

Impact Report



Yellowstone to Yukon
Conservation Initiative

2020 IN REVIEW





**We believe in
the power of a big,
bold idea.**

Y2Y’s ambitious but achievable mission is to connect and protect habitat from Yellowstone to Yukon so people and nature can thrive.

Photo: Jacob W. Frank/National Park Service

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Why connectivity?

The Yellowstone to Yukon region is one of the world’s last strongholds for nature, but science tells us that protected “islands” of habitat are not big enough to ensure the survival of iconic species such as grizzly bears and wolverines. They need large-scale protected areas connected through viable “corridors” to avoid genetic isolation, so that they can survive and thrive.



Photo: Jim Peaco/National Park Service



Thoughts on our interconnectedness

From Y2Y President and Chief Scientist, Dr. Jodi Hilty

2020 was an extraordinary year, and in many ways an awakening. It highlighted our interconnectedness and the impacts that ripple from the local to the global scale — whether from disease, or from social and economic inequities, or from people pushing for change.

For Y2Y, it was naturally a year of uncertainty, but also of learning and coming together in new ways. It also brought hope, because those of you who could step up, did so — despite everything else that was going on, or perhaps because of it. Together we achieved extraordinary progress, some of which is reflected here in this report.

As I look back on 2020, I want to thank you for your support through whatever role you were able to play, as you made the roles that we play in large landscape connectivity possible: as a leader, a model, a convener, a catalyst, and as a supportive partner and capacity-builder. I also want to share with you some of the important lessons we have been learning as an organization — in those various roles — which are in themselves also interconnected:



It takes a community

The Y2Y mission recognizes people are part of nature, and depend upon it. Over the past year, many of us have been more aware than ever of the benefits we get from nature, but it has also become clearer how invested we must be — as partners, policymakers, donors, funders, advocates, recreationists and much more — at every scale to protect nature.

Whether we are working to ensure connected habitats for wildlife, to challenge policies or practices that could devastate the landscape, to provide effective models to address climate change, or to set and achieve global targets for protected areas, we must work collaboratively. That means bringing together diverse expertise and perspectives — weaving science and traditional knowledge, breaking down silos within our organizations and communities — for maximum impact.

Messengers matter

We all want to hear from those who matter to us, and whose opinions we trust. People want to hear from their families, friends and peers; governments want to hear from their constituents, especially those who align with them on other issues. That’s another reason why it’s so important for us at Y2Y to listen to and collaborate with diverse partners, and to consider who is best positioned to influence outcomes. It’s also why we must be visible and vocal allies, whether by supporting Indigenous-led conservation, championing environmental and social justice, or letting others we recreate with know that it matters how, where and when we choose to pursue our outdoor adventures.

“Collaboration moves at the speed of trust”

Some of the successes reflected in this report have been years in the making. As we herald the construction of increasing numbers of wildlife overpasses, underpasses and associated fencing, we must remember that this represents decades of research, data gathering, relationship building and development of technical expertise. As we celebrate our First Nations partners as they lead the way with new Indigenous-led protected and conserved areas, we must respect the time and effort it takes to build authentic, trusting relationships, to truly reconcile, and to explore new ways forward together.

Thank you again for having the trust, patience and commitment to journey forward with us, and to leave a natural legacy for us all, and those to come, to enjoy.

Warmly,

Our overarching goals helping us to realize our mission, are:

- to protect core habitats including our precious headwaters;
- to keep those habitats connected through functional wildlife corridors — or to restore them where necessary;
- to support and enable thriving communities that live in harmony with nature; and
- to inspire others to engage in similar work.

Since 1993, the actions of Y2Y, our community of supporters like you, and more than 460 partners, have resulted in a more than 80 percent increase in protected area growth.

It takes a community to make enduring conservation progress. Every project we outline in this report is only made possible by support from donors and funders, collaboration with partners, and the advocacy and action of community members.

Thanks to partnerships and our network of collaborators, we are able to work in coalitions, lead projects, or provide support in the following ways:

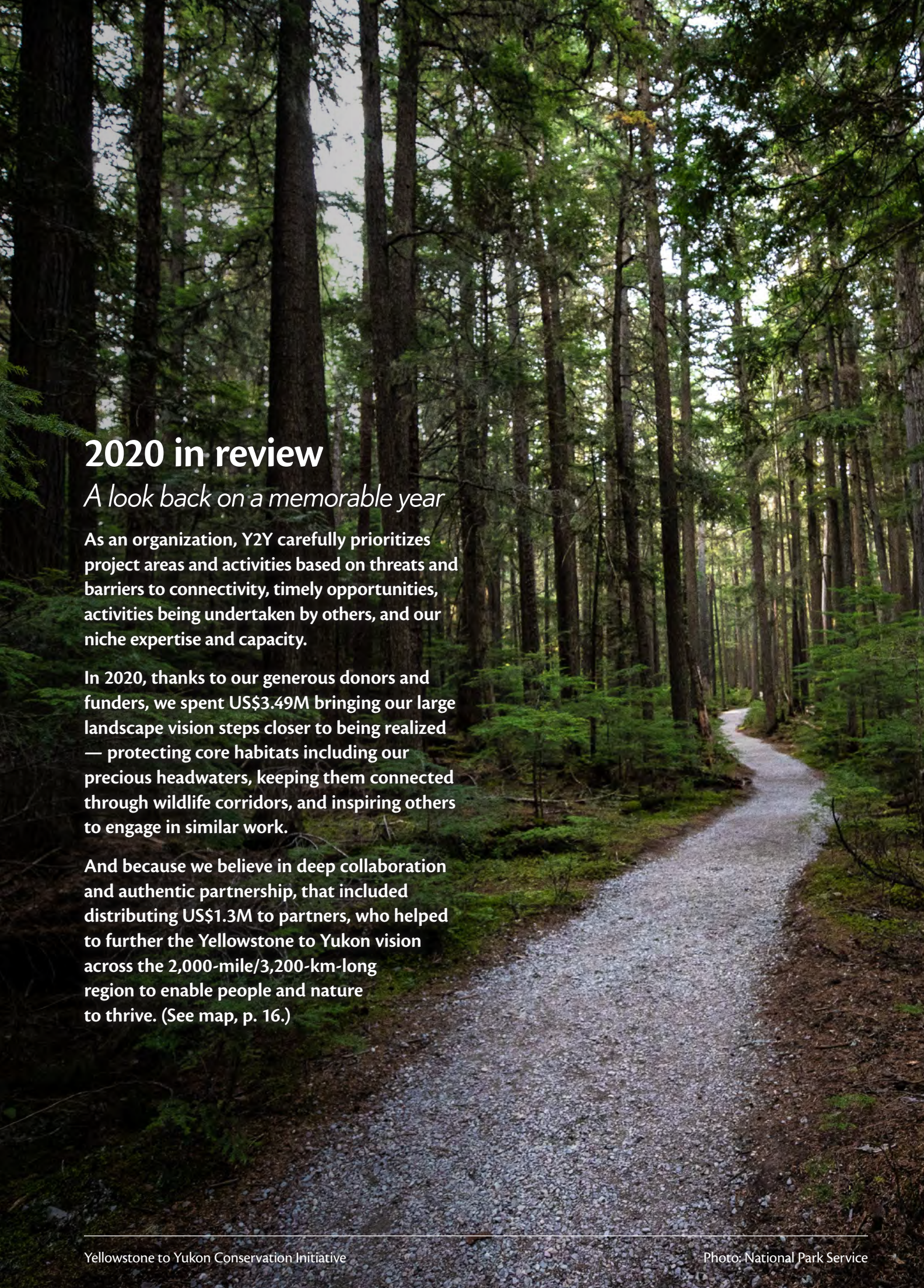
Delivering credible, accessible science and knowledge through creating, commissioning, synthesizing and communicating it;

Strengthening partners and networks by providing capacity support that includes building relationships and solutions, funding, convening, and providing strategic support;

Inspiring and mobilizing influencers, including individuals and communities, to take action on conservation issues, through sharing the Y2Y vision, organizing, advocating, and creating replicable models;

Working in a targeted way across four scales: local, regional, national and global, addressing both bottom-up and top-down levers to advance conservation.

Thank you for your support!
People like you power our work.



2020 in review

A look back on a memorable year

As an organization, Y2Y carefully prioritizes project areas and activities based on threats and barriers to connectivity, timely opportunities, activities being undertaken by others, and our niche expertise and capacity.

In 2020, thanks to our generous donors and funders, we spent US\$3.49M bringing our large landscape vision steps closer to being realized — protecting core habitats including our precious headwaters, keeping them connected through wildlife corridors, and inspiring others to engage in similar work.

And because we believe in deep collaboration and authentic partnership, that included distributing US\$1.3M to partners, who helped to further the Yellowstone to Yukon vision across the 2,000-mile/3,200-km-long region to enable people and nature to thrive. (See map, p. 16.)



Some of the important conservation wins that your support of Y2Y and its partners in 2020 made possible:

~2.03M acres (~820,000 ha.) of new or increased Indigenous-led protections announced, benefiting vulnerable species from caribou, to grizzly bears, to frogs and toads

13 new wildlife overpasses and underpasses in planning across the Y2Y region to help wide-roaming and migrating species cross busy roads, and keep drivers safe too; two were completed in 2020

Halting attempts to de-list 37% of Alberta's parks (32,932 square miles (85,293 square kilometers)) that would open them up to a range of industrial activities, including metallurgical coal mining

1,055 ac. (426 ha.) of land in crucial Montana linkage areas made more passable for grizzly bears and other wildlife, through conservation of private land parcels, and removal and restoration of forest roads

26,688 native trees and shrubs planted to nourish and cool important Idaho wetland habitat

57,966 people given tools and support to live and recreate alongside grizzlies, wolverines and other wildlife, from Montana's Big Hole Valley to the Kootenays in B.C., with many more reached through social media and other communications

14,656 of you standing up for nature through letters, calls, comments, and petition signatures

~5.5 million people inspired and informed by 80 media articles with messages about Y2Y and large landscape conservation

137,602 people learning directly about Y2Y's and their own roles in conservation through virtual events and talks, with thousands more accessing videos and recordings

Lead authorship of new global IUCN guidelines for ecological corridors that reached the top 5% of 15 million+ tracked research outputs

New hope for mountain caribou through Indigenous-led conservation

Leading the way on caribou recovery

An alpine meadow full of wildflowers, moss and lichen in northeast B.C.'s Peace Region is the final resting place for a magnificent weather-bleached antler from the now-extinct Burnt Pine caribou herd.

Mountain caribou have roamed these highlands since time immemorial, and Treaty 8 First Nations Elders remember last century when there was still a "sea of caribou like bugs on the land." But the cumulative impacts of resource development have pushed these animals to the brink.

Their habitat is being fractured and degraded by mining, oil and gas development, intensive logging, dams and roads. The stakes for wildlife here — the narrowest pinch-point of the entire Yellowstone to Yukon region — couldn't be higher.



The antler is a stark reminder of the fragility of the herd whose final members perished by 2013, but it has also played a powerful role in a more hopeful story, which has culminated in the first new habitat protections in the northeast of the province in 20 years.

Y2Y staff member, Tim Burkhart, had been living in the Chetwynd area and developing relationships with area First Nations and communities for several years, when on a hike he spotted the antler. Recognizing its simple but eloquent symbolism, and at a time when his friends and colleagues at West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations were battling for the survival of other dwindling herds, he put aside his usual "leave no trace" principles and "borrowed" it.

The antler started to help tell the story of the Nations' efforts, which needed buy-in from provincial and federal governments, industry, local communities, and other conservation groups, if there was to be any real hope of caribou recovery. Tim took it with him to meetings and public presentations, even the legislature, to let people see it, hold it and feel the tangibility of extinction.

In February 2020, after lengthy and complex negotiations, West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations finally signed an historic and hard-won Partnership Agreement with the B.C. and Canadian governments to recover caribou. The Agreement protects over 200,000 hectares (~500,000 ac.) of habitat, with a further 550,000 ha. (~1.36M ac.) set aside from development while caribou recover.

Raising awareness of the plight of caribou, generating and mobilizing support from constituents and communities, and providing Western science to weave together with Indigenous knowledge were just some of the ways in which Y2Y played a supportive role in the five years leading up to the Agreement. We also helped with strategy, communications, government relations and funding, as requested by our First Nations partners, and convened conservation groups for a more aligned and influential approach.

One wet and windy day in August 2020, Tim's promise to return the antler could finally be fulfilled. On the shore of a tarn at the base of the sacred Klinse-za (Twin Sisters) mountains, with the new protected area visible to the west, and cutblocks, windfarms, and transmission lines to the east, former Chief Ken Cameron of Saulteau First Nations and Tim laid the antler to rest.

Tim notes, "Despair is pretty common in the conservation world right now and this is one of the few truly optimistic and hopeful stories." Chief Roland Willson from West Moberley First Nation goes further, tying survival of mountain caribou to the broader human struggle: "We're kind of saving ourselves. What happens to the caribou happens to us."

Y2Y asked, and you responded — by providing more than 2,400 letters, comments and signatures in favor of the Agreement to the B.C. government.

Thank you for supporting, and celebrating with us, the efforts of West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations!



Bees to bears... and beyond

Y2Y's work often focuses on animals that move or migrate over long distances or large ranges, including grizzly bears, elk, and wolves. But, recognizing their interconnectedness and value, we're naturally concerned with all the different species in an ecosystem, from native pollinators such as bees and moths, to amphibians or lichen. The Bees to Bears climate adaptation project in north Idaho is an example of one where outcomes support species of all sizes — including people.

The project site in the Kootenai Valley is a low-lying wetland in north Idaho close to the Canadian border that has gradually been drying out since the early 1900s, impacted by damming and irrigation. It's a key east-west linkage between the Selkirk and Purcell mountains, connecting Idaho's panhandle with B.C. for grizzly bears, wolverines, lynx, and fisher.

The wetland plays an important role for sensitive species from bees, to pale jumping slugs, to western toads, and could provide an important regional "cool air refuge" as the climate continues to warm.

Together with additional partners, we have reintroduced large seasonal ponds, planted more than 50,000 native trees and shrubs

(over 26,000 in 2020 alone) to provide important food, cover from predators, and shade, and added native wildflowers that benefit pollinators and many other species.

Volunteers, including many children, have played crucial — and fun! — roles through activities such as collecting wildflower seeds and identifying native pollinators. This has also given them hands-on know-how, and hope, as they help their local area adapt to climate change.

Another critical component of the project has been sharing it with staff from other state agencies and local Tribes, as a cutting-edge model for habitat restoration through a climate resilience lens. Y2Y is now collaborating with the Nez Perce Tribe's Water Resources Division as they lead Camas to Condors, a coalition of tribal and non-tribal organizations, to protect and restore functioning ecosystems in their ancestral land. They aim to increase connectivity and resilience to climate change, to benefit 12,000 Indigenous people whose culture and livelihoods are sustained by native species and the landscape, along with ranchers and other residents.



Restoring connectivity — with continental-scale significance

As rural sprawl relentlessly creeps across Montana, the race to maintain wildlife corridors between protected areas is ever more urgent. Long-term survival of "island" populations of grizzly bears in the lower 48 relies on them genetically mixing with Canadian bears. Herds of migrating ungulates, such as elk and mule deer, can also be trapped by the same barriers that thwart the grizzlies — busy roads, burgeoning development, and private land developments.

Focusing on 15 scientifically-identified priority linkages of continental-scale significance, Y2Y is partnering with land trusts, funders and donors to systematically piece together pathways for wildlife across the landscape. We work with willing landowners to safeguard key private lands through

acquisition or conservation easements; provide communities with the know-how and tools — such as electric fencing to protect cattle and chicken coops — to avoid fatal confrontations; and work with transportation agencies to support connectivity across highways.

In 2020, with support from our generous funders and donors, we substantially completed our private lands work at the Wild River Estates subdivision near Troy, MT with the Vital Ground Foundation acquiring No. 16 of 18 land parcels there. The subdivision, in a five-mile-wide pinch-point at the confluence of the Yaak and Kootenay Rivers, helps wildlife cross between the Cabinet and Purcell Mountains — critical for U.S.-Canada transboundary movement.





Mobilizing for the mountains

Standing up for nature when we need it most

Community. Strength. Togetherness. These words come to mind when we think about Alberta in 2020 — a time when, though physically separated, our collective voice for nature was louder than ever.

This may come as a surprise after what, at times, felt like a never-ending effort to ward off threats to beloved wild places and wildlife.

It all started in March 2020, when the Alberta government announced it would fully or partially close 175 parks — a deep cut for wildlife, people and healthy landscapes. Then, in June, it rescinded Alberta's 1976 Coal Policy, leaving culturally important and sensitive lands in Alberta's Rocky Mountains and foothills that were not protected through designations such as Parks, vulnerable to open-pit coal mining.

Coming at a time when more people were turning to nature than ever, the outcry from Albertans was swift and fierce. Y2Y and partners also acted nimbly to increase awareness of the changes that had been made without consultation, and their implications, and to let people know what they could do to help. We amplified the voices of farmers, ranchers and

other stewards of the land, who became powerful messengers to the government. Additionally, we provided some of the science needed to make smart decisions for wildlife and wild places.

Ultimately, a shared love for towering peaks, clean waterways, abundant wildlife, and amazing nature-based recreation drove tens of thousands of people to sign and share petitions, write and call decision-makers, and donate to conservation groups.

The outcome was astonishing. In late December, Alberta reversed its plan to cut parks. All existing designations and associated protections remain in place. This was a testament to the passionate efforts of diverse Albertans from right across the province.

The story isn't over yet. While the Coal Policy has also since been temporarily reinstated, the threat to land outside of Parks still looms — we know that there is much more work to do. But if 2021 is anything like the last when it comes to people speaking up for nature, we have no doubts that with your help our efforts will help preserve these precious landscapes — and the eastern slopes of our beloved Rockies — for generations to come.

Safe pathways for wildlife and people

New crossings a success story for people and nature

Imagine embarking on your favorite annual hiking trip, confident you will reach your destination — only halfway through to unexpectedly stumble onto a highway with a stream of cars and trucks flying by. Crossing is far too risky. What now?

Wildlife has relied on movement corridors for millennia; but these days, they too often face this dangerous scenario on their usual travel routes. Roads are one of the biggest human-created barriers to their movement, resulting in fragmented habitat and deadly wildlife-vehicle collisions. Y2Y, its partners and supporters like you, advocate for infrastructure to keep wildlife connected. Hearing from road maintenance and emergency crews, or nurses and truckers, makes a huge impact.

In 2020, we made great strides with your help. In fact, 13 new wildlife overpasses and underpasses are in planning across the Yellowstone to Yukon region!

In B.C.'s Elk Valley, the Reconnecting the Rockies project with Y2Y and partners saw the first two of nine structures completed on Highway 3 — a huge cost-effective step forward in preventing

nearly 200 collisions with large mammals each year, safeguarding animals and people.

We also helped advance two wildlife crossings in Idaho: the nearly completed design of an underpass and fencing on US-95 near McArthur Lake, and Idaho's first-ever wildlife overpass on State Highway 21, north of Boise. These will support critical seasonal connections for mule deer and elk.

In Alberta, we remain engaged on the government's commitment to fund wildlife crossing and fencing projects on Highway 1 outside Banff National Park at Bow Valley Gap and on Highway 3 in Crowsnest Pass. Last fall, Y2Y funded Nakoda Audio Visual Club's animated film showing the challenge of crossing busy Highway 1 through the eyes of wildlife like bears, wolves and buffalo. In it, the group makes a strong case for the proposed wildlife overpass at the Bow Valley Gap site.

These solutions to keep wildlife connected also keep people safe on roads, so that we can stay connected to the wild places we love — they are a success story for people and nature.

The elusive wolverine

Working together to safeguard sensitive species

Deep in B.C.'s rugged Selkirk mountains, high in the alpine, a wolverine mother and her kits are exploring around their den, undisturbed. The mother and her kits don't know it, but there's a Wildlife Habitat Management order in place that alerts recreational users to the den site. This system also encourages skiers to choose other lines, to protect this sensitive animal at the most crucial of times. And it's working — the mother has returned to re-use the den for a third year. (See inset remote camera photo, p. 15.)

Putting nature first is not always an easy choice, but wolverines — who only reproduce every two to three years, and whose numbers are small and dwindling — seem to hold a fascination for many of us.

"They're so elusive. They're hard to see...they're kind of the last wild creature out there," explains Adrian, a trail-builder from Salmon Arm, B.C.

More than 300 sightings of wolverines, tracks, and possible den sites have been sent to the Wolverine Watch website by recreationist "community scientists" — including Adrian.

An avid backcountry ski-tourer and mountain-biker, Adrian signed up to help after learning more about wolverines through Wildlife Wise workshops hosted by Y2Y and partners this past winter. The online sessions hosted in mountain communities of southeast B.C. included local wolverine biologists Doris Hausleitner, Andrea Kortello, and Mirjam Barrueto. These experts increased understanding and support of wolverine and caribou needs, which could ultimately lead to greater protection for their habitat.

That could take the form of temporary closures, as above, or boost the case for a new Indigenous-led protected and conserved area. Y2Y is supporting the Okanagan Indian Band as they negotiate with B.C. and Canada governments to create new such protections in critical wolverine and caribou habitat important for their cultural heritage.

The workshops and recreation resources also encourage people to examine their own backcountry travel and impact. Stories are now

emerging of visitors avoiding areas where multiple wolverine tracks suggest nearby dens, starting with reports shared with Wolverine Watch. Now that recreationists better understand how sensitive wolverines are to human disturbance, and what to look for, they are finding ways to strike the balance between recreating and protecting wildlife, sometimes making different choices.

As Adrian reflects, "In the 80s and 90s you could go anywhere and it didn't seem to matter. But now there are so many people out there that we have to have those difficult conversations. It's really hard for me to be that person telling people they shouldn't go somewhere, but I'm very cognizant of the impact we have." A number of ski lines drop right onto another potential den site that he has reported.

Y2Y is supporting the research into wolverines and their denning habits led by Doris and Andrea, as well as complementary research by Mirjam and the University of Calgary into broader wolverine population and reproduction patterns. Our Wildlife Wise workshops have helped to increase awareness of wolverines, and to recruit community scientists for Wolverine Watch; and our growing network of supporters are influential advocates for new protections. We will also share the research results and recommendations, and support the government relations work needed to increase protections for wolverine habitat, and especially denning areas.

Conservation measures can play an essential role in ensuring a wolverine den site stays safe for a mother and her kits when they need it most. In the words of Genevieve, a workshop participant, "If that's what it takes to protect nature, then that's what we have to do".



Mapping our impact

Since embarking on our big, bold mission in 1993, we have worked with more than 460 partners, including but not limited to non-governmental organizations, communities, Indigenous governments and entities, government agencies, land trusts, biologists, and ranchers.

In 2020, thanks to funders and donors, Y2Y spent US\$1.3M on strategically supporting partners with projects that have a local impact, while helping to realize the larger Y2Y vision. Here, we outline 10 of the projects that are already making a difference on the ground and through policy and advocacy work.

For other Y2Y and partner projects, explore more on an interactive map at y2y.net/2020.

Yukon

- A Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Yukon Chapter**
Supported a youth land stewardship and junior guide training program in the Beaver River Watershed and Northern Tutchone Region, where planning processes could result in substantial land protection. Major mining development threatens the Beaver River Watershed, an unspoiled wilderness perched below the Peel Watershed, in the traditional territory of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.

British Columbia

- B Conservation North and Save-The-Cedar League**
Cleared and revitalized two trails in northern B.C., Morkill Old Growth Trail and Goat River Canyon Trail. This volunteer-driven work supports the creation of a proposed protected area in the northern inland rainforest.
- C Valhalla Foundation for Ecology**
Restored 5 ac. (2 ha.) of new wetland habitat in the Upper Columbia to support wildlife, habitat connectivity, and native plants and amphibians.

Alberta

- D Livingstone Landowners Group**
Supported four members of Livingstone Landowners Group to research and testify at the hearing on ecological aspects, impacts to water and environmental risks that an open pit mine on Grassy Mountain in southwest Alberta could bring.
- E Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association**
Ensured ranchers and rural homeowners could live alongside wildlife without conflicts, by helping secure attractants, like grain, from bears, and removing dead livestock.

Alberta cont'd

- F Kainai Ecosystem Protection Association**
Promoted a guide for ecologically valuable and culturally important Blackfoot plants key to community food systems and healthy ecosystems for Kainai Nation. This outreach project plays a role in Blackfoot language revitalization and Indigenous knowledge-based conservation of grassland and montane areas.
- G Blackfoot Confederacy Tribal Council**
Provided gardening resources, traditional food education and greenhouse set-up for a food security project in Moses Lake and Standoff within the Kainai Nation. Traditional harvesting information demonstrated the interconnected relationships between plants, animals, and all beings in the community.

US

- H Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance**
Supported efforts to permanently protect 130,000 ac. (52,609 ha.) of national forest land between Glacier National Park, the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, which has vital cultural importance for Blackfeet people.
- I Great Burn Conservation Alliance**
Influenced policy on the Nez-Perce Clearwater National Forest plan revisions to maintain protections for the Great Burn Recommended Wilderness and wildlife habitat; and supported wildlife monitoring to reduce negative human/wildlife encounters in an important area for landscape connectivity between the Cabinet-Yaak, Selkirk and Selway-Bitterroot ecosystems.
- J Henry's Fork Wildlife Alliance**
Helped keep wildlife populations healthy in Upper Henry's Fork watershed, by supporting this grassroots, all-volunteer organization of local residents and homeowners, in an area east of Yellowstone National Park affected by increasing recreation, tourism and population growth.

Donors and funders whose generous support makes it all possible.*

The Alben F. Bates and Clara G. Bates Foundation	The Grainger Foundation	Palmer Family Foundation
Alberta Ecotrust Foundation	Harvey Locke Conservation Inc.	Patagonia
The Alpine Club of Canada	Henry and Susan Rose Family Fund	Peter H. Bachman and Janet Rice Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation
Bergmann and Filakosky Donor Advised Fund	The Heymann Foundation	Pumpkin Hill Foundation
Bob and Karen White	House Family Foundation	Ralph and Gay Young Family Capital Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation
Bunting Family Foundation	Jeff and Jacqueline Miller	RBC Foundation
The Calgary Foundation	Joe Albright and Marcia Kunstel Charitable Fund of the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole	Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia
Cameron Development Corporation	John A. Mills and Susan K. Mills Charitable Fund	Rebecca Patton and Tom Goodrich
Canadian Mountain Network	Josephine K. Lowe	Robert S. Hunter Charitable Fund at Schwab Charitable
The Chawkers Foundation	KCS Pacific Foundation, Inc.	Ruby Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation
The Cinnabar Foundation	Ken Murray Professional Corp.	Sanders County Resource Advisory Committee
Columbia Basin Trust	The Kendeda Fund	Seepanee Ecological Consulting
Consecon Foundation	Knobloch Family Foundation	The Sitka Foundation
Cross Charitable Foundation	The Laura L. Tiberti Charitable Foundation	Turner Foundation, Inc.
The Crown Goodman Family	Maine Beer Company	Under the Arch Youth Foundation Fund at Calgary Foundation
Don and Joan Stanley Family Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation	MakeWay Foundation – Renewal Funds Charitable Giving Fund	Vancouver Foundation
The Donner Canadian Foundation	Mary and Charles Sethness Charitable Foundation	The Volgenau Foundation
Eleanor and Fred Winston – The Longview Foundation	Merrill Chester Gregg and Josh Gregg	The W. Garfield Weston Foundation
Environmental Careers Organization of Canada (ECO Canada)	Mind on Development	Walton Family Foundation
Ernest J. Abele Fund of the Columbus Foundation	The Mitsubishi Corporation Foundation for the Americas	Weeden Foundation
Fanwood Foundation	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Wilburforce Foundation
The Franklin Philanthropic Foundation	New Venture Fund	Wild Spaces for Wildlife Fund at Vancouver Foundation
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	The New York Community Trust	Winkler Family Foundation
Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs	OnwardUP Sales and Marketing, Ltd.	Woodcock Foundation
	The Otis Booth Foundation	

*We hugely appreciate all our supporters! Only Donor-Advised Funds, Family Foundations, Corporate and Grant Funders (>\$1k) are listed here.

“My environmentalism is personal: my passion. When you think about all the needs and challenges in today’s world, there is a never-ending list... but this has to be the number one priority, because the other issues won’t matter if we don’t save the environment. If you’re considering a gift to Y2Y, I’d say ‘Do it!’ The most important work Y2Y does is changing mindsets — with the concept of long-term sustainable conservation and partnerships — and trying to find solutions that work for everyone.”

NICK, Y2Y DONOR, MASSACHUSETTS

Forever Wild

Connect and protect the wild landscapes and wildlife you love, forever

In 2020, a year that will be remembered by many for its challenges for people and nature, Y2Y launched a program that exemplifies hope for the future: the Forever Wild Legacy Circle.

Legacy gifts to Forever Wild of any size are a lasting way of ensuring a personal impact, and an opportunity to safeguard the wildlife and beautiful landscapes you love, for generations to come.

There are many ways to support Forever Wild, from simple bequests, to gift of securities and life insurance. If you would like to speak to us, in confidence, about a future gift, please visit the “ways to give” section on our website, or contact our Senior Donor Relations Manager, Renee Krysko, at legacies@y2y.net or toll-free on 1-800-966-7920 ext.105.

If you have already named Y2Y in your will, or as a beneficiary for future funding, please let us know. We’d love to thank you and welcome you to the Forever Wild Legacy Circle.

With the launch of Forever Wild in 2020, we now have more than 25 legacy pledges from others who believe in the Y2Y vision, and the tangible results we have already achieved with over 460 partners across the region. They understand the need — and motivation — to protect our wild lands and water, and wildlife, for future generations.

Learn more at y2y.net/foreverwild



2020 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, who share our passion for and commitment to our mission. You can read more about our board members and their roles at y2y.net/board.

All three organizations strive to work seamlessly to fund, facilitate, and operate programs and activities to fulfill the Y2Y mission. The accompanying financial highlights combine information across all three Y2Y organizations. 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 2020, 83.6 per cent of Y2Y’s expenses directly supported conservation projects and campaigns across the region.

Balance Sheet December 31, 2020 (USD)

ASSETS

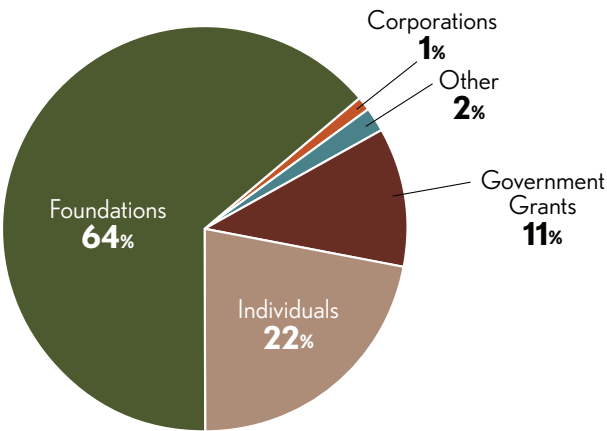
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,318,740
Investments	1,380,400
Accounts Receivable and Prepaids	212,962
Property and Equipment	54,352
Total Assets	5,966,454

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable	265,229
Deferred Revenue	2,725,603
Net Assets	2,975,622
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	5,966,454

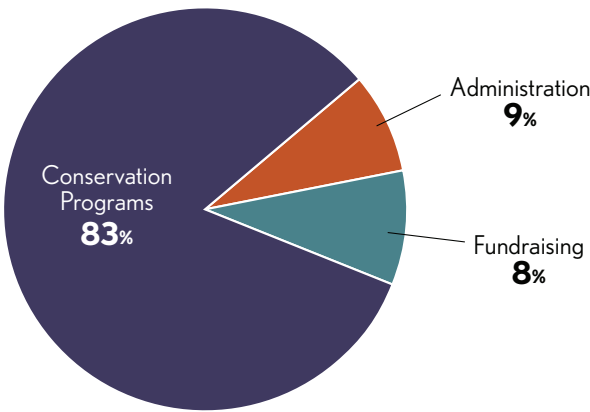
HOW Y2Y IS FUNDED

Revenue: 3,954,109



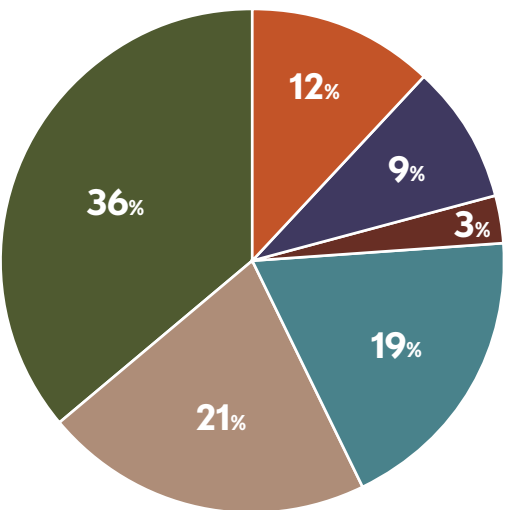
HOW YOUR DONATION IS USED

Total Expenses: 3,494,873



The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 delayed some activities, with applicable spend reallocated to 2022.

PROGRAMMATIC SPENDING BY THEME



- Connectivity between protected areas: making roads/recreation areas safer
- Helping people and wildlife share spaces
- Economic diversification: balancing the needs of people and nature
- Protecting and restoring private lands
- Indigenous-led conservation and protecting/restoring public lands
- Enabling policy (including global standards), inspiring, engaging and mobilizing communities



Y2Y Board and Council

A Message from Y2Y U.S. Board Vice-Chair, Pat Smith

As our attention in 2020 focused on a deadly pandemic, historic protests against racial injustice, and a riveting U.S. election, more quietly, history was also being made through Indigenous-led conservation. From my home on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana, home of the Salish, Kootenai and Pend O'reille, I have observed this paradigm shift taking place with excitement and optimism.

In January, B.C. announced the new Ktunaxa Nation-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) in the Central Purcells, followed in February by the announcement of the West Moberly and Sauteau First Nations-led IPCA in the Peace Region. And closer to my home, on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, 2020 also saw the last of 47 oil and gas leases cancelled in the Badger-Two Medicine area of Montana, a sacred and fragile place the Blackfeet Nation has fought to protect for decades.

On both sides of the Medicine Line, Indigenous nations are moving forward with clear visions for landscape and wildlife conservation of ancestral lands that were once exclusively their homelands.

It is clear that these indigenous-led conservation initiatives will play a vital role in fulfilling the formal commitments the U.S. and Canadian governments have made to achieve 30 per cent protection of lands by 2030.

As a board member, I have been particularly proud of the important supporting role that Y2Y has played working with the West Moberly and Sauteau First Nations to establish new protections in their territories that will strengthen caribou recovery (see story, p.8).

These hard-won advances by these First Nations and their partners are being hailed as the most important conservation achievements in B.C. since the Great Bear Rainforest. And here in the U.S., Deb Haaland's appointment as the first Native American Secretary of the Interior in American history assures that Indigenous eyes will be overseeing tribal-led conservation efforts in the U.S. in coming years.

These are truly historic times.

Pat



Y2Y Board members

Steve Baker

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Craig Groves, *Chair, U.S. Board*

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Jonathan Oppenheimer

Nancy Rourke

Pat Smith, *Vice-Chair, U.S. Board*

Amy Vedder

Annie Whetzel

Alison Woodley

Pam Wright

Y2Y Council

The Y2Y Council brings together individuals with the capacity to bring specialized assistance to the Y2Y Board and President.

Charles C. Chester, *Chair*

Joe Lougheed

Coral Lukaniuk

Jill Pangman

Thanks to support from donors and funders, the Y2Y vision is possible!

In a tumultuous year, your gifts and grants kept us strong and able to stand up for nature throughout 2020. Together, we adapted to connecting online instead of in-person, rallied to defend our wildlife, wild lands and waters, and committed to ensuring greater environmental and social justice.

"It will take generations to build both a vibrant and protected landscape and a culture that honors and integrates human life with nature, so that both live together sustainably and meaningfully. As a long-term Board member, I want to inspire others to consider Y2Y in their estate planning. We as individuals may not last forever, but nature will, and we can help it thrive with what we leave behind." JEREMY GUTH, Y2Y BOARD, ONTARIO

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Yellowstone to Yukon
Conservation Initiative

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“It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one destiny, affects all indirectly.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.