

A close-up photograph of two elk heads touching their noses in a forest setting. The elk have dark brown fur and are looking down. The background is a soft-focus green forest.

Annual Report

2017 in Review



Yellowstone to Yukon
Conservation Initiative

The Yellowstone to Yukon region



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Our vision

An interconnected system of wild lands and water stretching from Yellowstone to Yukon, harmonizing the needs of people with those of nature.

Our mission

Connecting and protecting habitat from Yellowstone to Yukon so that people and nature can thrive.

Big landscape requires big vision

A letter from our President and Chief Scientist

Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) Conservation Initiative's grand vision — of an interconnected system of wild lands and waters from Yellowstone to Yukon, harmonizing the needs of people with those of nature — takes time, resources and commitment. Effective large-landscape conservation requires invested and interested individuals. It goes beyond financial contributions to energy, knowledge and relationships, all key components of our everyday work. It also requires healthy doses of passion, hope and perseverance.

Just as we envision connected landscapes, we also work to connect the people living and working in these places to take care of the land. Bringing diverse voices and varied collaborators together, linking up decades of expertise and knowledge from all sectors and integrating the science that guides conservation action are vital to securing the large intact ecosystems that research tells us are so important for so many species to survive.

This annual report throws a spotlight on some of the many organizations and individuals working toward a sustainable future. These groups and people have contributed time, funds and expert knowledge to the bigger picture and we thank them for it.

Thanks to your support and shared vision for a healthy landscape, we are able to make the progress you can read about in these pages.

Without you, the Yellowstone to Yukon vision would just be one big, crazy idea. With you, this vision is becoming a reality. Together we're working to make a better place for all.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi Hilty".

Jodi Hilty, PhD

President
and Chief Scientist

My family believes firmly in maintaining wild lands and supporting the biological diversity of the planet, including all levels of natural life. Y2Y is an important long-term approach to saving our environment.

— Noah O., Y2Y donor | Wyoming



Key advancements you made possible



Conservation gains are not possible alone. They are the result of collaborative work with multiple partners, such as Defenders of Wildlife; University of Northern British Columbia; West Moberly First Nations; Salteau First Nations; Road Watch BC; Idaho Transportation Department; First Nations of Na-Cho Nyak Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin; chapters of Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society; Yukon Conservation Society and various other conservation and sportsman groups.

Thanks to partners like these, we were able to provide sound science, bring diverse partners and stakeholders together, give essential strategic and communications advice and support, lead and participate in campaigns and on-the-ground actions, and in myriad other ways make significant contributions to the following conservation achievements.



Protected areas and connected lands

- In December, supported partners at a Canada Supreme Court ruling that found the Yukon government must complete consultation and implement a land-use plan that will protect 80 per cent of the 26,255-square-mile (68,000-square-kilometer) Peel watershed;
- In February, protected 390 square miles (156 square kilometres) in southern Alberta with the establishment of Castle Wildland Provincial Park and Castle Provincial Park.



Advancing science and policy

- Provided travellers with a smartphone app to report roadkill and wildlife sightings along B.C.'s Highway 3;
- Planned habitat restoration work for connectivity and climate change resilience in North Idaho's Boundary Creek;
- Released International Union for Conservation of Nature report, co-authored by Dr. Jodi Hilty and Harvey Locke, which endorses the protection of large intact landscapes as crucial for addressing climate change;
- Released the Strong Foundations report, recommending ways to strengthen federal environmental and regulatory processes in Canada;
- Helped fund Idaho's first wildlife overpass, to be built by 2021 on Highway 21;
- Surveyed for improvements for wildlife connectivity on Highway 3's Lizard Creek Bridge near Fernie, B.C.

Corridors and coexistence

- Helped install 41 new electric-fence projects in northwest Montana's Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem, an important core habitat for grizzlies;
- Created a valuable model on an interactive map to share select coexistence successes across the region for other communities seeking similar solutions;
- Identified 15 wildlife-vehicle collision hot spots in northern B.C., information that will keep wildlife moving and our highways safer;
- Reduced wildlife conflict and bear deaths by working with partners to educate communities, farmers and ranchers in Montana about managing wildlife attractants;
- Continued to share the success story of wildlife crossings in Banff National Park, where fencing, structures and signage have reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions by 80 percent on a 50-mile (82-km) stretch over 20 years.





Protected areas and connected lands

Overview

A major component of Y2Y's work is identifying and protecting critical wildlife habitats that are at risk of development and then finding ways to protect them. Some areas, such as B.C.'s Peace region, have less than four-per-cent protection. However, the network of protected areas between Yellowstone National Park and Canada's Yukon includes national, state and provincial parks, managed to support wildlife and ecosystems. These areas have increased significantly over the last 25 years. Protected areas are essential to keeping wildlife populations connected and landscapes healthy, and for the recreational and cultural needs of people.

How we do it

Thanks to our steadfast donors, Y2Y is leading and supporting its partners to gain additional protection for ecologically valuable landscapes in the Yellowstone to Yukon region. This work includes scientific analysis, gathering community and political support and looking for opportunities to protect key habitat for a broad range of species.

“Yellowstone to Yukon is the last great big animal corridor in North America and everything possible should be done to preserve it. The decision about Alberta’s Castle parks by the provincial government is a huge move in the right direction.”

— Robert S., Y2Y donor | Alberta



Your voices were heard

In February 2017, after more than 40 years of pressure from Y2Y and other groups, the Alberta government announced the final boundaries for Castle Wildland Provincial Park and Castle Provincial Park. Located just north of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, these protected areas serve as a crucial link for wide-ranging wildlife and conserve prime habitat in one of Canada’s most biologically rich landscapes.

Solutions that help wildlife and people thrive

Overview

Corridors, connection and coexistence are at the heart of what we do across this 2,000-mile (3,200-km) landscape. Helping species move across the region is key to the long-term health of wildlife, waters and lands. As this occurs — especially in busy valley bottoms and growing mountain communities — human-wildlife interactions may increase. We must take into consideration the challenges of coexistence when we work to restore connectivity.

How we do it

We continue to make strides in helping humans and wildlife live or pass near one another. Since our inception, we've been working with partners on coexistence projects across the Yellowstone to Yukon region, where, as human populations grow and species such as grizzlies and wolves re-enter their historic ranges, our collective knowledge and tools are increasingly important for the safety of both wildlife and people.

One bear's legacy

In July 2017, grizzly 148 was translocated to northern Alberta after her persistent entry into urban areas in and outside Banff National Park. This bear's struggles — and ultimately death in B.C. — reflect the threats to maintaining wildlife connectivity in the busy Bow Valley. Her story shows the need to conserve grizzlies beyond park boundaries, as they often move in and out of protected areas. Bear 148's legacy for communities dealing with similar issues emphasizes the need for different jurisdictions, residents, and visitors to work together. We will all ensure her legacy lives on.





‘When I moved to Banff, learning about the natural world was an important part for me in establishing a sense of place and a larger appreciation for the mountain landscape. Protecting the wildlife that make this busy little valley and beyond their home is a wonderful cause.’

— Kiley T., Y2Y donor | Alberta

Advancing science and policy

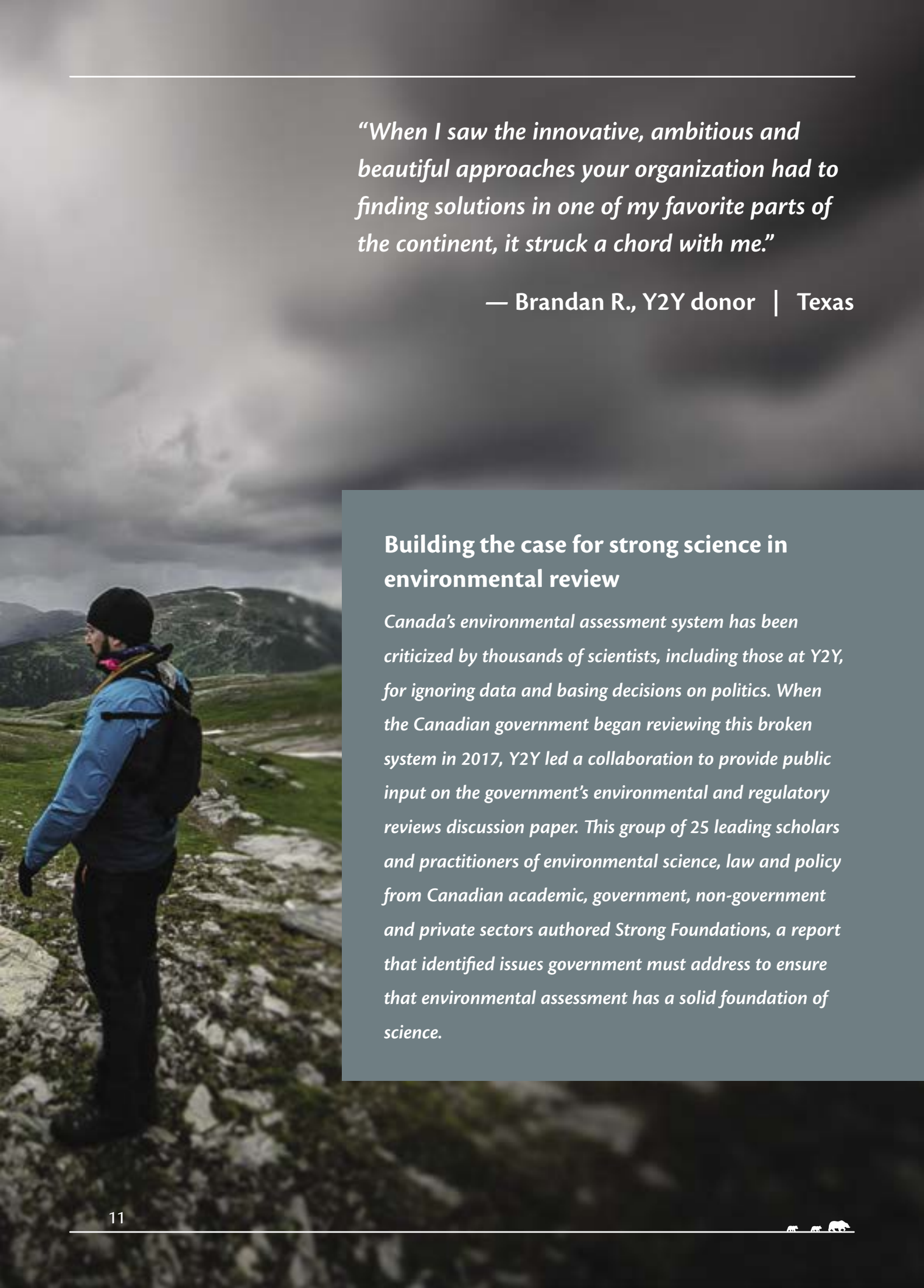
Overview

Scientific solutions, political will and courageous communities are all regularly part of addressing environmental challenges across the Yellowstone to Yukon region. Providing resources and support to partners allows us to expand their work's impact or connect it to the bigger global picture. Coming together is part of making conservation solutions become reality.

How we do it

With the support of donors like you, Y2Y conducts and commissions the necessary research to support our collective work. While our partner groups and stakeholders often know how to resolve issues, implementation can take years of policy wrangling and political footwork. And with scientists on staff, serving on the board and working as advisers — along with engaged supporters who contribute citizen science — Y2Y is well positioned to reach the decision-makers who can make large-landscape conservation ideas political reality.





“When I saw the innovative, ambitious and beautiful approaches your organization had to finding solutions in one of my favorite parts of the continent, it struck a chord with me.”

— Brandan R., Y2Y donor | Texas

Building the case for strong science in environmental review

Canada’s environmental assessment system has been criticized by thousands of scientists, including those at Y2Y, for ignoring data and basing decisions on politics. When the Canadian government began reviewing this broken system in 2017, Y2Y led a collaboration to provide public input on the government’s environmental and regulatory reviews discussion paper. This group of 25 leading scholars and practitioners of environmental science, law and policy from Canadian academic, government, non-government and private sectors authored Strong Foundations, a report that identified issues government must address to ensure that environmental assessment has a solid foundation of science.

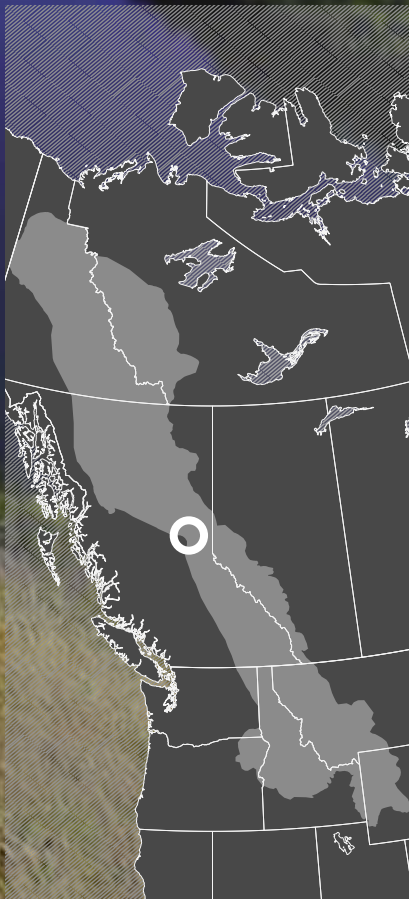
Communities coming together for conservation

Overview

It takes engaged community members to accomplish conservation goals, and Y2Y works to inspire others to take part in similar work or connect with those who are. Many issues perceived to be local are relevant elsewhere across the Yellowstone to Yukon region and lessons learned in one community can apply elsewhere. Your commitment to Y2Y enables us to partner with other conservation groups, scientists and citizens to stitch together this landscape.

How we do it

Y2Y helps local communities understand the importance of their efforts to a healthy Yellowstone to Yukon landscape. We also bring partners together to share learning across the region. In 2017, we supported many existing community conservation efforts and amplified the voices and beliefs of conservation groups, local landowners, businesses, government agencies, Indigenous communities, scientists and others.



Like you, we're in it for the long haul

Site C was approved by the B.C. government in December 2017 despite years of work by Y2Y and partners to halt construction of this dam. The decision was deeply disappointing. The Y2Y community helped make the dam an election issue and amplified the voices of Peace residents to the national level, and the issue of Site C went back to court in 2018. While Site C continues to be challenged in the court by First Nations partners, Y2Y remains in the Peace region for the long haul, to carry out our mission to connect and protect habitat so that people and nature can thrive. We seek to restore balance to this heavily industrialized landscape by increasing conservation and protection in partnership with First Nations and Peace communities.

Partner power: Y2Y grants back important work

When you support Y2Y, you contribute to conservation efforts across the region. In 2017, thanks to your help, Y2Y backed partners and conservation projects throughout the Yellowstone to Yukon region. Here is some of the work these groups completed thanks to that support:

A

Studying old growth forests, West Kootenay EcoSociety

This project analyzes the Kootenay region to determine if the current type and extent of old growth management areas are appropriate and assesses whether those management areas are effectively protecting actual old growth forests.

D

Planning for landscape health, CPAWS Southern Alberta

Public land-use planning in southern Alberta involves working with local communities. The Porcupine Hills Coalition has been working for more than two years to achieve conservation objectives, including outreach, along the southeastern slopes of the Rockies.

B

Protecting a significant connection, Fraser Headwaters Alliance

Funds helped upgrade trails in this key corridor. Full protection of the Goat River wilderness would link the Cariboo Mountains between Bowron Lake Provincial Park and West Twin Provincial Park, protecting habitat for mountain caribou, bull trout, grizzlies and Chinook salmon.

E

Building bear poles in the backcountry, People and Carnivores

Preventing human-bear conflicts in the backcountry is a major part of reconnecting grizzly populations. This partnership provided support for the installation of 10 bear poles and two steel structures to improve backcountry food storage for recreationists.

C

Sharing science with youth, Doris Florig

This art installation used fiber and felt to introduce schoolchildren to gravel-bed river ecosystems, which are integral to large-landscape and general-habitat health. The Braided River brought a tactile learning experience about the importance of these rivers to dozens of young learners.

F

Birds-eye view of landscapes, Eco Flight

Eco Flight provided 36 flight missions for 163 passengers including Y2Y staff, partners, donors, media, politicians and more in the southern reaches of the Yellowstone to Yukon region, to support restoring, connecting and protecting these key areas.

G *Reducing habitat fragmentation, Hell's Canyon Council*

The Wild Connections project seeks to reduce habitat fragmentation in a Y2Y priority area and define where the highest levels of defensive advocacy work should take place to protect existing habitats.

H *Amplifying opposition to a damaging project, Peace Valley Environmental Association and Sierra Club B.C.*

Work included media, communications and outreach highlighting the economic, ecological and cultural impacts of the Site C dam and supporting strategy development with regional and provincial partners.

I *Figuring out the human footprint, University of Northern British Columbia*

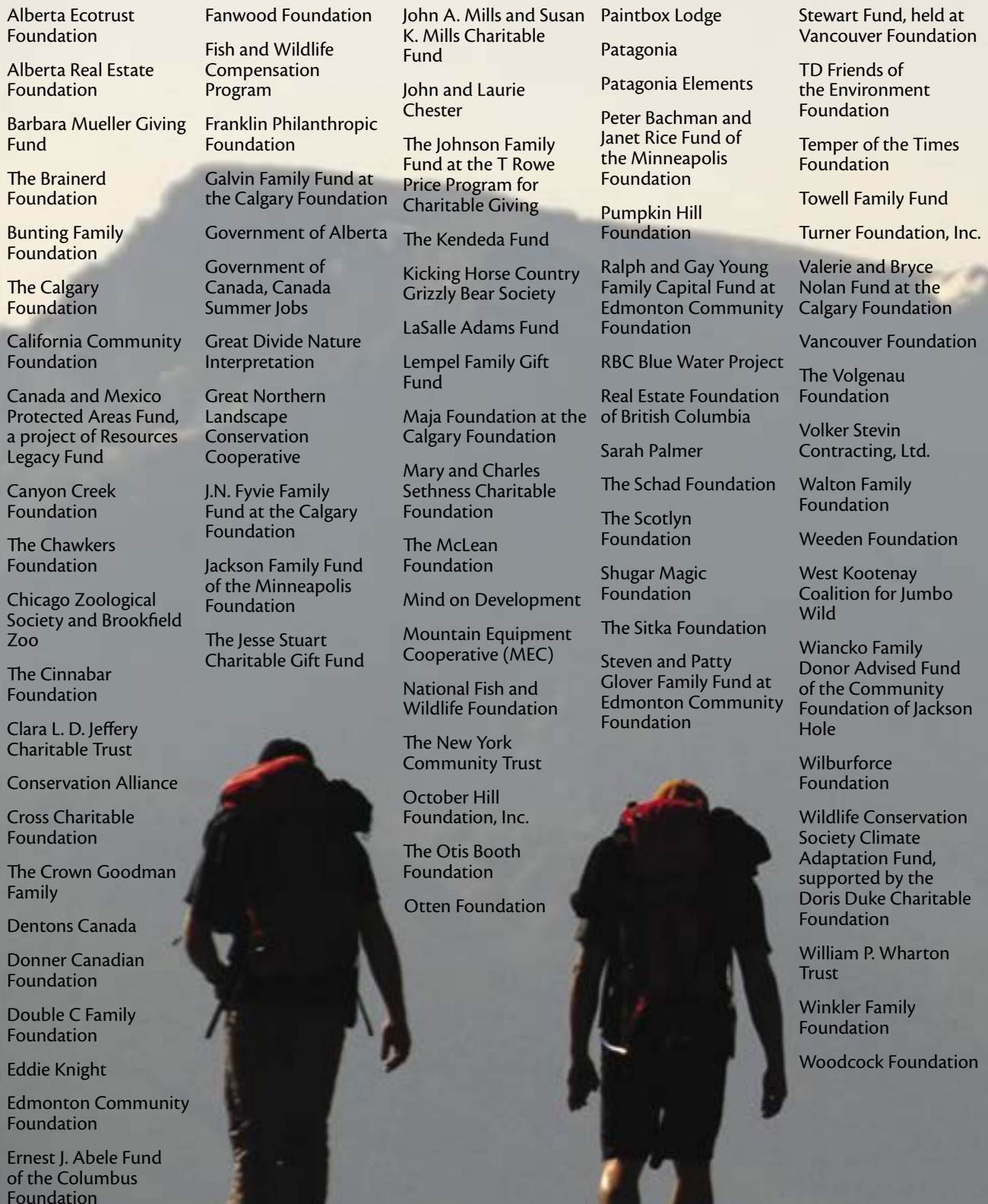
This project examined the human footprint in the Peace River Valley and Hart ranges (Wild Harts) of northern B.C. The data is critical to advancing work on connecting protected areas in the region and effectively managing endangered species, such as mountain caribou.

J *Restoring a creek, Lower Kootenay Band*

Restoration activities were carried out — including planting native sedges and willows — along Branch 18 Creek, a 984-foot (300-meter) section above the confluence with Freeman Creek in the area known as Freeman Meadow, helping improve a key riparian habitat.



People who make it possible



Alberta Ecotrust Foundation	Fanwood Foundation	John A. Mills and Susan K. Mills Charitable Fund	Paintbox Lodge	Stewart Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation
Alberta Real Estate Foundation	Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program	John and Laurie Chester	Patagonia	TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Barbara Mueller Giving Fund	Franklin Philanthropic Foundation	The Johnson Family Fund at the T Rowe Price Program for Charitable Giving	Patagonia Elements	Temper of the Times Foundation
The Brainerd Foundation	Galvin Family Fund at the Calgary Foundation	The Kendeda Fund	Peter Bachman and Janet Rice Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation	Towell Family Fund
Bunting Family Foundation	Government of Alberta	Kicking Horse Country Grizzly Bear Society	Pumpkin Hill Foundation	Turner Foundation, Inc.
The Calgary Foundation	Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs	LaSalle Adams Fund	Ralph and Gay Young Family Capital Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation	Valerie and Bryce Nolan Fund at the Calgary Foundation
California Community Foundation	Great Divide Nature Interpretation	Lempel Family Gift Fund	RBC Blue Water Project	Vancouver Foundation
Canada and Mexico Protected Areas Fund, a project of Resources Legacy Fund	Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative	Maja Foundation at the Calgary Foundation	Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia	The Volgenau Foundation
Canyon Creek Foundation	J.N. Fyvie Family Fund at the Calgary Foundation	Mary and Charles Sethness Charitable Foundation	Sarah Palmer	Volker Stevin Contracting, Ltd.
The Chawkers Foundation	Jackson Family Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation	The McLean Foundation	The Schad Foundation	Walton Family Foundation
Chicago Zoological Society and Brookfield Zoo	The Jesse Stuart Charitable Gift Fund	Mind on Development	The Scotlyn Foundation	Weeden Foundation
The Cinnabar Foundation		Mountain Equipment Cooperative (MEC)	Shugar Magic Foundation	West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild
Clara L. D. Jeffery Charitable Trust		National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	The Sitka Foundation	Wiancko Family Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole
Conservation Alliance		The New York Community Trust	Steven and Patty Glover Family Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation	Wilburforce Foundation
Cross Charitable Foundation		October Hill Foundation, Inc.		Wildlife Conservation Society Climate Adaptation Fund, supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
The Crown Goodman Family		The Otis Booth Foundation		William P. Wharton Trust
Dentons Canada		Otten Foundation		Winkler Family Foundation
Donner Canadian Foundation				Woodcock Foundation
Double C Family Foundation				
Eddie Knight				
Edmonton Community Foundation				
Ernest J. Abele Fund of the Columbus Foundation				

2017 financial highlights

The Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) group is comprised of three organizations; Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative Society, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative Foundation. Each organization is governed by an independent Board of Directors. All three organizations strive to work seamlessly to fund, facilitate and operate programs and activities to fulfill the Y2Y

mission. The accompanying financial highlights presents the information of the Y2Y group.

We are supported by a broad network of foundations, government agencies, businesses and individuals from around the world. Thanks to their generosity, we completed the year in a strong financial position. In 2017, more than 80 per cent of Y2Y's revenue directly supported conservation projects and campaigns across the region.

Balance Sheet, December 31, 2017 (USD)

Assets

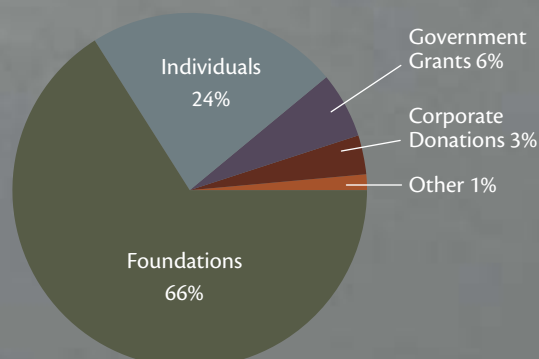
Cash in the Bank	3,351,855
Investments	552,397
Accounts Receivable and Prepaids	192,682
Total Assets	4,096,934

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	117,503
Deferred Revenue	2,109,284
Net Assets	1,870,147
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	4,096,934

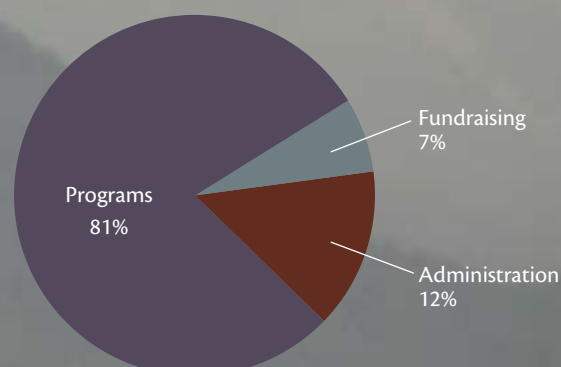
How Y2Y is Funded

Income: 3,011,143



How Your Donation is Used

Total Expenditures: 2,952,863





Global support

As a transboundary conservation organization, we have the pleasure of working across five American states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming), two Canadian provinces (British Columbia and Alberta), two Canadian territories (Yukon and Northwest Territories) and a multitude of Indigenous territories.

Our big, bold vision has attracted international attention from media and supporters from around the world. Your help comes in many forms: liking and following us on social media channels; writing and calling to advocate for change; donating time, talent or funds to our work; and more.

And it's not just individuals who are helping. Foundations and businesses from across North America support our work. Wildlife knows no borders and neither do you.

You power us up. Your voices, your donations, your support. Thank you for being there.

While the base of our support comes from close to the Yellowstone to Yukon region in western North America, we are lucky to have fans from every American state and Canadian province and territory, as well as around the globe: 74 countries and counting!

Whether you heard of us on a visit to the Yellowstone to Yukon region, attended one of our events, read an article about us, saw a documentary on television or heard about us in a biology class, we appreciate your support.

It is our privilege to work with you to protect and connect one of our planet's richest ecological areas. Your support highlights and amplifies a globally relevant model that inspires other actions around the world, showing why connecting and protecting are essential to our planet thriving.



"It warms my heart to hear from others across this continent committed to our beautiful Earth and the wild animals that roam."

— Ginger T., Y2Y donor | Texas

"It is gratifying to find and support this organization, which works on behalf of wildlife and wild places, which uses top-notch science, and which educates and develops relationships to achieve their unique vision."

— Roberta J., Y2Y donor | B.C.

CANADA

Unit 200, 1350 Railway Avenue

Canmore, AB T1W 1P6

UNITED STATES

P.O. Box 157

Bozeman, MT 59771-0157

Tel (403) 609-2666

Fax (403) 609-2667

Toll-free 1-800-966-7920

info@y2y.net

y2y.net



Yellowstone to Yukon
Conservation Initiative

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