

A Great Summer

As summer winds down we have had to say goodbye to several of our staff as they return to university ... "au revoir"! A big thanx to all of our staff, year-round and seasonal, who have helped spread wolf and conservation awareness: Jax Hoggard, Alannah Duffy, Elke Van Breemen, Jenny Ma, Diana Lukinuk, Crystal Leonard, Ivanka Cankovic, & Sadie Parr.



Our major fundraiser this summer was the silent auction of a limited edition signed print by Robert Bateman. Mr. Bateman is a big supporter of wildlife conservation and we will make sure the money from his generous donation is put to good use.

This summer season our pack accomplished a great deal working together. Nancy Wilkin, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Environmental Stewardship Division has responded to our request for legalizing the use of Karelian Bear dogs in B.C. by saying that it is being considered as an option in the Renewed Wildlife Act:

"As you are aware, the ministry is looking at a broad range of issues within the Wildlife Act, with the goal of creating a new Act that is less specific and more enabling. The issue of using dogs in aversive conditioning to reduce conflicts with bears may be one that could benefit from a more flexible approach... Thanks again for bringing this issue to my attention."

How long will it take to create the new act? At this time, we need to keep the pressure on. You can help by sending letters and voicing the need for non-lethal bear management alternatives. We have also climbed on board with the David Suzuki Foundation to demonstrate the rich biodiversity in BC, and the need to protect it. British Columbia is home to **3,600 species and subspecies**, including: 76% of Canada's bird species, 70% of Canada's freshwater fish species, and 60% of Canada's conifer species.

This rich diversity is comparable to that of the Amazon or Great Barrier Reef. Wolves help maintain biodiversity in many ways. 1,300 of BC's species are at **risk** of being **extirpated** or going **extinct**. Of these, only 68 (approximately 5%) receive some form of protection. Unfortunately, the Grey wolf is NOT one of these.

Finally, we have had a great number of people using our sample letters to voice their opinions regarding the need for Buffer zones around our National Parks and legalizing Karelian bear dogs. We cannot expect to make these changes on our own; it takes each and every one of you to HELP US make a difference. A big howling thanks to all of you that have taken the time to write letters. Keep it up, because your voice counts!

An Ode to Panorama

In the spring of 2005, Northern Lights Wildlife found an exciting new way to reach both local and international visitors with our message of conservation. Panorama Mountain Village was already a bustling year-round resort, and the addition of our sister Wolf Centre perfectly rounded out their activities. Over the past two and a half years, the Wolf Centre in Panorama has connected with thousands of individuals, spreading the word about wolves - but also other important issues such as the long-opposed Jumbo Glacier Resort. The summer Kid's Camp and Thursday Night Howl programs have been widely successful, and they have given people of all ages memories they won't soon forget. It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye, but we

feel closing the doors in Panorama will soon open new ones. We hope that focusing our efforts in Golden and other aspects of education such as school programs and public events in the valley will make more of an impact. We are also very excited and pleased to give our former Panorama pack members, Moab and Keehta, more space and pack affection by bringing them to our main facility in Golden. We welcome you to visit Moab, Keehta and the rest of our pack at the Golden centre for many years to come. Thank you to all the visitors and Panorama staff for all your support and a truly memorable experience, we've had a howling good time!

Our howl nights have been a big hit at Panorama Mountain Village, and this is something we've decided to keep doing here in the Golden area. Come and HOWL with a wolf at Kicking Horse Mountain Resort in Golden, on the following dates: December 22nd and 29th, February 16th and March 15th. Howls start at 7pm. These events will include an interpretive talk about wolves and their importance in the ecosystem, followed by a group howl and song response from one of our wolves. There will also be hot cocoa and a bonfire to help keep warm and roast marshmallows. This is a fun family event for people of all ages. Come and join us for a howling good time.... Aaaooooooooooooo....!

Back to School!

Kids don't always want to return to school in September, but they would be a lot more excited to head back if there was a wolf there! School opening means that Shelley Black is heading back into the classrooms of the surrounding area, prepared to offer a fun-filled lesson on Life Sciences with a special focus on wolves. These programs are interactive, educational, and FUN!!! If you are interested in having an in-class presentation or experiencing a field trip to the Wolf Centre, contact us for more information or to book a program.

Sometimes she'll even bring a wolf along. Now that's "show and tell"!

Wolf Awareness Week

Wolf Awareness Week is October 14-20, 2007. Our project for this year's wolf awareness involves the development of a Wolf Coalition across Canada. For decades several small organizations such as our have existed to raise awareness, and we believe that if we join our voices in unison we can have a greater impact. We are calling on all Canadian wolf organizations and conservation groups to stand together and demand that our National Parks obtain buffer zones. By improving relationships and networking opportunities, we can form a stronger activist base for wolf conservation through outreach and education.

We strongly believe that the first, obtainable goal for wolf conservation is the implementation of buffer zones around Parks, where wolves cannot be hunted or trapped year-round. Currently, there are few restrictions on the killing of wolves outside of Park boundaries, and the buffer zone would be a way to "virtually" extend these protected areas.

As part of your discovery of Wolf Awareness, take the time to learn about the Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative. It was inspired by the journey of a wolf, and its goal is the conservation of "wildlife corridors" up and down a large portion of our continent. www.v2y.com



The Origin of the People

A young mother with two children was trying desperately to escape from her enemies. After traveling fast for many hours, they reached the shore of a great lake and the mother sank to her knees in despair. Without a canoe, she and her children were trapped.

A wolf appeared on the shore, wagging his tail. Several times he walked out into the water and then came back to her, as if trying to tell her to follow him. Finally the wolf came to her and licked the tears from her face. He looked at the water, took a few steps and looked back at the woman.

Surely they would all drown, she thought, but if they stayed here they would be killed. On trembling legs, the women led her children into the lake. As they continued to walk farther out, the women was amazed to find the water never rose above her ankles. After two days of walking they finally reached the shore. Although they were exhausted, they were safe now, thanks to the wolf.

And what a difference their rescue would make to the world, for the oldest boy was destined to become the father of the Inuit people, while from his younger brother would come the Chipewyan people.

Shelley Black, our Alpha female and amateur photographer extraordinaire, has been playing with her new camera, and here are some fun shots that may never make it to a coffee table book!



Photo Fun

Become A Sponsor

Help us help wolves! You can adopt a wolf individual from our pack, and receive updates about your wolf... or you can become a pack member and receive general updates about the pack and the wolf centre. Your generosity helps with the huge responsibility of feeding and caring for our wolf pack, putting together our Edu-kit, as well as helping us to reach our goals to promote wolf awareness, help to educate people, and help change legislation to protect our wilderness.

Adopt A Wolf \$ 75

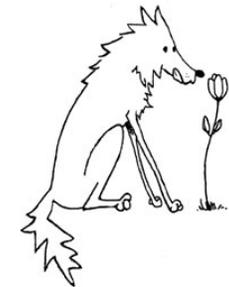
Pack Membership

\$250 = Wolf Pack
\$100 = Alpha Member
\$ 50 = Beta Member
\$ 20 = Puppy Member

Check out our website www.northernlightswildlife.com for pictures and info about the individual wolves.

WE ACCEPT MEAT DONATIONS!

PELTS & SKULLS: We are looking for donations of wolf or bear pelts and skulls for putting together Edu-kits for our school programs. Pelts and skulls are wonderful hands-on tools for teaching kids about scary predators and other "untouchables". Do you know any hunters or trappers? Let us know!



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BUFFER ZONES AROUND NATIONAL PARKS to protect wolves

BACKGROUND & MAJOR POINTS

Wolves are ecologically important to our wilderness as a top predator and keystone species. Their presence and numbers indicate intact wilderness and a healthy ecosystem. Where wolves have decreased in numbers, biodiversity is also greatly decreased.

Currently, wolves are protected within the boundaries of National Parks. Within the boundaries wolves suffer high mortality rates due to collisions with vehicles and trains, as well as disturbance from human activities and facilities. Outside of the Park, wolves face the extra risks of hunting, trapping, and poisoning. Only 5 % of wolves in the Central Rockies die of natural causes; and have less than 1% chance of surviving 10 years². Most Park wolves are killed by people.

Due to a limited amount of habitat suited for prey along the valley bottoms, wolves in the Rockies require vast territories. Wolves will ALWAYS be partially dependent upon adjacent provincial lands used by landowners, recreationists, etc.

Cover these major points in your correspondence:

- The wolf population in the Central Rocky Mountains is among the lowest density of wolves in the world
- Our protected areas within the Rockies are not big enough to maintain a healthy population of wolves
- The territory of every wolf pack in the National Parks extends OUTSIDE of the protected areas
- Human-caused mortality is the biggest threat to long-term health of wolf populations in the Central Rocky Mountains

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Mr. _____

As the number of grey wolves declines in the Central Rockies, a cascade effect is being observed. Small mammals, fish, insects, birds, amphibians, ungulates, tree species and vegetation all suffer¹. As a keystone species, wolves maintain the balance and diversity within our natural ecosystems.

Wolves are protected within our National Parks, but their total annual mortality exceeds their total annual gain. Over 4 years (winter 1999-spring 2004), 13 adult wolves died WITHIN the boundaries of Banff National Park, which greatly exceeds a sustainable rate of loss². A wolf pack living within Kootenay National Park requires a territory of 2800 km² because only ¼ of the valley is suitable for prey³. Wolves collared in Kootenay National Park travel as far as 250 km outside of Park boundaries³. Even with sufficient prey and habitat within a park, the number of wolves declines as they travel outside the boundaries; hunting and trapping are major contributors. A year-round ban on hunting/trapping in the areas surrounding National Parks will likely reduce the annual mortality rate of wolves, keeping their population stable.

Grey wolves are an endangered species worldwide. It is unacceptable for your government to sit by and watch these top predators disappear. **A healthy wilderness depends on wolves.** We need to take measures to save the wolves in the Central Rocky Mountain regions of Canada.

Wilderness tourism can mean long-term financial benefits for our country; as an example, the reintroduced wolves of the Greater Yellowstone area benefits the U.S. Northern Rockies' economy to the tune of **\$35-million tourist dollars** annually⁴. We can improve our conservation efforts and image, attracting millions, by protecting the long-term health of our wilderness. **It is time for action**, not further studies. I look forward to your response on creating a 50 km buffer zone around protected areas where wolves cannot be hunted.

Yours truly,
(Your Name)

1. Hebblewhite et al., "Human Activity mediates a Trophic Cascade caused by Wolves," Ecology 86 (8), August 2005
2. Banff National Park of Canada, HJD 7/30/2004
3. Kootenay National Park of Canada, Natural Wonders and Cultural Treasures, accessed June 2007
4. Defenders of Wildlife (defenders.org), 2006 statistics, accessed June 2007

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CHASING WILDLIFE WITH DOGS

SAMPLE LETTER WITH MAJOR POINTS

Dear [government official's name],

Please see reverse for names and addresses!

We understand that the Ministry of Environment is reviewing the Wildlife Act, with the intent of introducing revisions in the legislature in 2008. We strongly encourage you to allow Conservation Officers (CO) in British Columbia (BC) to use trained dogs to chase wildlife away from human areas, which entails an amendment to Section 78.

Section 78 of the BC Wildlife Act states that "a person commits an offence if the person causes or allows a dog to hunt or pursue wildlife or an endangered species or threatened species" *except in accordance with hunting regulations* (Government of British Columbia 1996).

Bear hunting with dogs is allowed in only two provinces in Canada: Ontario and BC. BC hunting regulations for 2005-2006 permit the use of dogs for hunting all game, in many cases off-leash, during hunting seasons (Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection 2005, p. 17, under Section A: "...Unleashed dogs may be used to hunt small game, lynx, bobcat, grizzly bear, black bear or cougar").

So... pursuing bears with dogs for the purposes of conservation is NOT permitted, although off-leash chases by hunters IS permitted. Since an exception has been made for hunting, we are asking for another exception to be made for conservation.

In the fall of 2006, Norm McDonald, our MLA, presented a petition on our behalf. The petition called for legalizing the use of trained Karelian Bear Dogs by COs in BC through an amendment to Section 78 of the Wildlife Act.

The use of Karelian Bear Dogs as a tool by COs may reduce the appalling destruction of close to 1,000 bears each year in this province. Some bears are translocated - a costly and unsuccessful solution. By the Ministry's own admission, "The use of translocation of animals as a response to wildlife conflicts has proven to be ineffective". Most bears are killed - the cheapest and easiest solution.

There are many examples of the success in using trained dogs to "teach" or "condition" bears and other wildlife. This method has been used to manage human/wildlife conflict for over a decade in places like: Alberta, Utah, Montana, Nevada and California.

In its Human-Wildlife Conflict Prevention Strategy, the Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection promises to "develop and facilitate implementation of innovative solutions to prevent human-wildlife conflicts," and to "change legislation as needed" to support such solutions (2003, p. 16). The Bear Shepherding program provides the government with an opportunity to uphold these promises.

Please add your support to our petition for the amendment to Section 78 of the BC Wildlife Act.

Sincerely,
Your Name

Tips from the David Suzuki Foundation about contacting your political representatives

One letter represents more than 1,000 opinions at the federal level. The more time and thought put into the communication, the greater your opinion is valued.

- Letters are better mailed than faxed
- Faxes are better than e-mail
- Writing is generally better than phoning
- Something is better than nothing!

TIPS!!!

- You do not need a long, detailed letter
- You do not have to be an expert
- Attach an article or short summary of a study that makes your point
- Request a specific action as well as expressing a concern
- Point out that the priorities the politician has expressed are not at odds with protecting the environment