



Annual Report

2003-2004

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Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology

Box 2568 Revelstoke BC V0E 2S0

Phone: 250-837-9311 Fax: 250-837-9311

Email: office@cmiae.org Web site: www.cmiae.org

1 Message from the President

The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology (CMI) was busy with smaller projects this year, in lieu of a larger event. The *Annual Researchers' Meeting* was held at the Blue Lake Centre, and a repeat offering of the *Applying DNA Methods to the Study of Wildlife Distribution and Abundance* course was well attended. We assisted the Revelstoke Forest Workers Group by hosting the *Mountain Caribou Predator-Prey-Habitat Expert Panel*, and by taking over the maintenance of their *Mountain Caribou Compendium*. We also assisted the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection by administering funds for wildlife inventory flights.

We did not host a major event in 2003-2004, and, as expected, had to dip into our hard-earned surplus from the previous year. Four events will kick-start the 2004-2005 year, so we are hopeful that next year will be off to a good start, both activity-wise and financially.

This year marked the fifth and final year of our Cooperating Agreement with Parks Canada. We are confident that both the CMI and Parks Canada benefited from this Agreement, and we look forward to continuing our working relationship in future years.

The success of our events and our ability to do a lot with a small amount of funding is due in large part to the energy and hard work of the organizing committees, our instructors for the events, and our volunteer board of fifteen directors. However, the main reason for CMI's continued success is our Executive Director, Jackie Morris. On behalf of the members and directors, I would like to extend our thanks to Jackie for her excellent work and dedication. Jackie maintains a high standard of professionalism that is reflected in the success of our endeavours.

We rely on our diverse membership to suggest themes for workshops and courses, and to contribute information for our much-praised members' email bulletins. As you will see in this report, the number of our Corporate and Regular members is once again higher than the previous year. We take this as a positive sign that our society is moving in the right directions in regard to supporting the research community.

Ian Adams, Vice President
Columbia Mountains Institute

2 Operation of the Columbia Mountains Institute

2.1 About the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology

The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology (CMI) is a non-profit society dedicated to facilitating applied ecological research in the Columbia Mountains of British Columbia and to making information stemming from this research available to managers, resource technicians, scientists, and the public.

The CMI was incorporated as a society in 1996, and is based in Revelstoke, British Columbia. The society is directed by a maximum of fifteen Board members. An Executive Director supports the Board on a contractual basis.

2.2 Board of Directors for 2003-2004

Executive

Karen Bray, President	Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program
Ian Adams, Vice President	Corvus Communications
Del Williams, Treasurer	Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation
Susan Hall, Secretary	Parks Canada

Directors

Patrick Daigle	BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
Jenny Feick	BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
Ed Hill	BC Hydro
Rachel Holt	Veridian Ecological Consulting
Bruce McLellan	BC Ministry of Forests
Garth Mowat	Aurora Wildlife Research
Ian Parfitt	Selkirk College
Chris Steeger	Pandion Ecological Research
Brendan Wilson	Selkirk College
Guy Woods	BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
John Woods	Parks Canada

Staff

Jackie Morris

Directors' meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each month, with the exception of July and August.

2.3 Membership of the Columbia Mountains Institute

The Columbia Mountains Institute ended the year with 60 regular members, 3 student members, and 31 corporate members. Over 200 people receive the CMI emailed updates—likely more, as the updates are circulated widely within some of the corporate memberships.

CMI Corporate Members for 2003-2004

- Atticus Resource Consulting Ltd
- BC Hydro, Generation Environment, Burnaby office
- BC Hydro, Revelstoke Office
- Canadian Mountain Holidays
- City of Revelstoke
- College of the Rockies
- Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program
- Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission
- Dillon Consulting
- Downie Timber
- DWB Forestry Services Ltd.
- East Kootenay Environmental Society
- Forest Extension and Research Partnership
- Friends of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier
- Golder Associates
- Great Canadian Heli-skiing
- Guide Outfitters Association of BC
- Ministry of Forests Research Branch, Victoria office
- Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, Ecosystem Conservation, Victoria Office
- Ministry of Water, Air and Land Protection, Biodiversity Branch, Victoria Office
- Minto Manor Bed and Breakfast
- Nanuq Consulting Ltd.
- Monashee Powder Adventures Cat Skiing
- Okanagan University College
- Parks Canada, Calgary Office
- Parks Canada, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks
- Revelstoke Skills Centre
- Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation
- Selkirk College, Renewable Resources Department
- Tembec Industries, BC Division
- West Fraser Mills

2.4 Supporters of the Columbia Mountains Institute

The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Parks Canada through our Contribution Agreement. This was the final year of our five year Agreement. The generosity of other agencies for grants and sponsorships in support of our activities are recognized in the list of workshops and courses on the CMI web site (www.cmiae.org).

2.5 Administrative Changes for the Columbia Mountains Institute

In October of 2003 the CMI began to collect and remit the GST. This was not a requirement, for in some years the CMI does not reach the income needed to make handling GST a necessity. However, the CMI pays GST, and it is advantageous for us to recover the GST.

Other changes in office operations included:

- In May of 2003, we surplused the old laser printer and bought a laser printer that also serves as a fax machine and scanner.
- The CMI's email address changed to office@cmiae.org when we shifted to a new web server with more capacity.

In March of 2004, BC Hydro donated a surplus digital projector to the CMI. Although the projector is old, it will have value as a backup unit.

3 Activities of the Columbia Mountains Institute

3.1 Collaboration

The Columbia Mountains Institute has completed a five-year Contribution Agreement with Parks Canada (Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks). This multi-year agreement formalized financial and in-kind support for the CMI, and outlined the benefits Parks Canada receives in return. Support for the Columbia Mountains Institute furthered Parks Canada's interest in maintaining environmental integrity both inside and outside the national park boundaries.

Memoranda of Understanding are now in place with:

- Dr. Mindy Brugman, Research Scientist
- Lauren Waters, Research Associate
- Brendan Wilson, Research Associate
- Pandion Ecological Research, Corporate Research Associate
- Mark Hall, Research Associate

A fifth Memorandum is in progress with Dr. Kris Rothley at Simon Fraser University. These Memoranda set the stage for supporting these Research Associates in various research projects.

3.2 Supporting Applied Ecological Research

CMI Email Bulletins

The CMI's email bulletins provide members with updates on CMI news, funding sources, web sites, new documents, job postings, workshops, and other topics of interest to researchers in the field of applied ecology. Messages are grouped and sent as a bi-weekly or monthly bulletin. Nineteen email bulletins were sent to CMI members over the year. A print archive of the emails is maintained at the CMI office. An on-line archive of these bulletins is available on the CMI web site, although it is always several months out of date (receiving the bulletins is a privilege of membership in the CMI.) Bulletins are sent to over 200 people, and distributed further within the networks of our corporate members.

CMI Web Site (www.cmiae.org)

The CMI web site continues to provide information on current ecological issues to members and the general public. In December of 2003 the CMI web site was

shifted to a new server. Numbers of visitors entering via search engines dropped while the internet search engines “re-located” our web address.

Popular pages on the CMI web site continue to be:

- Anything about bears or mountain caribou
- CMI Event Information and summaries of past workshops.
- National park feature articles
- Bibliography on the *Effects of highways and other linear developments on wildlife populations.*

Mountain Caribou Compendium

The Mountain Caribou Compendium was developed by the Revelstoke Forests Workers Group in early 2003, and on-going maintenance of the Compendium was assumed by CMI in June 2003. The Compendium consists of print copies of over 125 research documents related to Mountain Caribou, and is housed at the Revelstoke Library. A downloadable listing of these documents, including abstracts, is housed on the CMI web site. The same information is available at the FORREX web site (Natural Resources Information Network). Updating of the Compendium will continue as funding permits.

Mountain Caribou Predator-Prey-Habitat Expert Panel

In February 2004, the CMI assisted the Revelstoke Caribou Recovery Committee to host a panel of three experts, who addressed the Predator-Prey-Habitat issues surrounding the decline of Mountain Caribou. Recommendations from this panel went to the North Kootenay Recovery Action Group in March 2004. The report is available on the CMI web site or by calling the CMI office. Funding assistance for this project came from the Columbia Basin Trust, Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, LP Corp, Downie Timber, Revelstoke Snowmobile Club, and the Revelstoke Community Forest Corporation.

Wildlife Inventory Flights – Funding Support

Through an agreement with the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, CMI was able to hold funds into the fiscal year of 2003-2004 to support costs for Wildlife Inventory Flights for Mountain Caribou.

3.3 Education

Workshops and Courses

A major goal of the CMI is to identify current ecological issues, then host workshops or courses to address these issues. The following two events were offered in 2003-2004. Other events were considered and then did not progress beyond the initial stages (Cumulative Effects on Wildlife, Effects of Backcountry Recreation on Wildlife, and Biodiversity in Wetbelt Forests).

The CMI worked with the University of Northern British Columbia, Continuing Education, to host another Wildlife Immobilization course. The course was scheduled for April of 2004 and cancelled due to lack of participants, although UNBC is hopeful it will be held in June of 2004. Jackie Morris worked with Rob Bryce, offering advice and contacts from past CMI-hosted Wildlife Immobilization Courses, on a fee basis. The fee will be paid when UNBC runs the course.

Applying DNA Methods to the Study of Wildlife Distribution and Abundance
December 1-4, 2003
Nelson BC

This course was a repeat of the course held in November 2002. Twenty-three people attended the course. Garth Mowat, David Paetkau, and John Boulanger each taught a one day session, and John Woods acted as course coordinator. The course concluded with a group discussion on controversies concerning the use of DNA to estimate wildlife abundance and distribution.

CMI Annual Researchers' Meeting
April 29-30, 2003
Blue Lake Forest Education Centre

CMI's Annual Researchers' Meeting and Annual General Meeting for 2002-2003 were held at the Blue Lake Forest Education Centre near Canal Flats, BC on April 29-30th. Twenty-eight people heard presentations about current ecological research and new initiatives in the Columbia Basin.

4 Preface to Financial Statement

The un-audited financial statements report a net deficit of 9,835.32 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2004. This deficit was predicted in the budget for the year. By comparison, the previous three fiscal years produced the following results: in March 2003, a net surplus of \$21,890, in March 2002, a net deficit of \$13,229.73, and in March 2001, a net surplus of \$13,131.28.

The CMI enters the next fiscal year with an accumulated surplus of \$22,588.

Since CMI does not have a major financial underwriter, our operating funds come mostly from workshop proceeds, membership fees, and contract administration revenues. Membership fees and contract administration fees are kept as low as possible, thus our financial success in a given year relies on the types of events we host, and their success. Typically, we have major event every two to three years that produces a large surplus that subsidizes the lower income years. Past examples include the *Mountain Caribou in 21st Century Ecosystems* and *Managing for Bears in Forested Environments* conferences.

We are again grateful to our members and our volunteer Board of Directors for keeping us in touch with current ecological issues and identifying skill development needs, because this is what keeps our events relevant and well-attended. The in-kind and financial support of our event sponsors and partners, some of whom have contributed to several of our events over the years, is also acknowledged as important to our society's financial standing.

Del Williams
Treasurer
Columbia Mountains Institute

(The financial statement for 2003-2004 is not included in this internet version of the Annual Report. They are available to CMI members only, by contacting the CMI office at 250-837-9311.)