

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Yukon Conservation Society respectfully acknowledges that we are advocating for the protection and conservation of the lands, waters, and wild beings within the current Yukon Territory, which have been stewarded by Yukon First Nations, the Inuvialuit and transboundary Indigenous peoples since time immemorial.

ENERGY + ELECTRIC THERMAL STORAGE

YCS Team: Scott Pressnail (Energy Analyst), Dr. Tara Howatt (former ETS Project Manager), Sarahlily Stein (ETS Project Coordinator), Alyssa Benoit (Clean Energy Intern)

We made a lot of progress on the Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) demonstration project:

- We completed the installation of all the 45 ETS units, including seven Air-Source Heat Pump and ETS combination systems, followed by regular site visits with project participants.
 - We hosted ETS contractor training sessions to enhance local capacity for this technology.
 - We are working closely with our research partners at Northern Energy Innovation to complete the ETS project's final report.
 - We have begun installation and analysis for a commercial/institutional thermal storage unit at Yukon University.
 - We were honoured with an invitation to present at the Generation Power event, a program empowering Indigenous youth to lead Canada's transition to a clean energy economy, held at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre (KDCC).
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MINING

YCS Team: Lewis Rifkind (Mining Analyst), Laura Pothier Guerra (Sustainability Intern)

Our contributions helped shape mining decisions in the territory:

- We provided feedback on eight mining projects through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board (YESAB) and four through the Yukon Water Board (YWB).
 - We actively advocated for effective environmental laws in the upcoming New Mineral Legislation through our participation in meetings with the drafting bodies, submitting detailed comments and providing direction for public comment submissions.
 - We supported Yukon community groups by developing valuable resources including maps showing mine claims within municipal boundaries.
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YCS Team: Sebastian Jones (Fish, Habitat and Wildlife Analyst), Dr. Kirsten Reid (former Conservation Biologist), Laura Pothier Guerra (Sustainability Intern)

Our contributions helped advocate for Yukon's quieter lands and wildlife:

- We submitted 20 comments to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB).
- We engaged in a stakeholder group tasked with developing a new **Yukon Public Lands Act**, alongside the Yukon Government and the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN). This act is poised to significantly influence land use planning across various sectors.
- We were invited to present our findings on the effects of cumulative disturbances on the **Clear Creek Caribou Herd** at the North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference, held in May in Anchorage, Alaska.
- We published the **Yukon Caribou Story Map**, emphasizing the need of caribou conservation.



YCS Team: Sarah-Juliet Nadler (Outreach & Communications Manager), Natalie Van Sterthem (former Fundraising & Engagement Coordinator), Aiyana O'Shaughnessy (Educational Program Coordinator), Andrew Smyth and Danial Kosarifar (2023 Interpretive Guides)

We connected people with nature, amplified Indigenous voices and created community:

Summer Program: Guided Hikes and Created at the Canyon

- We engaged with over 1,000 participants this year. Thank you for connecting with us!
- We offered over 100 free guided hikes and 11 themed program offerings.
- The 12th annual *Created at the Canyon* began with an opening prayer and ceremony led by Elder Phil Gatensby. YCS sponsored 7 local artists, including both demonstration artists and interactive workshop leaders. Indigenous artists were at the forefront, with four featured creatives, showcasing beading, carving, dream-catcher making, and storytelling. The final artist exhibit was graciously hosted by the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

Thank you for sharing your knowledge and expertise, strengthening our Summer Interpretive Program: Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, WildWise Yukon, S.S Klondike National Historic Site, Yukon First Nations Culture & Tourism Association, Beringia Interpretive Centre, MacBride Museum, YG Tourism and Culture (Chelsea Jeffery, Ty Holton), Yukon Wildlife Preserve, Bruce Bennett, Brent Liddle, Michael Dougherty

Winter Program: Educational Workshops

- The new Educational Program Coordinator role enabled us to offer Indigenous-led educational workshops, including salve-making and sewing with fish leather, with additional workshops planned. Stay tuned for more!
- We have been excitedly planning public educational programming including a multi-perspective speaker and discussion series as well as youth curriculum and outdoor learning experiences.

Outreach, Engagement and Action

- The YCS team continues to deliver interviews with local, territorial and national media outlets. It is a rare week that at least one of our analysts is not consulted by a journalist!
- We continue to collaborate with the YCS team to produce YCS' bi-weekly newsletter *Tread Lightly*, biannual publication *Walk Softly* and maintain a multi-channel online presence.
- YCS is working collaboratively on the communications for the Yukon South Beringia Priority Place Initiative and producing a video about Road Ecology with Yellowstone to Yukon.
- We did community outreach at the Fireweed Community Market, Indigenous Peoples Day at the KDCC, Electrify Yukon, YukonU Expo, and 12 Days of Christmas.
- Staff and volunteers hit the streets with trash bags for the CoW Community Clean-up.



AROUND THE OFFICE

YCS Team: Martin Melendro (Executive Director), Joan Norberg (Administrative Manager), Scott Pressnail (Energy Analyst)

Updating the Parnell House:

- As YCS has grown, we need an office space that grows with us. We are looking into options and funding to be able to either retrofit our office or to do a more robust renovation. This initiative not only aligns with our environmental ethos but also serves as a practical demonstration of our advocacy in action.
- We engaged the YCS community for input on the future of our office, ensuring our plans resonate with our collective vision for a sustainable workspace.

Heartfelt Gratitude to YCS Funders and Partners

Wilburforce, 444S, Nature Canada, Climate Action Network, the City of Whitehorse, the Yukon Government, Historic Sites Fund, Arts Fund, Yukon 125, Heritage Training Fund the Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs, Clean Foundation Green Jobs, Canadian Wildlife Federation, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, Terre Boréale, Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, Yukon Energy, Yukon University's Northern Energy Innovation, CPAWS Yukon, Yukon South Beringia Priority Place Initiative, Canadian Environmental Network, Environment and Climate Change Canada



THANK YOU.

Yukon's communities, wild beings and wilderness greatly appreciate and rely on your continued support for the conservation and environmental advocacy work that we do!

Donate online:



Renew membership:



Open Houses & Pop-up Art Shop

Snack, shop local, and talk nature!



Thursday,
December 7th



302 & 301
Hawkins St.



3:00 - 7:00 pm

Co-hosted with:



YCS' End-of-Year Party

Cozy, potluck, awards, cider, fire, music, games, good cheer



Thursday,
December 7th



YCS, 302
Hawkins St.



7:00 - 10:00ish pm



HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

