



Human/Grizzly Bear Coexistence Project in the Kootenays Gets Funding Plus 180 Conservation Projects Across BC

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Cranbrook, BC: the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF) has announced \$9.2 million in funding for more than 180 individual wildlife, freshwater fish, and habitat conservation projects across British Columbia this year.

“This is no small feat,” said Dan Buffett, CEO of HCTF. “It reflects a diversity of funding from our core contributors [hunters, anglers, trappers and guides], court awards, provincial government contributions and endowments, and our partners such as the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC).”

Through cooperation with conservation groups like FESBC, HCTF is able to support projects such as the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development’s study of grizzly bear mortality in the Kootenay region. This project builds upon a large base of research to provide recommendations on how best to solve pressing conservation concerns in a region with one of the highest rates of human caused grizzly bear mortality in the province.



Project lead Clayton Lamb is working with researchers and local authorities in the Elk Valley to track bear populations and implement precautionary measures designed to limit human/bear conflict.

“Our project blends scientific rigour and a large group of collaborators to achieve on-the-ground conservation for grizzly bears and the people who coexist with them. Through HCTF and FESBC’s funding, we have been successful in monitoring over 50 grizzly bears in south eastern BC,” says Lamb.

To date, the project has achieved a number of meaningful conservation actions, including removing uncontrolled roadkill dumping sites near communities where bears were feeding, breaking ground on roadkill-reducing underpasses along Highway 3 near Fernie, and reducing resource road densities throughout the Elk Valley. This project is an excellent example of how conservationists across the province are taking in-depth scientific research and applying it to practical conservation solutions to the benefit of both BC’s wildlife and the human populations that coexist with them.

Other HCTF funded projects taking place in the Kootenay region:

- \$68,000 for invasive plant management and forage improvement on bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer winter ranges, co-funded by FESBC
- \$122,800 for habitat enhancement and connectivity improvement for the Bull River bighorn sheep population
- \$147,500 to support the Kootenay Region River Guardian Program which provides a compliance presence, collects angler survey data, and educates the public about sport fish populations across the region.

FESBC’s Executive Director Steve Kozuki is “thrilled to partner with the trusted and respected Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation to improve wildlife habitat. With their first-in-class management of funds and projects by talented and professional staff, we know that we are maximizing benefits for wildlife in British Columbia.”



Forest Enhancement
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Each project funded through HCTF is reviewed by a multi-level, objective technical review process prior to final Board review and decision. HCTF's Board of Directors ensures that species important to BC anglers and hunters are supported but also place a great deal of importance on conserving whole ecosystems, species-at-risk and investing in environmental education across the province.

To see the complete list of HCTF funded projects or explore the conservation work being done near you view the [2020-21 Approved Project List](#) or our [2020-21 Project Map](#).

For Interviews:

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HCTF Quick Facts

It is the mission of HCTF to improve the conservation outcomes of BC's fish and wildlife, and the habitats in which they live. We make a difference by funding conservation projects and by educating and engaging the public about BC's natural assets.

- Since 1981, HCTF has provided over \$189 million in grants for almost 3,000 conservation projects across BC.
- HCTF began as an initiative by BC anglers, hunters, trappers, and guide outfitters.

FESBC Quick Facts

In February 2016, the Government of British Columbia announced the formation of FESBC with initial funding of \$85 million and a five-member Board of Directors to oversee the establishment of the Society and the delivery of its purposes. An additional \$150 million was announced in early 2017.

- The purposes of FESBC are to advance environmental and resource stewardship of BC's forests by: 1) preventing and mitigating the impact of wildfires; 2) improving damaged or low value forests; 3) improving habitat for wildlife; 4) supporting the use of fibre from damaged and low value forests; and 5) treating forests to improve the management of greenhouse gases.
- As of January 30, 2020, FESBC has supported 250 projects valued at \$233 million, in partnership with the Province of BC and the Government of Canada.