



COLUMBIA MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE OF APPLIED ECOLOGY

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

www.cmiae.org

CMI acknowledges and honours the four nations on whose territory we work: the Sinixt, the Ktunaxa, the Secwepemc, and the Syilx.

Photo: Marc-André Beaucher

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been another exciting and productive year for CMI, with the delivery of many courses, workshops, and a large conference as you will see below. This would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our Executive Director Hailey Ross who is the mastermind behind being able to offer and deliver CMI's programs, once again. CMI Board Members and volunteers also play an important role in piecing together the subjects and content chosen for our events while also supporting event delivery logistics. There is a lot to it, and that is what makes it both challenging and very rewarding. I want to emphasize that the CMI membership is vital to our organization financially, but also because what we do is for you! Our success lies in your engagement with the knowledge sharing, skill building, and networking that take place at our events. Thank you to all, this is what makes the CMI network so valuable!

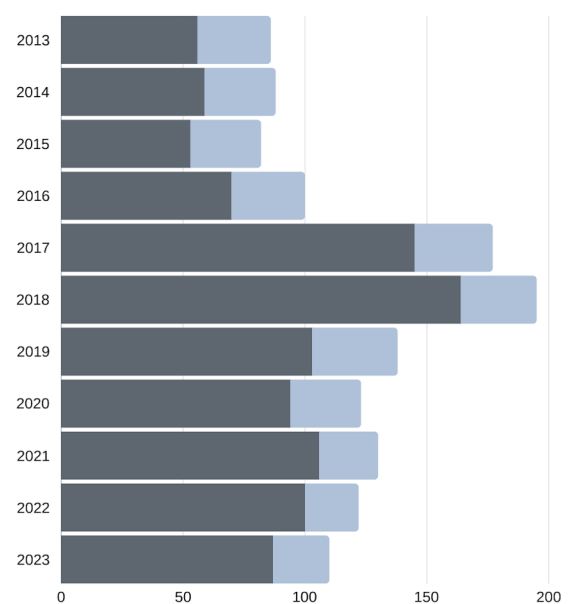
- Marc-André Beaucher, CMI President

OUR MEMBERSHIP & NETWORK

CMI's 2023 membership levels saw a small drop in regular individual memberships at 72, down from 100 the year before. Student membership remained stable at 15, and a slight increase in corporate memberships at 23 which accounts for 362 individual people. We continue to notice that rate of renewal for individual memberships from year to year is low and looking at renewal rates over a longer period of time, member retention is very high. In other words, individuals don't necessarily renew *every* year, but they do every few years and you can see that almost half of our membership have been with us for well over decade. We continue to see an increase in the number of people enrolled to receive our event announcements with that list reaching 1200* people. Collectively, these people make up CMI's network.

*This is a decrease from what was reported in 2022 due to the removal of bounced email addresses from the list.

CMI Membership over the last 10 years



Dark grey are individual members (including students), light grey are the number of corporate members.

THANK YOU

2023 EVENT FUNDERS

Project-specific funds were received from:

Columbia Basin Trust, Columbia Power, Masse Environmental, McElhanney, RC Strategies, Real Estate Foundation of BC, Revelstoke Credit Union, Revelstoke Municipality Initiative, Tourism Revelstoke, and Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative

2023 EVENT PARTNERS

BC Conservation Data Centre, BC Parks, Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Golden + Area A Trail Alliance, Kootenay Conservation Program, Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, Poisson Consulting, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, Selkirk College, Shuswap Trail Alliance, and Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative

CONTINUING EDUCATION

In 2023, CMI delivered a fantastic mix of skill-building courses and workshops both in-person and online. We also hosted an interdisciplinary and very well-received hybrid (online and in-person) conference on the topic of Responsible Recreation that engaged people and organizations that were new to CMI. We had another successful season of the CREDtalks that were delivered in partnership with the Kootenay Conservation Program (more in this below). We continue to ask our network what sort of events and courses they could use to support them professionally – these suggestions truly drive what we do. We are always pleased to hear these suggestions, so thanks in advance for continuing to send them in!

Courses & Workshops

A total of 7 courses and workshops were held in 2023 that collectively engaged a total of 156 registrants and 15 instructors and facilitators. Ayla Pearson's online R courses continued to be popular, and Joe Thorley's deep dive into Bayesian Statistics proved to be a deep learning experience for those who stuck with him over the summer months. We were thankful that Chris Beirne returned to Revelstoke to deliver his prized course on Camera Trap Data Management which continues to bring people together from far and wide. We were happy to offer an opportunity for our network to receive updates from Environment and Climate Change Canada on navigating the new changes to the Migratory Birds Convention Act along with the supporting tools and data with the BC Conservation Data Centre. This year's Advanced Field Ornithology course saw Marc-André Beaucher and Rachel Darvill rise to the challenge of filling John Woods' shoes, delivering an excellent course. Finally, Richard Johnson, whose enthusiasm is infectious, continued to offer his online QGIS training. The links below will take you to more course info.

- [Introduction to `R` software](#) (June & Nov)
- [Data Manipulation and Visualization in R](#)
- [Introduction to Camera Trap Data Management and Analysis in R](#)
- [Statistical Rethinking: A Bayesian Study Group](#)
- [Advanced Field Ornithology: Identification and Surveys by Sound](#)
- [Navigating the Migratory Birds Convention Act and Species at Risk Act, with Methods, Tools and Data from the BC Conservation Data Centre](#)

CMi RESOURCES & PUBLIC OUTREACH

CMi maintains and is continually adding to our [YouTube Channel](#) – a place that has just gotten better since the beginning of the pandemic and includes all the recordings curated during our popular CREDtalks series. There are dozens of talk recordings on there from past events available to anyone with interest. We also create [proceedings documents](#) from all of our major events which are fabulous resources and available as free downloads from our website. Most of these proceeding documents can also be found on EcoCat: the Province of [BC's Ecological Reports Catalogue](#). EcoCat provides access to reports on ecological activities in BC, plus related files such as maps, datasets and published inventories when available. Subject areas include: aquatic species and habitats, terrestrial species and habitats, floodplain mapping, reservoirs, groundwater, and vegetation.

Public Talks & Webinars

For CREDtalks, our annual webinar series, we partnered with the Kootenay Conservation Program (KCP) to deliver 7 talks on the theme of Foundations of Resilience: Understanding departures from historical ecosystems and adapting for resilient futures. Jen Baron, PhD candidate with UBC, was indispensable in helping to shape the series theme and identify potential speakers. With KCP's partnership and support, an excellent webinar series was delivered with just over 1,630 registrants, accounting for 644 individuals. Talk recordings were created and are available to anyone with interest, the views continue to rise on both the KCP and [CMI YouTube Channels](#). At the time of writing (Feb 2024) total views for all talks in season 7 total to 2,060. We thank The Columbia Basin Trust for their continued sponsorship of this series, and the speakers for sharing their time and knowledge with us!



We also hosted a very thought-provoking [Community Keynote for the Responsible Recreation conference](#), read more about that below or follow the event link.

Conferences

In May of 2023 we hosted an interdisciplinary crowd for the 2-day conference: **Responsible Recreation – Pathways, Practices and Possibilities**. This was CMI's first hybrid conference welcoming both in-person and online attendance with just over 200 registrants in total. A strong committee with the following partner groups helped to shape this event: [BC Parks](#), [Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area](#), [Golden + Area A Trail Alliance](#), [Outdoor Recreation Council of BC](#), [Recreation Sites and Trails BC](#), [Selkirk College](#), [Shuswap Trail Alliance](#), and [Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative](#).

At this event, the most science-driven talks addressing wildlife impacts were delivered in panel form to make the information as accessible as possible for the diverse audience in attendance. The talks given the most time on the agenda were specific to management approaches and tools (Pathways, Practices and Possibilities). The second day of the event provided lots of time for discussion in both panel and workshop form, as well as a wrap-up conversation café with break-out discussion groups. The results from the conversation café along with presentation summaries are included in the [proceedings document](#). This document was received by the Province of BC's visioning process towards the development of a provincial recreation strategy.

A community keynote took place that was open and free to the public and featured an opening address with Sinixt cultural facilitator, Shelly Boyd, a film screening of [Beyond Begbie](#), and a panel discussion with Shelly, the film producer Nat Segal, and others featured in the film. Natalie Knowles with the University of Waterloo and Protect Our Winters provided a thought-provoking keynote. This evening event was not recorded, something we came to later regret.

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

CMI DIRECTORS:

Jeremy Ayotte
Marc-André Beaucher, President
Kevin Bollefer, Treasurer
Catherine Craig, Secretary
Brett Elmslie
Ryan Gill
Doris Hausleitner
Rena Mackas

CMI DIRECTORS (con't)

Mike Miller
Randy Moody
Carrie Nadeau
Peter Tarleton, Vice President
Jacqueline Van Horne
Harry van Oort
Brendan Wilson

CMI STAFF:

Hailey Ross, Executive Director
Mia King, Administrative Assistant

Learn more about our directors and staff on our webpage [here](#)

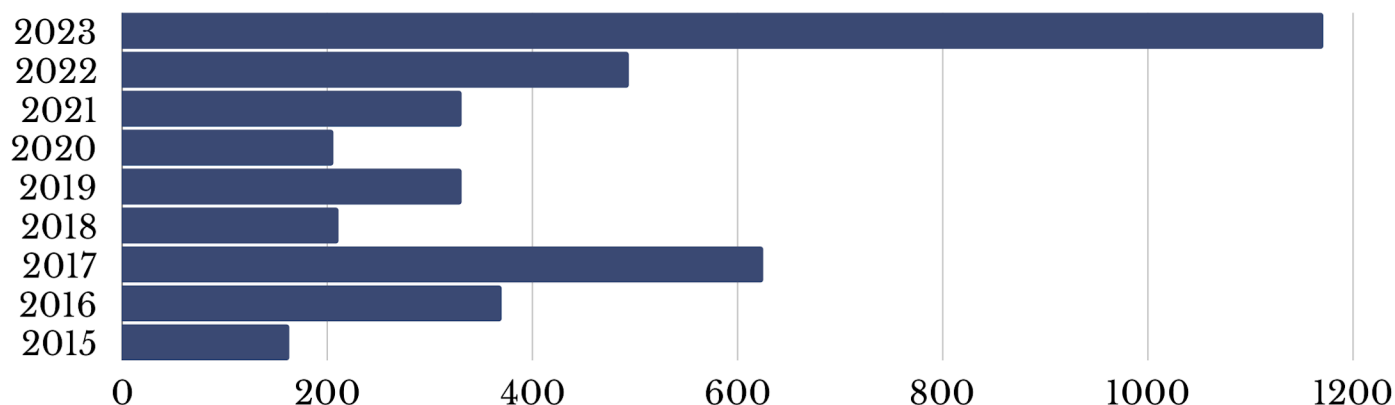
CMI's Researchers' Forum

This year, our annual Researchers' Forum took place in Nelson, BC during the first snowfall of the season in October. The event welcomed research and project updates on the theme of restoration along with a smattering of other really interesting and valuable projects. While the Researchers' Forums tend to be small events, just over 100 people registered for this event, including just over 30 students from Selkirk College. It was wonderful to have the students engage with the ecologists in the area and get inspired about how they might contribute to all this great work. A proceedings document provides summaries of 2 field trips, 11 posters, and 11 oral presentations on everything from White Surgeon restoration projects to Myxomycetes (slime molds!) of BC. We can't wait to gather with our network again next year at this social event.

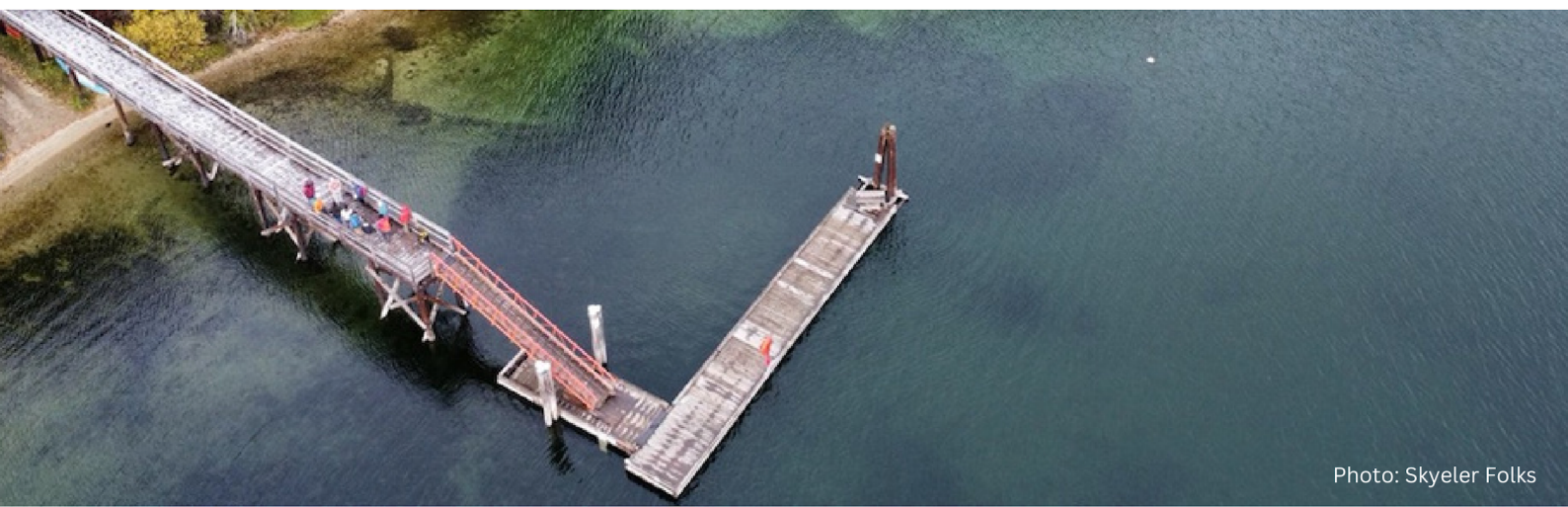
Youth Engagement

We continue to connect the youth audiences at Revelstoke's secondary and primary schools when we have visiting ecologists with interesting projects and tales to share. As a means of introducing the idea of ecology work to students contemplating what comes next, we share stories about the work our members are engaged in. This past year Dr. Chris Beirne inspired the Science 11s again with a presentation that took students around the globe via camera traps. Marc-André Beaucher and Rachel Darvill introduced those same Science 11 students to the world of ornithology with the help of the Merlin App. These are really fun days! Many thanks to School District 19 for hosting us, and providing space for our courses.

Event Engagement: Attendance Numbers

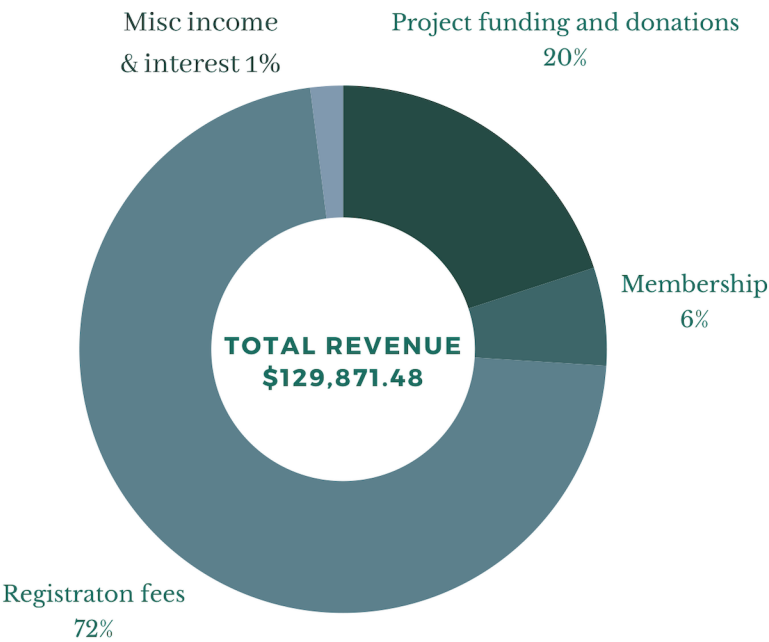


Number of event registrants since 2015. These numbers include event instructors/facilitators, but do not include engagement with event recordings, proceeding documents, etc. They also do not include number youth engaged.

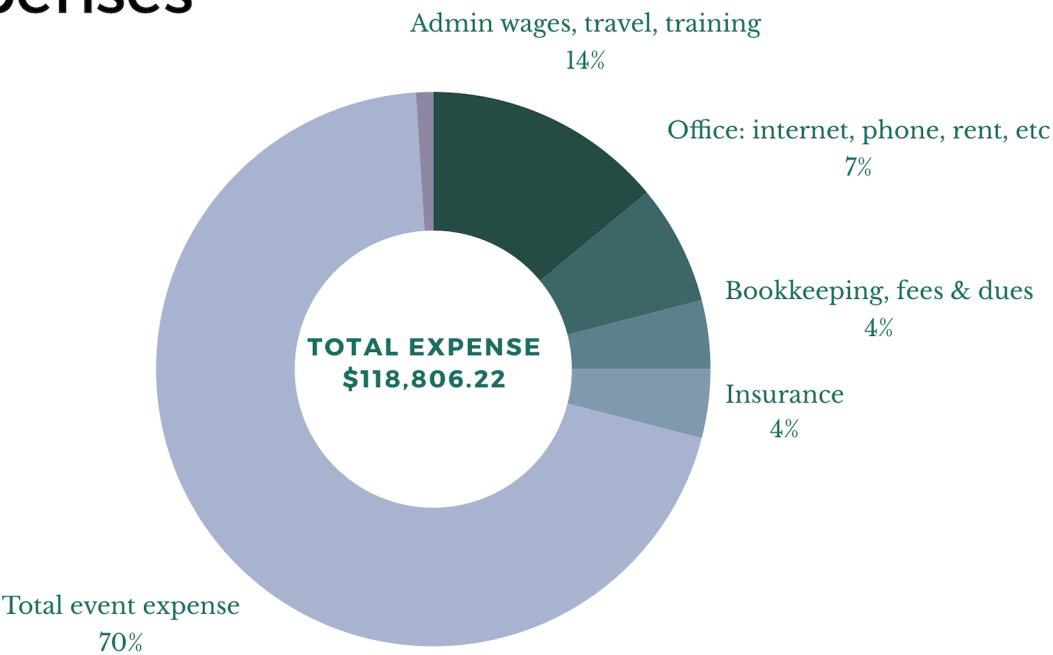


FINANCES

2023 Revenue



2023 Expenses



Net Profit for 2023 was \$11,065.26