

Together for Wildlife

Together for Wildlife HCTF Conservation Fellowship Recipient 2023



Jeffrey Nishima-Miller

Jeff Nishima-Miller is a PhD Candidate at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus. Jeff works out of UBC Okanagan's Centre for Environmental Assessment Research under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Hanna.

Though originally from Southern Alberta, Jeff spent most of his childhood and formative years living in Victoria, BC. While completing his bachelor's and master's degrees, Jeff worked for the British Columbia Wildfire Service as a Unit Crew member based out of Princeton.

Wildfire work and backcountry pursuits have allowed Jeff to explore much of British Columbia and further develop his appreciation for wildlands and passion for wildlife conservation.

Jeff's research focuses on conservation planning, including setting population objectives, conservation goals, and management action design. As a part of Jeff's research, he is working with the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation to advance knowledge and support the development and implementation of a wildlife management strategy for the Tsilhqot'in Declared Title Area. The 2014 Supreme Court of Canada's landmark Tsilhqot'in decision recognized 1700 km² of land as Declared Title of the Tsilhqot'in Nation. The Tsilhqot'in Title Land is within the Caretaker Area of Xeni Gwet'in First Nation (one of six Tsilhqot'in communities). Jeff is working with the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation, to advance the design and implementation of their wildlife management strategy.

The Tsilhqot'in Title Lands are physically and biologically diverse, including species such as bighorn sheep, mountain goats, grizzly and black bears, cougar, wolves, moose, and mule deer. Population stressors, including, species interactions (i.e., predation and competition), habitat degradation and fragmentation, and climate change (among other factors) are changing the suitability of habitats and the persistence of wildlife. Through a community-based approach, Jeff's work supports Xeni Gwet'in in strategizing how best to mitigate the impacts of species population stressors, with the end goal of cultivating an abundance of healthy and thriving habitats and wildlife populations.

By supporting Xeni Gwet'in's strategic planning, Jeff's research will identify wildlife management levers, governance approaches, and funding models across Canada and internationally which can be weaved into a robust wildlife management regime to achieve tangible outcomes for people, wildlife, and habitat in tandem.



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