to disposable utensils. Reusable, durable, lightweight bamboo is perfect for hiking, camping and lunches! A complete eat and drink solution with fork, spreader, spoon, chopsticks and straw and bottle-opener carabiner. Sleeves are made from 100 per cent post-consumer recycled bottles. Each set replaces 1,625 single-use utensils.

MHO Adventures Dried Whole Eggs
(from $7.95; mhoadventures.com)
MHO Adventures is thrilled to have dried eggs available—what an amazing addition to your backcountry meal plan! Compact and lightweight, with quick and easy preparation. Shelf life is approximately 18 months from packaging date. Store in a cool, dry place away from moisture or high humidity.

Skechers GOrun Trail Altitude - Element
($120; skechers.ca)
Blaze through the trails in supportive comfort with the Skechers GOrun Trail Altitude - Element shoe. This water-repellent trail-running mid-top sneaker features a durable leather and mesh upper with an Air-Cooled Goga Mat™ insole, lightweight ULTRA LIGHT midsole and a rugged traction system ready for any terrain.

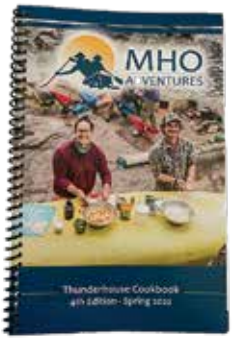


Skechers Escape Plan
($130; skechers.ca)
Tame the terrain in style and comfort with Skechers Escape Plan. This lace-up hiker features a water-repellent leather, synthetic and mesh upper with an Air-Cooled Memory Foam® insole and a Flexible high traction all-terrain rubber outsole.

Skechers Hillcrest - Vast Adventure
($95; skechers.ca)
Adventure in the great outdoors with the Skechers Hillcrest - Vast Adventure shoe. This casual walking trail sneaker features a leather and synthetic mesh upper in a lace-up front, memory foam cushioned insole and a shock-absorbing and speckled accent midsole.

Skechers Relaxed Fit Trego - Alpine Trail
($130; skechers.ca)
Start your own path in comfort and outdoor style with Skechers Relaxed Fit®: Trego - Alpine Trail. This lace-up hiking boot features a waterproof suede, synthetic and mesh upper with an Air-Cooled Memory Foam® insole. The Relaxed Fit® design offer a roomy comfort fit at toe and forefoot.

MODL – Water's First Multi-Tool
($39; modloutdoors.com)
MODL is LEGO for adventure—a buildable and modular ecosystem of gear designed to make adventure a more integral part of life. If you enjoy the outdoors and want gear that can do more, consider exploring the MODL System as well as their newest product, the Infinity Tool.



Thunderhouse Cookbook by MHO Adventures
($25; mhoadventures.com)
This on-trail cookbook is a must-have when heading out with expedition food supplied by MHO Adventures—and it's full of recipes to help with ideas and portions when packing your own food as well. This 44-page, spiral bound guide includes tips on re-hydrating, baking and managing your menu, as well as common ratios.

Mystery Ranch Coulee 25
($189; mysteryranch.com)
For fast-and-light day-outings into the mountains, the COULEE 25 integrates Mystery Ranch's classic three-zip design for instant access to gear. It also features two front and side stretch-woven pockets, the top lid has a zippered (and patented) Futura Yoke that easily adjusts to the torso length and there's a removable waist belt. Men's and women's available.

SABRE Protector® 22-Gram Dog & Coyote Attack Deterrent with Adjustable Hand Strap
($14.99; sabred.com)
The SABRE Protector Dog Spray with adjustable running hand strap is a dog-walking essential. Its maximum strength formula provides humane yet effective protection, approved by Health Canada. The 22-gram canister delivers five, one-second bursts and has a three-metre range to help protect you and your dog from harm.

Outdoor Minimalist: Waste Less Hiking, Backpacking and Camping
($21.95; rowman.com)
As hikers, campers, and backpackers—we love the outdoors. But with an excess of packaged food, single-use disposables and convenient consumables, are we loving the land to death? With actionable ways to waste less and implement low-impact practices, *Outdoor Minimalist* is the guide to helping outdoor enthusiasts be good stewards.

Klean Kanteen 16oz TKWide
($32.95; kleankanteen.com)
Now crafted from certified 90 per cent post-consumer recycled 18/8 stainless steel, Klean Kanteen's vacuum insulated TKWide line features TK Closure™ internal thread design and award-winning Climate Lock™ double-wall vacuum insulation for leading-edge thermal performance. TKWides are made for life with chip-resistant Klean Coat™ finish and five compatible low-profile lids with easy-carry swivel loops.

Moskinto, The Original Itch-Relief Patch
($16.86; moskintousa.com)
An easy-to-use itch-relief patch for mosquito bites. Drug-free and chemical-free. Moskinto starts to work instantly by relieving any itching and swelling from a bite. It is waterproof and lasts approximately four to seven days. Quick itch-relief with easy, fun and effective patches!

UltrAspire Lumen 800 Multi-Sport Light
($299.99: ultraspire.ca)
The Lumen 800 Multisport has two-spot cones that create a wide angle and project a focused beam for fast-paced adventures. This unit features UltrAspire 3D Lighting, which casts shadows across uneven surfaces giving you a better understanding of your terrain. It can be removed from the belt and attached to the included UltrAspire bike bracket or a headlamp band.

Blundstone #2056 All-Terrain in Rustic Brown
($259.95; blundstone.ca)
Blundstone has partnered with Vibram to create an exclusive outsole in the #2056 All-Terrain in Rustic Brown. This unique feature-packed Vibram sole takes Blundstone to the next level of enhanced slip-resistance while maintaining legendary Blundstone comfort and durability.

Merrell Moab 3 Mid Waterproof
($190; merrell.com)
For over 15 years, the Merrell® Moab has been the best-selling hiker in the world. Famous for its out-of-the-box comfort, its predecessors have enabled 25 million people to step further outdoors. The all-new Moab 3 features a new supportive insole, a softer cushioned midsole, and a best-in-class Vibram® outsole. The Moab 3 Mid WP features a waterproof membrane to keep your feet dry.

Icebug
TIND RB9X Men's* Women's
TIND RB9X® is a comfortable low-hiker, suitable for day hikes in the forest and mountains. This shoe has a roomy toe box and provides great traction on both dry and wet surfaces. The upper is suede leather/recycled rubber mudguard; the lining is 100 per cent recycled GRS certified PET Polyester. Plus, it features an EVA midsole with 20 per cent BLOOM® foam and a RB9X® rubber outsole with 15 per cent recycled rubber content.

Photo by Marcus Paladino
The hike to this secret wave in the Pacific Northwest begins with surfer Andy Jones advising to, "Be bold and start cold!" I take his advice and ditch my extra layer on this brisk early morning. By the time we reach the beach, I'm covered in sweat.

We've finally arrived, but as expected due to the rising swell in the forecast, the wave is only about knee-high. We set up our bright orange tarp to protect us from the rain, and then we sit and wait. And wait. And wait. Patience is running thin; morale is getting low. Six hours of kicking rocks is not helping the cause.

But in the distance, we see another lone surfer walking from across the beach toward our makeshift camp. We greet him in a friendly way, but he continues to stare straight ahead and intentionally snubs us as he walks past. It's almost as if he knew, because mere moments later the wave began to build and finally show its true form.

Details:
Model: Canon EOS-1D X Mark II
Lens: EF70-200mm f/4L USM
Shutter Speed: 1/1000 sec
Aperture: f/7.1
ISO: 640
Focal Length: 70mm

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