



# WWF-CANADA

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

“Regenerate Canada” sure has a nice ring to it, but when we launched the campaign last fall, it was about so much more than a memorable slogan. As we continue on our ambitious 10-year journey to expand habitats, reduce atmospheric carbon, lower industrial impacts and reverse wildlife loss, the cascading effects of our efforts keep growing.

Covering our July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 fiscal year, this Annual Report shows how you’ve helped us gain ground on these bold goals as we accelerate efforts to combat the planet’s nature crises.

Here’s a sneak peek: We grew a million native-plant seeds to supply our large-scale restoration efforts. We

produced ground-breaking science to measure ecosystem carbon and prioritize conservation actions to maximize impact on both climate change and biodiversity loss. And we funded community-level conservation and research partnerships with Indigenous, local and academic organizations from sea to sea to sea.

We experimented and engaged, advocated and amplified — and you were right alongside us the whole time: raising record funds; sending government more than 18,000 emails; creating habitat in your gardens and on your balconies with 109,000 native plants; and spreading awareness about the urgent need for action. And we pulled it off amidst a still-ongoing pandemic.



© Jamie Kronick

I could not be prouder of our progress, or more grateful for your trust and support that pushed Regenerate Canada forward. There’s much more work ahead to realize that thriving future we keep talking about, but it is within sight. Thank you, from all of us at WWF-Canada — let’s keep changing the world for the better, together. ■

*Megan Leslie*

Megan Leslie,  
WWF-Canada President and CEO

This past year has been marked by both long-awaited accomplishments and new challenges to overcome. I am filled with pride, inspiration and gratitude when I think of how this organization goes above and beyond every day in the name of nature, wildlife and people; of the dedicated staff who never give up looking for new ways to make a bigger impact; and of the steadfast supporters who never stop fighting alongside us for a better future.

Together, we are dreaming big and taking the steps that will make those dreams come true. We are setting our sights on goals that feel almost impossible. And we are proving that we can reverse the seemingly irreversible.

This message of hope for the future is resonating. People across the country are rallying to our call. When we rang the alarm about ships dumping harmful waste in protected ocean areas, our supporters were there — sending letters to their government officials, writing letters to the editor and spreading awareness through their

networks. Thanks to their advocacy, we have already started seeing incredible advancements in government policy and industry action.

In this annual report, you will find countless examples of how WWF-Canada and our partners are taking action for nature. And I hope you will feel the same pride, inspiration and gratitude that I do when you see how your support is helping to deliver real and lasting results for the planet.

Congratulations and thank you to our leaders, staff and supporters for all that you do for nature. ■

*Lloyd Bryant*

Lloyd Bryant,  
WWF-Canada Chair of the Board



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

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# WWF-CANADA: 2021-2022 MILESTONES AND HIGHLIGHTS

1,000,000

The number of seeds harvested from 10 demonstration seed orchards funded by WWF-Canada. These seeds will help restore hundreds of thousands of square kilometres of habitat in the coming years.

109,000

The number of native plants put in the ground by In the Zone participants.

\$2,644,868

The amount of conservation funding for Indigenous communities and organizations that came directly from WWF-Canada and from grants that WWF helped these partner groups secure.

18,000

The number of Canadians who wrote the government to say “No” to dumping harmful ship waste following the release of our report on vessel dumping in marine protected areas.

4,379

The number of kilometres travelled in our inaugural Run to Restore Nature, where supporters across the country ran, walked and wheeled to raise \$130,000 for important conservation work.

18,920

The number of square kilometres in Nepal that were surveyed to count the country's wild tiger populations. WWF-Canada supported WWF-Nepal in this huge effort.

70

The number of populations of at-risk species that will benefit from the restoration work being done through our Nature and Climate Grant Program, which contributed \$500,000 to six projects last year.

700,000

The number of trees we secured funding to plant as part of our support of Indigenous-led efforts to restore habitat destroyed in the 2017 Elephant Hill forest fire on Secwépemc territory.



# OUR FUTURE IS IRREVERSIBLE

## HOW YOU ARE HELPING TO REGENERATE CANADA

**T**here are two paths ahead of us. One leads to an invisible line that, once crossed, unlocks a future that is four degrees warmer. That rise in temperature will bring severe climate disruption and the potential extinction of more than one million species worldwide.

The other is a route to nature's recovery — a future where wildlife and people thrive. There is still time to choose this path and change the trajectory of our planet — but the window is closing. We need to take the right actions, in the right places and in the right way. And we need to act now.

By using nature to fight biodiversity loss and climate change, we can help reverse what seems irreversible and stay on the right side of that invisible line. This message is the guiding force behind our award-winning *irREVERSIBLE* campaign, released last fall, and the foundation of our bold 10-year plan to Regenerate Canada.

All our conservation work continues to drive towards our three Regenerate Canada goals, each designed to work together to reduce threats to wildlife and positively impact nature in the short term, while also laying the foundation for long-lasting, meaningful change. In two short years, we've put new programs into action and released groundbreaking research that will help governments, industries, communities and individuals alike maximize the power of nature-based solutions for wildlife and climate.

Ultimately, our mission remains the same: to create a Canada with abundant wildlife, where nature and people thrive. With Regenerate Canada laying out the path forward, and with your steadfast support, we have been able to think bigger, aim higher and do even more to fight the crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

Together, we will reverse the irreversible. —

### RESTORE 1 MILLION HECTARES

**Restore** at least one million hectares, regenerating lost complex ecosystems that provide essential wildlife habitat and sequester carbon in nature.

### STEWARD 100 MILLION HECTARES

**Steward** at least 100 million hectares of vital ecosystems for wildlife and communities.

### REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS BY 30 MILLION TONNES

**Reduce** carbon emissions by 30 million tonnes by restoring carbon-rich habitats and protecting current carbon stores.

## LEGEND

Our conservation efforts address multiple threats and priorities at once. So, we've used these icons throughout this report to identify how each project connects back to our Regenerate Canada goals.



Restore one million hectares



Steward 100 million hectares



Reduce carbon emissions by 30 million tonnes



# REFORESTING ELEPHANT HILL



In 2017, the Elephant Hill forest fire burned across Secwépemc territory near Kamloops, B.C., searing nearly 200,000 hectares, destroying homes and leaving charred trees and riverbanks along the Bonaparte and Deadman rivers — essential habitat for many fish species including Chinook and coho salmon.

In the aftermath, the Secwépemc’ecw Restoration and Stewardship Society (SRSS), which has eight member communities and is dedicated to advancing conservation, revitalization and restoration for their territories, took stock of the damage. In many areas the severity of the burn scorched seeds buried in the soil and in cones, leaving them useless, and the complete loss of an overstorey led to widespread erosion and, in some cases, landslides. In the face of such devastation, the SRSS developed a

plan to regenerate the ecosystem. *“The impacts from the fire are not just physical, they are also emotional. By helping our community recover and restore from an ecological perspective we also help on an emotional and mental basis by seeing the replanting of our areas and the restoration of salmon, which is sacred to our First Nation communities.”* — Angie Kane, CEO of SRSS

For the past two years, WWF-Canada has been pleased to support the Indigenous-led efforts of the SRSS as they restored over 200 hectares using traditional ecological knowledge and planting nearly 150,000 trees that range from ponderosa pine to trembling aspen. Reforesting with a mix of native trees will benefit riparian areas, reduce erosion and create shade and leaf litter that is essential to fish habitat.

Communities preferred and initially

requested deciduous trees for their local plantings. But seed collection and seedling growers produce primarily coniferous trees due to their economic value to the forestry industry. Due to a lack of available deciduous seedlings, plans were adjusted accordingly.

However, we provided support for a feasibility assessment to scope out developing an Indigenous-led program that targets the collection and propagation of deciduous trees found within the region for future restoration work. We also supported a morel mushroom harvest patrol.

Building on these lessons and successes, WWF-Canada will continue to work in partnership with the SRSS to plant an additional 700,000 trees in the next two years.

*Restoration efforts with SRSS are supported by the Government of Canada’s 2 Billion Trees Program and Lowe’s.* ■

# NATIVE PLANT SEED ORCHARDS ARE KEY TO LARGE-SCALE HABITAT RESTORATION



Restoring vast degraded and fragmented areas into functioning and healthy habitats is one of the ambitious goals of our 10-year plan to Regenerate Canada. But restoring hundreds of thousands of square kilometres requires millions — even billions! — of native plants. These plants form the foundation of healthy landscapes; they provide food and shelter for a huge host of species, all while sequestering carbon from the atmosphere.

While there is growing demand for native plants in Canada, there aren’t nearly enough plants to meet it. In 2021, Air Wick, lead supporter of our Seed Orchards program, helped us give grants to 10 community and campus groups to start seed orchards. These orchards are growing ethical, source-identified, native plants and seeds that are essential to our restoration efforts.

In the project’s pilot year, 450 people were involved in starting 10 brand new seed orchards. They planted over 6,500 plants from over 80 different native species and harvested more than a million seeds!

The next steps will be developing resources for groups cultivating small-scale orchards and to grow in

scale by partnering with commercial and Indigenous-led initiatives.

Our In the Zone program is continuing to encourage gardeners in southern and eastern Ontario and southern Quebec to use native plants in their own outdoor spaces. Growing a native plant garden helps restore habitats for species like bees, butterflies and birds.

Last year, we connected with over 520 people at 14 events; with the help of our partner Loblaw Companies Limited, we held our first in-person gardening events since the start of the pandemic at participating Loblaw gardening centres across Ontario and Quebec.

Over the past year, more than 1,250 new gardeners joined In the Zone (up 17 per cent from the previous year), while around 109,000 native plants were planted and our total garden habitats expanded by 76 hectares. These big and small havens for native plants are improving ecological connectivity and creating healthy, resilient landscapes where wildlife can thrive.

*Seed Orchards are generously supported by Air Wick. Loblaw Companies Limited generously supports In the Zone.* ■

## DONOR STORY



WWF has been part of my life since my husband Tim joined the board 20 years ago. Since then, I have also served on the board and now head up Friends of WWF-Canada, an inspiring community of champions for nature. Our volunteering has greatly enriched our lives because we have learnt so much about the state of our natural world. Our donations have helped in a small way to start saving our planet. I urge you to get involved, too."

— NALINI STEWART, National Chair of Friends of WWF-Canada





# COLLABORATION ACCELERATES RESTORATION FOR VANCOUVER ISLAND SALMON



## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT



“Climate change will have a profound impact on this country, and it is already making Canadians physically, emotionally and financially vulnerable. As a leading insurer, we see first-hand the devastating impacts of climate change on our communities every day. At Aviva, we’re helping people mitigate and adapt to climate change, and we’re committed to tackling biodiversity loss with nature-based solutions through our partnership with WWF-Canada’s Nature and Climate Grant Program. Fighting climate change is a collective effort, and every one of us has a role to play.”

– JASON STORAH, CEO, Aviva Canada

Despite its name, Tranquil Creek is a river in crisis. Winding through traditional territory of the ʔaʔuukʷiʔath (Tla-o-qui-aht) Nation on Vancouver Island’s west coast, the waterway’s western red cedar and Sitka-spruce-lined shores were stripped by industrial logging decades ago. The habitat has never recovered. With centuries of trees and undergrowth gone, conifers struggled to take hold, exposing the banks to extreme weather and accelerating soil erosion. The once-deep channel became shallower, wider and inhospitable to the teeming shoals of wild salmon that use it to spawn. In recent years, chum salmon counts dropped by 92 per cent; chinook by 85 per cent. Restoring it requires planting thousands of native conifers and willow stakes and reintroducing logs and root wads to the riverbed. This work is led by Redd Fish Restoration Society, a long-running non-profit working to conserve local wild fish, and Tla-o-qui-aht Nation, who rely on healthy salmon stocks for environmental, cultural and economic prosperity. And we’re helping make it happen. Redd Fish is part of WWF-Canada’s Nature and Climate Grant Program (NCGP), a multi-year initiative —

funded by a landmark \$2 million commitment from presenting partner Aviva Canada —supporting community-based projects that fight biodiversity loss and climate change in degraded habitats. Phase One wrapped in spring 2022, with seven grantees across Canada collectively restoring more than 160 hectares of fields, grasslands, shorelines and wetlands. Phase Two launched in May to support the critical work of six organizations, including three returnees, until 2024. From Vancouver Island to New Brunswick, their projects are expected to collectively restore more than 180 hectares, sequester at least 5,700 tonnes of carbon and safeguard 42 at-risk species of plants and animals. Just as no single change will bring salmon back to Tranquil Creek, no single organization can solve the dual threat of biodiversity loss and climate change. Meaningful partnerships — like those between WWF-Canada, presenting partner Aviva Canada, NCGP grantees and their community stakeholders — show how collaboration can generate transformation. The Nature and Climate Grant Program is presented in partnership with Aviva Canada. ■

# SUPPORTING A HISTORIC MILESTONE FOR NUNAVUT



Covering 2.1 million square kilometres, the Nunavut Land Use Plan (NLUP) is the biggest in the world and will determine which parts of the Arctic territory are open to industry like mining or oil and gas — and which are not. Intended to balance economic development with conservation, it’s been in progress since 2007, with the fourth and final draft released for review in July 2021. WWF-Canada has been actively engaged in the process for over a decade — providing scientific and Inuit-led analysis and data sets from research supported by our Arctic Species Conservation Fund, submitting our own recommendations and comments for consideration, and facilitating community involvement in NLUP consultations upon request. Our largely Iqaluit-based team was able to safely visit 11 communities, where we were able to offer one-on-one support, amplify local priorities and facilitate preparation for hearings and the submission of Inuit Knowledge-based feedback on the draft’s finer details. Helmed by Paul Okalik, WWF-Canada’s Lead Arctic Specialist, these consultations were held entirely in Inuktitut whenever possible and included Cambridge Bay, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, Taloyoak, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Nauyasat, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet. Informed by our community consultations and research, we also submitted our own review. We advocated for year-round protection of calving grounds and other important caribou habitat, along with seasonal ice-breaking restrictions during caribou migration. We also supported year-round protections for terrestrial walrus haul-outs and stronger seasonal protections for polar bear denning areas. And we amplified territory-wide concerns over protection of community-identified lakes, rivers and coastal areas to ensure clean water and healthy fish, recommending these areas also be made off-limits to industrial development. This would guarantee the constitutionally protected right of Inuit to fish for food, as well as allowing local fisheries to create sustainable alternative economic opportunities. We now look forward to the NLUP finally being implemented to help guide Nunavut towards an environmentally sustainable future. ■

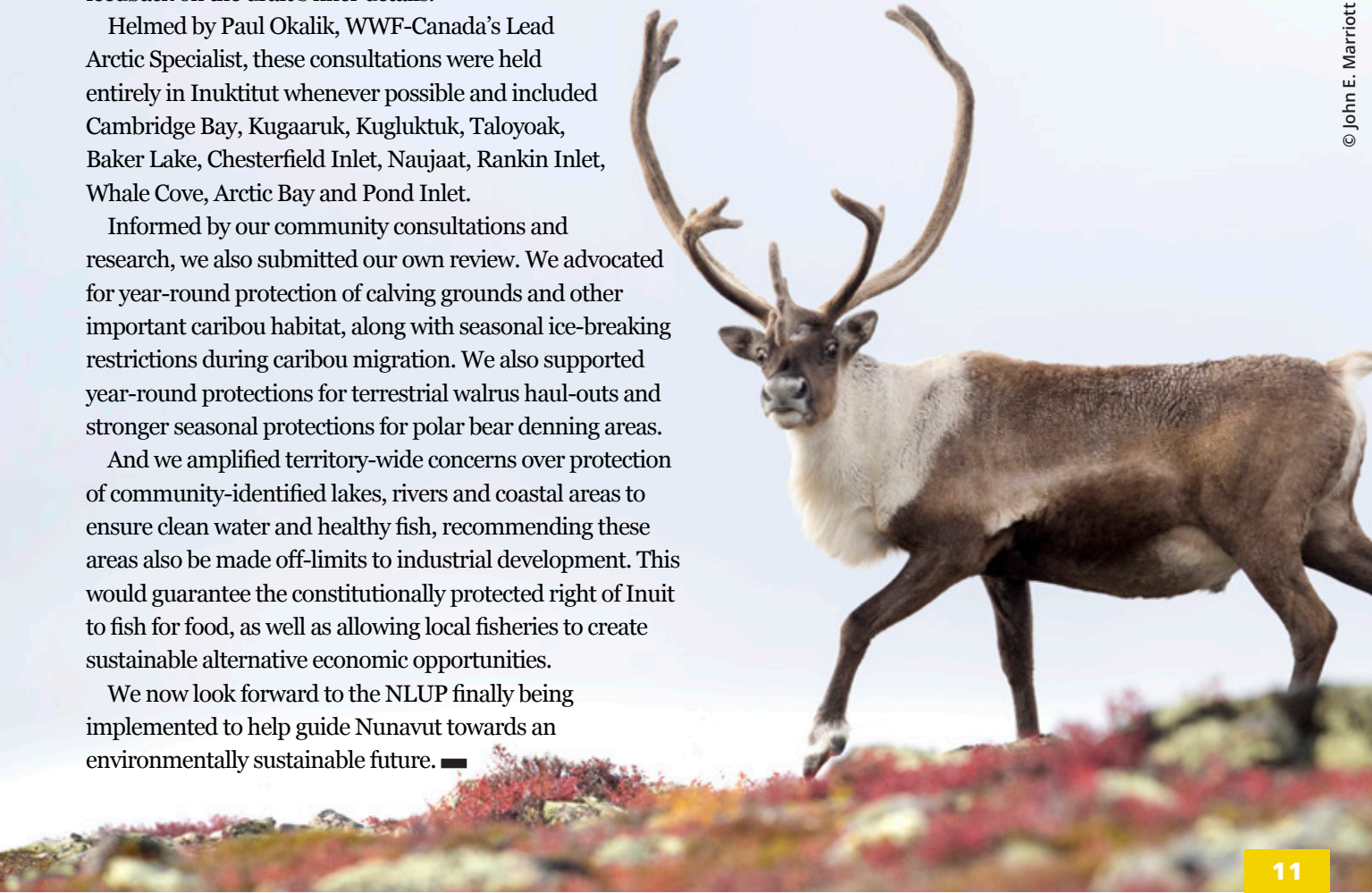
## DONOR STORY



Machan sisters doing a neighborhood cleanup.

“Thank you for what your organization is doing. It’s why I chose to become a monthly donor. I’ve been a long-time fan of WWF. I try to do my part and though my overall contributions are small in the big scheme of things, I know that if each of us do our part we can quite literally change the world. Here’s my little girls, doing their part!”

— JED MACHAN



© John E. Marriott



## LEADING THE WAY FOR STRONGER PROTECTIONS IN MARINE ECOSYSTEMS



Every single day in our protected ocean areas, ships are dumping harmful, toxic operational waste. We always knew this was a serious threat to marine species — but until recently, we didn't know just how big of a threat.

Our National Vessel Dumping Assessment, released in March 2022 and supported by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, revealed that ships generate a staggering 147 billion litres of waste annually as they operate in Canadian waters. And as much as 10 per cent is dumped in areas set aside for conservation.

The problem doesn't just lie with ship operators. A federal commitment to ban dumping in marine protected areas (MPAs) exists. Three years ago, Canada promised new minimum standards that would prohibit harmful activities like dumping — but delays defining what should be included have led to inaction.

By filling a profound data gap, WWF-Canada's National Vessel Dumping Assessment makes a strong case for urgent action. It has also shown that for a ban to actually make a difference for wildlife and habitats, the definition of dumping needs to include all waste streams, especially scrubber washwater, which accounted for 97 per cent of the generated waste in our study.

The report received national and international media attention that, along with advocacy from more than 18,000 supporters, is bringing us closer to our goal of banning all dumping in MPAs once and for all. In April 2022, Transport Canada announced stricter voluntary measures for how cruise ships treat and discharge greywater and sewage within 12 nautical miles of our shores. These new measures are an encouraging step and show our collective voices are making an impact, but they do not address other waste streams.

With you by our side, we'll continue pushing Canada towards more ambitious standards, including a ban on ALL dumping in MPAs. ■

## MAKING EVERY VOICE COUNT AS OPPOSITION BUILDS AROUND MARY RIVER MINE



"These decisions should not be just about money," wrote Enookie Inuarak, a hunter from Pond Inlet, Nunavut, in an op-ed published in The Hill Times about Baffinland's proposed expansion of the nearby Mary River iron mine.

"In the name of the project, are we going to lose our way of life that has been taught for countless generations? If my son loses the knowledge that has been passed down, how is he going to pass it on to his children and their children? How are they even going to know what they lost? It will be like total colonization."

WWF-Canada has been supporting local communities to ensure their voices are heard, including lobbying for and facilitating meetings and helping with hearings preparation. The mine is already the biggest

industrial development in the Canadian Arctic. The proposal to double its annual production to 12 million tonnes would also require building a 110-kilometre railway through critical caribou habitat and a dramatic increase in shipping through the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area, home to 75 per cent of the world's narwhal.

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) began hearings in 2019, which concluded in early 2022 following pandemic-related delays. Alongside amplifying the voices of community members like Inuarak, we funded and helped submit scientific and Inuit Knowledge-based research on the mine's impacts to local wildlife.

WWF-Canada's lead Arctic specialist Paul Okalik, whose home

community Pangnirtung is on the other end of Baffin Island, has been an official intervenor in the hearings, echoing these community concerns by calling for strict measures to reduce disturbance to wildlife.

This past spring, NIRB issued its 441-page report recommending that the federal government reject Baffinland's proposal because the expansion would have "significant adverse effects" to wildlife and Inuit that cannot be "adequately prevented, mitigated, or adaptively managed."

WWF-Canada subsequently called on the government to listen to the affected communities, accept NIRB's recommendation and recognize the significant impact this mining project is already having on wildlife and Inuit culture, health and well-being. ■





## UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF THE “BREATHING LANDS”

“

The Elders in the territory have referred to this area as the Breathing Lands of Mother Earth because of its significance in what it does for the world in sequestering large amounts of carbon and cooling Mother Earth.”

— VERN CHEECHOO, *Mushkegowuk Council*

© D.A. Sutherland / Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry

**A**long the shores of Hudson Bay and James Bay and extending into Manitoba and Quebec, you will find a swath of peatlands, one of the largest networks in the world. This region, much of which is the traditional territory of the seven First Nations forming the Mushkegowuk Council, contains five times as much carbon as the Amazon rainforest, metre for metre. And according to a groundbreaking carbon map developed by WWF-Canada and McMaster University, it stores more soil carbon than any other region in Canada.

It is also a globally important habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds and the site of the proposed Ring of Fire mining development, which, if realized, could disturb

countless peatlands and release dangerous levels of stored carbon to the atmosphere.

Since 2020, WWF-Canada has been working with the Mushkegowuk Council to call attention to the global significance of the region and advance new approaches to regional environmental assessments in order to protect and steward carbon-dense regions like this.

To reap the climate benefits of the region and keep the ecosystem intact, we need to understand, in greater detail, just how much carbon is stored in the peatlands and what will happen if it is disturbed. We have continued to work with the Mushkegowuk Council and four Omushkego communities to conduct training workshops and

prepare for a field campaign to “ground truth” the remote-sensing ecosystem carbon data — a challenging undertaking in a vast, remote region without roads. This community engagement involved two knowledge-sharing sessions that brought together community members, Elders, researchers and members of the Mushkegowuk Council, because relationship building is important in preparation for fieldwork.

These efforts will not only support Indigenous-led carbon measurement but they will also help to further identify areas of high carbon density that must be protected in order to prevent the release of carbon from nature, meet our climate targets and prevent catastrophic climate change. ■



## MAPPING CANADA’S INVISIBLE CARBON STORES

**W**e know that high-carbon landscapes play an important role in regulating the Earth’s climate by removing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in natural ecosystems.

Until recently, however, we didn’t know how much carbon is stored in terrestrial landscapes across the country or where.

New research by WWF-Canada, led by scientists at McMaster University’s Remote Sensing Lab and released in November 2021, revealed a staggering picture of the spatial distribution of Canada’s carbon stores and what’s at stake for the planet if they are disturbed.

The study — the first of its kind to measure carbon above and below ground, at different depths — found that Canada stores a massive 327 Pg (that’s 327 billion tonnes of carbon) in its terrestrial ecosystems. That’s equivalent to about 25 years of human-caused global greenhouse gas emissions at 2019 emission levels. It identified several key high-density regions, including in Indigenous territories that have benefitted from millennia of responsible management by Indigenous Peoples.

The findings have significant implications for both Canada and the world, highlighting how targeted implementation of nature-based climate solutions and protected and conserved areas allow us to fight climate change and biodiversity loss at the same time. These strategies must be implemented in collaboration with Indigenous communities, where and when requested, in a way that respects and advances Indigenous rights.

The report was debuted on the world stage at the UN Conference of the Parties in Glasgow and received major national media coverage that put a spotlight on the global responsibility Canada has in keeping its invisible carbon stores in the ground. By making access to the interactive map publicly available, we put an incredible tool into the hands of communities across the country, so this foundational set of data can be built on for years to come.

*Mapping Canada’s Carbon Landscape was completed in partnership with McMaster University’s Remote Sensing Lab and is generously supported by Maple Leaf Foods Inc. and the Metcalf Foundation. ■*

### DONOR STORY



“

There is no issue more critical than the environment. We appreciate being part of the global effort through WWF to not only preserve what nature we have left, but to mitigate the damage we’ve already done. Protecting our unique planet and the life that it sustains, including our own, is of utmost importance.”

— JESS AND MARK PATHY



# PUTTING PTM TO THE TEST



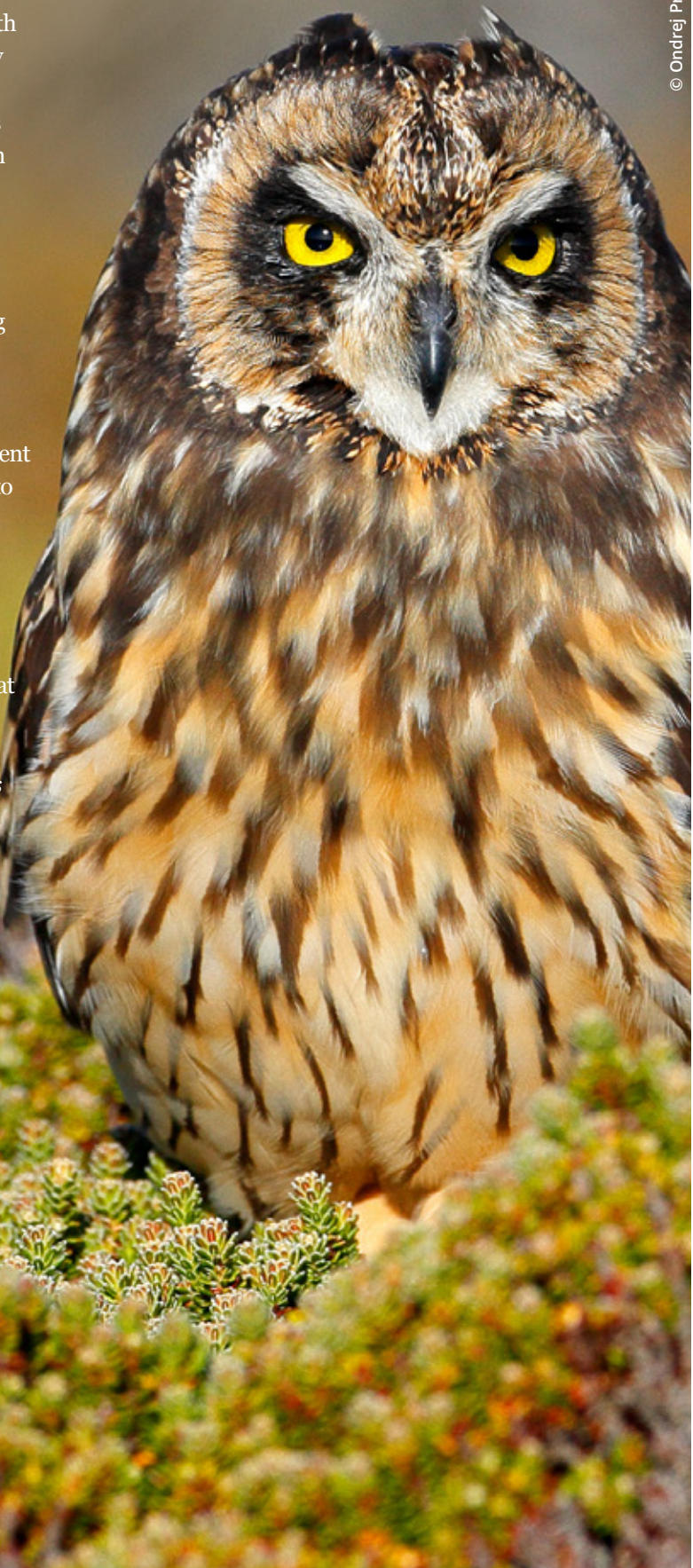
We continued to find new approaches to conservation that address both biodiversity loss and climate change by expanding our 2020 Priority Threat Management (PTM) work with the University of British Columbia.

PTM is a framework for making conservation decisions that rapidly zeros in on strategies that benefit the most species while taking into consideration the costs, benefits and feasibilities of conservation actions to maximize the impact. The actions that PTM pinpoints not only offer the best odds of protecting wildlife but, in many cases, can also help slow climate change.

In the Wolastoq (Saint John River) watershed in New Brunswick, we assessed the carbon benefit of the recommended PTM actions by evaluating how they could help to avoid carbon emissions (e.g., by protecting carbon found in nature) or remove carbon from the atmosphere (e.g., by restoring carbon-sequestering habitat). We found that if the PTM’s protected and conserved areas target (17 per cent) in the watershed is not met, the equivalent of 6.1 megatonnes of carbon is at risk of release by 2050. That’s equivalent to about half of the province’s overall greenhouse gas emissions in 2019.

We also launched a new PTM project in south central Ontario by gathering conservation practitioners from government, industry, academia, non-governmental organizations and Indigenous communities. Once the analysis is complete, the results will highlight where we should prioritize our collective conservation effort, helping to protect and recover the many species at risk that call this region home.

*Thank you to the Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada through the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk, and the Hewitt Foundation for their generous support helping to achieve this impact. ■*



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## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT



Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation

“

Although nature tries to take care of itself, sometimes it needs help. If the threats of global warming continue to increase, it is our duty to try to make the Earth a better place for future generations.

WWF-Canada’s work is important from both an educational and conservation perspective. We need a voice to constantly encourage our governments and public to do more to protect the environment. The Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation believes that by supporting WWF-Canada in its various projects, we are contributing to preservation of nature and the environment.”

— **ROHIT AND CHRISTINA SHARMA**, Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation



© Steven Kazlowski / naturepl.com

# SUPPORTING ARCTIC SPECIES, AMPLIFYING NORTHERN VOICES



Since the Arctic Species Conservation Fund (ASCF) was started in 2016, it has supported more than 80 high-quality stewardship and research initiatives that bring together Inuit knowledge, science and tech.

Our latest crop of projects — led by Indigenous, academic, government and scientific organizations — are continuing to advance our understanding of how species are responding to climate change, amplify northern voices, and inform effective Arctic conservation policies and legislation. In total, ASCF awarded over \$250,000 for projects throughout Canada’s North that assessed the impact of underwater noise from ships on bowhead whales in Foxe Basin, Nunavut; analyzed decades of narwhal data to understand how the species move; identified the drivers of human-polar bear conflict in southern Hudson Bay; and assessed walrus behaviour using satellite telemetry and stationary cameras in Nunavut.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic did stall some other planned projects, but we remained flexible and committed and are looking forward to seeing what our grantees will learn in the next field season.

*Thank you to the Alan and Patricia Koval Foundation for their generous and longstanding support of the Arctic Species Conservation Fund. ■*





© PACO COWO / Shutterstock

## BEYOND CANADA

**W**hen Rinjan Shrestha, WWF-Canada's Asian species expert, travelled to the lowland forests of Nepal five years ago, he saw only a single greater one-horned rhino around the Tamor Tal area of Chitwan National Park. On his most recent expedition in May 2022, he spotted three individuals within 45 minutes at the same location! While anecdotal, these sightings are part of a conservation success story made possible in part by donors in Canada.

WWF-Canada has supported the conservation of endangered and threatened species such as rhinos, tigers and snow leopards in Nepal since 2013 through population monitoring, habitat improvement,

and partnerships with local communities to reduce human-wildlife conflict and poaching. This year, WWF-Canada's funding helped WWF-Nepal to restore 10 hectares of grasslands, construct and maintain two wetlands, set up 367 metres of fencing to protect crops and livestock from wildlife, and establish a relief fund to reimburse farmers who experience losses.

Thanks to you, wildlife populations are gradually recovering. Once, greater one-horned rhinos were near extinction. Today, WWF researchers in Nepal have witnessed the number of greater one-horned rhinos steadily climb to 752 individuals in 2021 and

celebrated 365 days of zero poaching. Researchers from government, WWF-Nepal and other conservation organizations also undertook a National Tiger Survey, covering 18,920 sq. km and 16,811 days of field staff time. The results didn't come in time for our 2022 fiscal year, but indications pointed to numbers well surpassing the goal to double the number of wild tigers.

Nepal was also the recipient of the 2021 Conservation Excellence Award for its contribution to tiger conservation in the Khata Forest Conservation Area, a wildlife corridor that enables tigers and other wildlife to travel safely between Nepal and India.

Your gifts will help us keep up the momentum and secure the future of vulnerable species in Canada and beyond. ■



### DONOR STORY



Anna Saroli and her husband, Andrés

“Anna Saroli was born with a love of nature thanks to her parents, city people with a passion for the outdoors and camping. A committed donor since the late 1980s, Anna is a member of WWF-Canada's Legacy Circle. “It was important for me to include charities in my estate plans as a natural extension of care for the causes I'm close to,” she says. Supporting efforts to reverse nature loss gives Anna hope, as does nature's ability to regenerate.



## CLEAN CAMPS, CLEAN COASTS



Once again, WWF-Canada staffers headed out into a remote region of Nunavut to support a community-led shoreline cleanup alongside local youth and hunters. Assisting the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board in their first-ever cleanup of Iqaluit Lake — a priority fishing area identified by the Amaruq Hunters and Trappers Association in Iqaluit — the team arrived via Twin Otter prop plane and either took a long gear-laden hike to the camp or a different lengthy trek to retrieve and inflate a zodiac boat to travel there. Everyone slept in a lakeside cabin, a must for polar bear protection.

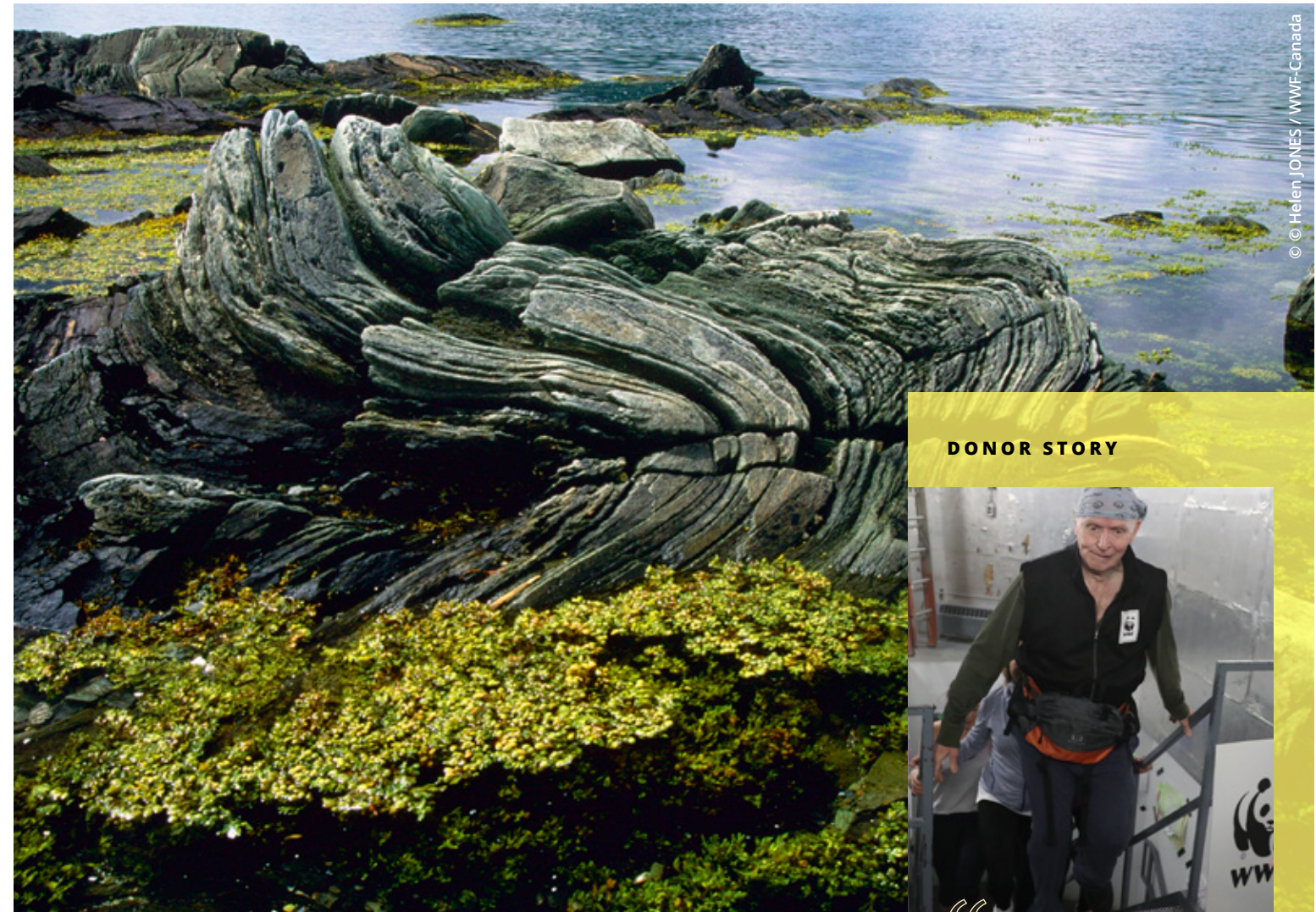
The multi-day effort to collect abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG or “ghost gear”) and other items included using an underwater ROV (remote operated vehicle) to search the lake. The team found old nets, twine, rope, fishing lures, ice chisels and boards used for getting nets in place under the ice, steel drums, soda cans, building materials, tin cans, fuel cans, plastic containers, an old skidoo and more. However, not everything found by the ROV could be retrieved, so the learning for our next Nunavut cleanup is to bring along scuba divers. ■

## RUN TO RESTORE NATURE

Participants from coast to coast joined our first-ever Run to Restore Nature, a week-long event challenging people to walk, wheel or run for nature. Participants travelled a combined 4,379 kilometres and raised over \$130,000 for critical conservation work. ■



© Jeffrey Turford



© Helen Jones / WWF-Canada

### DONOR STORY



“

Julian Backhouse is not the kind of person to let a challenge get in the way of supporting a cause he loves. The grandfather of four has Wilson's disease, a rare genetic disorder that affects his physical strength and coordination. Although he uses a wheelchair to get around most of the time, Julian has scaled the CN Tower for WWF-Canada six times, raising more than \$14,000 for wildlife conservation.

Now facing a new challenge — cancer — Julian took time to host a celebration of life that also fundraised for WWF-Canada and other charities close to his heart. “I want everyone to know I lived a full life highlighted by my grandkids joining me at the top of the CN Tower,” he said.

## ADVOCATING FOR NATURE



WWF-Canada joined several environmental organizations in appealing a Federal Court decision that would exempt future oil and gas projects off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador from scrutiny. An increase in exploratory activity in these offshore waters threatens important marine ecosystems while hampering Canada's ability to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Our appeal argued the Regional Assessment (RA) was flawed by not properly considering cumulative effects and setting a dangerous precedent for RAs, an otherwise promising protective mechanism under the

Impact Assessment Act.

We also advocated against the approval of Equinor's Bay du Nord Development Project, an offshore oil and gas site in an ecologically sensitive and biologically significant area northeast of St John's. Sigrid Kuehnemund, our VP of Wildlife and Industry, wrote in a SaltWire op-ed that the proposed activities “simply don't stand up to scrutiny, especially at this perilous moment in time for the planet.” The project, which will produce hundreds of millions of barrels of oil over its 30-year lifespan, was eventually approved by the federal government. ■





## WALRUS FROM SPACE

**W**e asked Canadians and others around the world to become citizen scientists and use satellite imagery to help count the number of walrus that haul out onto land. The goal is to use this non-invasive monitoring method to collect climate-related data on how their numbers are affected over time by sea ice loss and the changing Arctic environment.

The project received major national media coverage and helped make our Giving Tuesday campaign, which focused on safeguarding walrus and other northern species through our Arctic Species Conservation Fund, our most successful yet. ■



## LIVING PLANET @ SCHOOL: EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATOR HELPS STUDENTS TAKE NATURE HOME



**M**yrna Coleman, an educator at Clark Boulevard Public School in Brampton, Ont., knew she needed a way to get nature to the grade 3 students, many of whom lived in high-rise apartments, during lockdown. The opportunity appeared when her project was selected as a pilot in our Habitat Stewardship Initiative and also received a Go Wild grant, all through our Living Planet @ School program.

“Our original goal was to create a school-based caring garden to include pollinators, Indigenous medicinal plants and nutritious vegetables for families in our school community,” she explained.

When the lockdown hit, she had to change tack. “That’s when I thought, at school I bring the students to the

dirt, but what about sending the dirt to the students?” So Myrna and her educational assistant delivered soil, seeds, pots and other supplies to the students’ apartments. As decisions were made, they kept three guiding pillars of the project in mind – curriculum, community and caring – helping children develop deeper understanding and connections to the gifts of the Earth.

They encouraged each other virtually, excitedly sharing images of their growing plants online, and the project was a huge success. Thirty-eight balcony container gardens were created, each with a cherry tomato plant, Indigenous plants (lemon balm/wild bergamot) and pollinator-friendly heliopsis, as well as sunflower, bean and pea plants. ■

## SPREADING THE WORD

**A** core part of our mission is amplifying the voices of our Indigenous partners, and we had a unique opportunity to do so on the global stage at COP26 in Glasgow by hosting the Inuit Circumpolar Council panel “Inuit resilience and solutions to climate change in Arctic ecosystems.”

The panel featured stories from Inuit climate leaders from across the Arctic, including Jimmy Ullikatalik, manager of the Spence Bay Hunters and Trappers Association in Taloyoak, Nunavut. He is also leading a food sovereignty project called Niqihagut as part of the effort to create an Inuit Protected and Conserved Area in Aviqtuuq.

Jimmy’s arrival at COP was, ironically, delayed by climate change (unseasonably warm weather kept the Taloyoak airport fogged under), so we pre-recorded his remarks in our Toronto office. Once he arrived, Jimmy participated in a number of sessions, including meeting with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault, about Aviqtuuq.

Another opportunity to reach new audiences came via Alternatives Journal magazine. We guest edited an issue themed “The Future of Us,” which was full of articles about or related to our work, ranging from carbon-mapping the Mushkegowuk peatlands in Ontario and using



priority threat management in the Wolastoq watershed in New Brunswick to making shipping safer and a discussion between our president and president emeritus on the past and future of conservation. ■





# A GROUNDSWELL OF SUPPORT HELPS PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Last year, WWF-Canada continued making a positive impact on biodiversity and climate through our plan to Regenerate Canada, thanks in large part to our community of financial supporters who recognized the importance of our ambition.

In fiscal 2022, we raised \$31 million — a historic high. Our Legacy Circle donors, people who want to invest in a better future even after they’ve passed on, contributed \$9 million. But every single donation, big and small, helped us meet this milestone. Not all of these funds were spent in 2022, and not all will be spent in 2023. We will be financially prudent and reserve some of these funds for the future so that we can always respond to urgent needs and continue progressing toward our long-term goals even during unpredictable times.

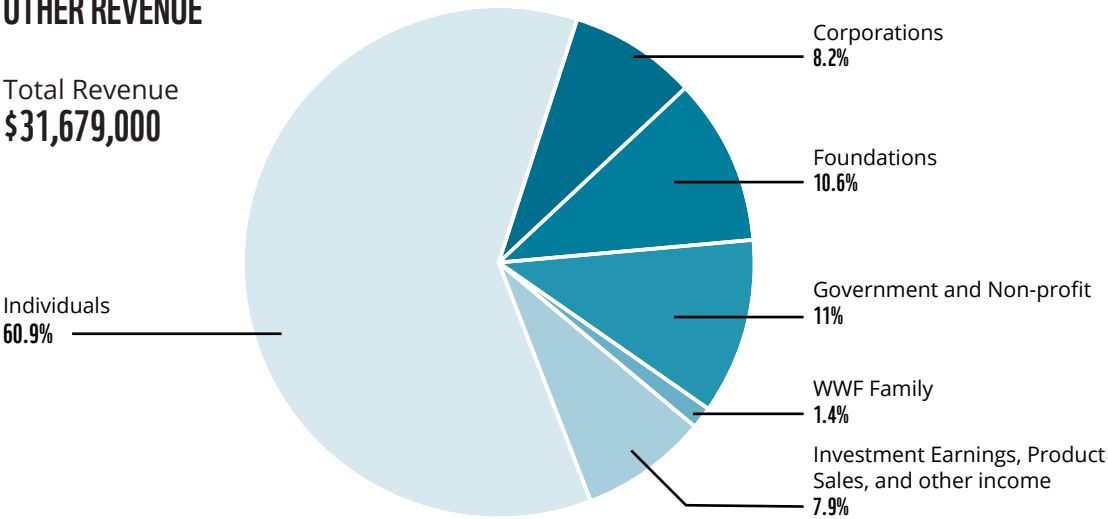
Last fiscal, we spent \$19 million on our conservation efforts. This includes everything from mapping national carbon stores and working with Indigenous partners across the country to facilitating the Nature x Carbon

Tech Challenge (supported by founding partner RBC Tech for Nature and national technology sponsor Microsoft) and supporting our Nature and Climate Grant program (presented in partnership with Aviva Canada). All these actions — large-scale and at the individual level — are focused on halting climate change and reversing biodiversity loss.

The year hasn’t been without challenges, many of which we’ll continue to face in the coming years. WWF-Canada has not escaped the issues affecting the global economy — inflation, supply chain issues and a possible recession — and we know our supporters face them as well. But we hope that people continue to understand the urgency of this moment and the value in supporting our important conservation work. We will be keeping a close eye on market forces and exercising caution when called for. Above all, we will maintain our high standards of accountability and governance while pursuing our goal of a creating a resilient and equitable future for all. ■

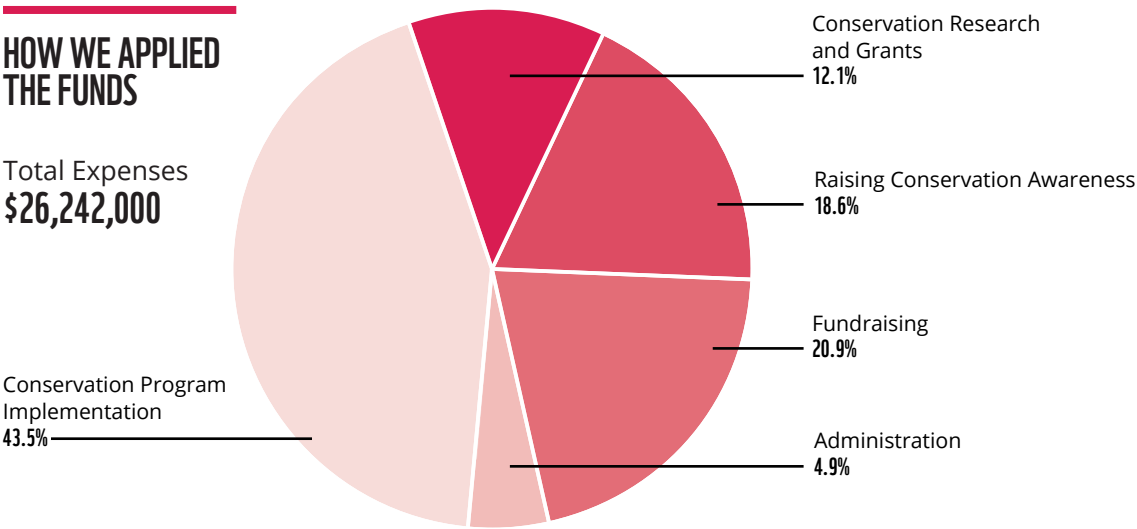
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HOW WE APPLIED THE FUNDS

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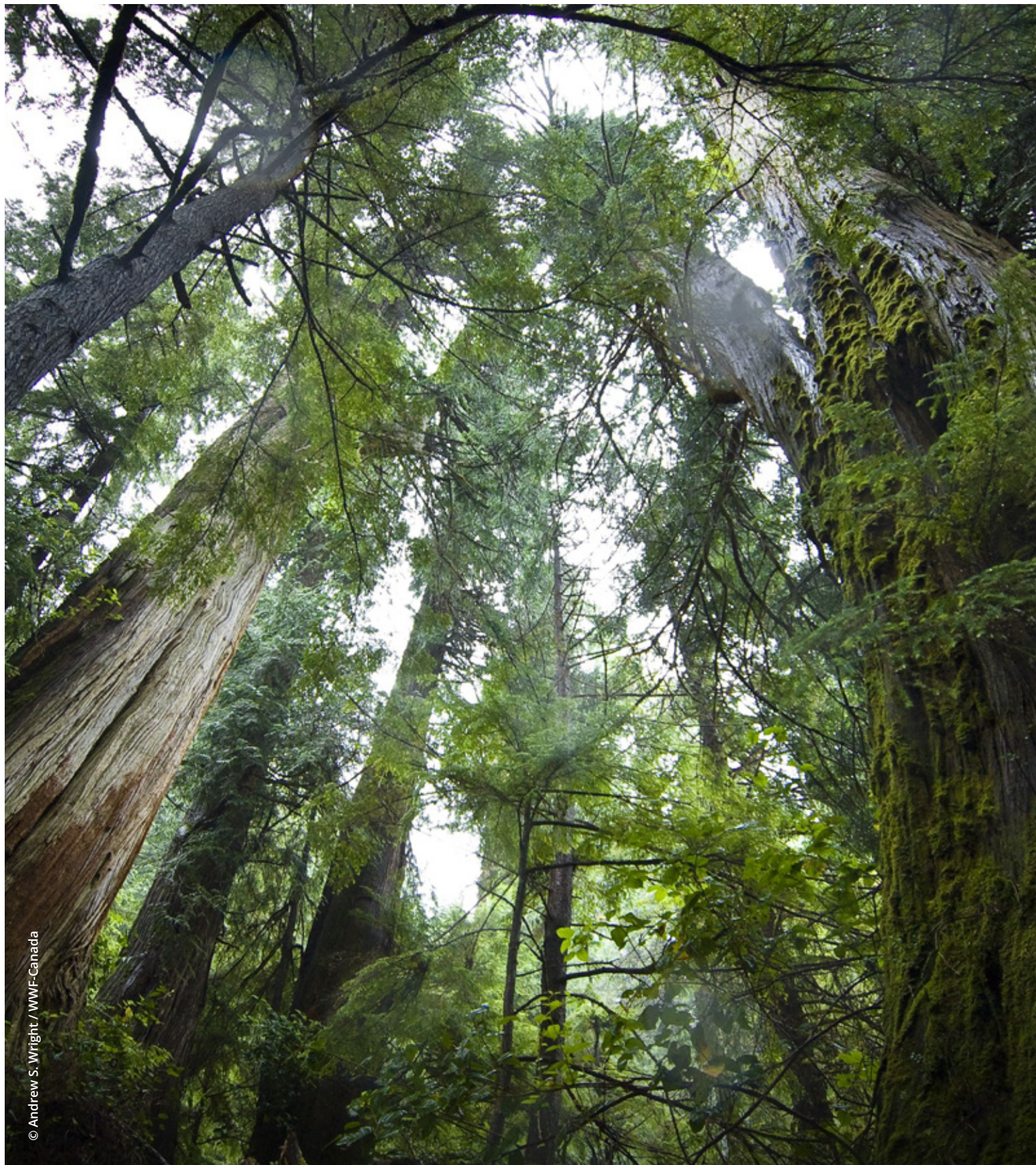
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