



2021 - 2022

# Annual Report



The  
**Fur-Bearers**



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# Welcome



Dear members, supporters, and friends,

The Fur-Bearers are proud to present our 2021-22 Annual Report, reviewing some of our accomplishments and highlights from the fiscal year. The only part of this entire process that hasn't filled me with pride is the required editing of this very introduction. How can I possibly express the extraordinary growth, change, and success of this organization and the incredible people who make it possible over the last year, in only a few hundred words?

We saw an end to mink fur farming in British Columbia! Details of this major success and the various ways we worked toward it are on page 16, but the partnerships with new friends like the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (particularly Kupki7 Judy Wilson) and infectious disease specialist

Dr. Jan Hajek, along with our colleagues at the BC SPCA and HSI - Canada, prove to me how effective and powerful advocacy for fur-bearing animals can be!

The Fur-Bearers team itself grew for the first time in several years, too, with the introduction of Aaron Hofman (Director of Advocacy and Policy) and Sydney Schaffner (Social Media & Communications Coordinator)! Both these outstanding individuals have worked with our existing team and are allowing us to take on even more fast responses to crises, legal cases protecting fur-bearing animals, and educational content to promote coexistence!

While we have many, many accomplishments and challenges we've taken on of which I'm proud, our ongoing ability to stay prominent and

relevant in the media on behalf of the animals is top-tier to me. We average more than one media mention per week on a variety of issues, have over 100,000 podcast downloads, more than 700 hours of YouTube content consumed, and even more analytics that indicate how impressive this is (see page 16). By excelling in an increasingly-crowded media space, we ensure that communities across Canada keep fur-bearing animals and the issues most important to our organization in the spotlight.

There is more to say here than I will ever have space for, so I will end on this simple message: thank you.

For the animals,  
Lesley Fox  
Executive Director



# About Us

The legal name of our society is The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals, although we do business as The Fur-Bearers.

The purposes of the Society are:

1. to protect the environment by preserving urban and rural ecosystems and the wildlife therein;
2. to advance education by:
  - (a) developing and delivering training, courses, seminars, workshops and conferences that promote the welfare of animals; and
  - (b) conducting, commissioning and disseminating research related to the welfare of animals;
3. to uphold the administration and enforcement of animal welfare laws by:
  - (a) monitoring the practices of commercial fur farms and other commercial operations using fur-bearing animals to determine compliance with relevant laws; and,
  - (b) identifying infractions by monitoring and reviewing publicly accessible information and through tips from the public; and
4. to do all such other things as are incidental and ancillary to the attainment of the foregoing purposes and the exercise of the powers of the Society.

## Mission Statement

To protect fur-bearing animals through conservation, advocacy, research, and education.

*Continued on page 5*





# About Us



## Values

We believe that:

- Fur is not a commodity.
- Coexistence with fur-bearing animals is possible and nonlethal solutions to human/wildlife conflicts are effective.
- Fur-bearing animals are a part of a healthy Canadian environment.
- Education and open, respectful and positive interactions will bring about sustainable change.
- Repeatable, reviewed and ethical science should be the basis for solutions.

## Our Values

**Respecting Individuals:** We strive for a world where non-human animals are respected and acknowledged as individuals.

**Solution-Oriented:** We believe that all problems must be met with solutions, not complaints alone.

**Credible:** Our actions and statements will be backed by science, research, and with an understanding of their implications.

**Habitat:** We recognize that in order to protect fur-bearing animals in the wild, we must protect their habitat.

**Compassion:** To achieve a more compassionate Canada, we must lead with compassion – even with those who disagree with our values and mission.

## Vision Statement

A world where humans and wild animals coexist peacefully.



# About Us

## Governance

The Fur-Bearers is governed by a volunteer board of directors who help provide strategic direction, uphold fiduciary and legal responsibilities, manage organization risks and establish organization policies.

Our **board of directors** for 2021/2022 include:

Erin Ryan, B.Sc, M.Sc, President

Ingrid Katzberg, Vice-President

Christine Pintea, Treasurer

Anne Carchesio, Secretary

Kitty Bourne, B.Sc., At Large

Camran Monsef, B.A., M.A., J.D., At Large

To implement board directives, The Fur-Bearers has a **staff** that includes:

Lesley Fox, Executive Director

Aaron Hofman, Director of Advocacy and Policy

Michael Howie, Director of Communications

Marcy Potter, Director of Finance

& Donor Relations

Sydney Schaffner, Social Media & Communications

Coordinator

In addition to the above, a volunteer Advisory Board provides ongoing expertise regarding our campaigns, communications and projects. These individuals include:

Dr. Kristen Walker, PhD

Allison Render J.D.

Amelia Porter, MSc., RPBio

David Stanford, PhD Candidate

Matthew Brown B.Sc., JD Candidate

Osgoode Hall, J.D. Candidate

Chelsea Greer, B.Sc., MSc. Candidate

Christina Carrières

Dr. Chris R. Shepherd, PhD

*More details on our board of directors, staff, contractors and advisory board can be found at [www.TheFurBearers.com](http://www.TheFurBearers.com).*







# The Year In Review



# Highlights

## BC Bans Mink Fur Farms

The 2021-22 fiscal year saw SARS-CoV-2 – the COVID-19 virus – breakout on three mink farms in British Columbia. Mink are highly susceptible to the virus, as are humans, and transmission between the two is made easier by conditions on fur farms. Further, Freedom of Information documentation revealed that at one farm, two mink were found roaming the property outside of cages – while positive with the virus. This information, in addition to the advocacy and tireless work by The Fur-Bearers and our partners, in part lead the province to banning mink fur farming entirely. Read more on this on page 13.

## Chinchilla Farm Judicial Review

Freedom of Information requests revealed that a chinchilla farmer was operating without required documents as per legislation in the province. When this was reported to the provincial authorities, no action was taken. As such, The Fur-Bearers launched a judicial review of this decision – a court process in which a judge must determine if the province followed their own regulations. This was started with the financial support of Westcoast Environmental Law's Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund (EDRF). Due to pandemic-related delays, no court date in the 2021-22 fiscal year was available, and as such, resolution is expected in our 2022-23 fiscal year.





# Highlights

## The Coyotes in Stanley Park

Several coyotes were killed in Vancouver's Stanley Park in 2021 following negative encounters with humans, and much of it was preventable. The Fur-Bearers first contacted the Vancouver Park Board (who manage Stanley Park) in January 2021, when initial reports of unusual behaviour – such as biting – hit the media. Our observations at the park indicated that direct and indirect feeding of the coyotes was occurring (a major driver in negative encounters), simple attractant management issues like open garbage containers needed to be resolved, and a lack of signage was compounded by a total lack of enforcement of feeding or wildlife-related laws.

After the BC Conservation Officer Service killed coyotes in response to calls, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) enacted a plan to kill the remaining coyotes in the park. Several weeks later, in winter 2022, it was determined some coyotes remain in the park. Researchers and experts on the ground have indicated that feeding is a primary driver of the behavioural changes in coyotes at Stanley Park, in addition to displacement within the park, potential exposure to toxins or narcotics, and the lack of education and enforcement of people who created the situation.

The Fur-Bearers launched a Thank You For Not Feeding Wildlife campaign after FLNRORD killed several more coyotes (but not all of them it seems). Millions of Vancouver-area residents saw our multi-lingual messaging and were guided to a page on our website that outlines (translated by Google into every potential language) why feeding is more harmful than helpful. The City of Vancouver and Park Board both voted to enact feeding wildlife bylaws following our advocacy and the public outcry against the killing of coyotes in the park. The Fur-Bearers continue to communicate with agencies and individuals involved in this issue and actively advocate for coexistence strategies to be implemented within Stanley Park to protect coyotes and all other fur-bearers who call it home.

*More on this issue, including numerous articles, exclusive podcast interviews and more can be found online at [www.TheFurBearers.com](http://www.TheFurBearers.com).*





# Strategic Plan Review



The following is a section-by-section impact report and review of internal and external goals set by The Fur-Bearers in our 2020-21 Strategic Plan.

## Goal: Improve financial health

1. Our first full fiscal year with charitable status required a significant focus on updating content to reflect the status, inclusive of all donation forms online and in print, pamphlets, websites, microsites, and so on. This was successfully achieved.

2. We generated new and notable fundraising opportunities throughout the 2020-21 fiscal year, including a planned giving drive, a peer-to-peer read-a-thon, online silent auctions, establishment of a Facebook giving toolkit, established and exceeded goals for our Giving Tuesday drive, established a digital 'Christmas Tree for the Animals' format, and partnered with organizations such as Benevity to make workplace donations easier for supporters.

3. With the assistance of Raymond James LLP, The Fur-Bearers can now receive donations of stocks and mutual funds and received two in the fiscal year.

4. The Fur-Bearers continued to keep infrastructure costs down while utilizing specialists to achieve campaign work and deliverables for wildlife and communities.



# Strategic Plan Review

## Goal: Board Development

1. Three board members attended seminars or undertook training modules to better their governance role with board of The Fur-Bearers.
2. One new board member joined at the Annual General Meeting, and recruitment of new members is ongoing.
3. The review and development of existing policies is ongoing at the board level and will be incorporated in 2022-23 and future strategic planning goals.





# Strategic Plan Review

## Goal: Refine and Execute Programs and Campaigns

### Living With Wildlife

1. Wolverine conservation was supported through the completion and sharing of research funded in part by The Fur-Bearers in the 2019-20 fiscal year. The research was featured as an article as well as a podcast on our website and will ultimately assist landowners and planners to effectively protect critical wolverine habitat.

a. Incidentally, the person behind this project won the first science scholarship we offered, and we expect more on this project by end of fiscal 2021-22, or early fiscal 2022-23.

2. Educational assets are updated regularly and distributed across Canada. Of particular interest are the door hanger style awareness pamphlets, which are frequently used to help prevent fear-based responses or negative encounters between humans and wildlife. A grant from the Greygates Foundation helped pay for some of the distributed materials.

3. A quality candidate emerged to take the scholarship offered by The Fur-Bearers to the Beaver Institute's training program. This Alberta-based resident is already involved with wildlife rehabilitation, education and field work, and they will be actively able to help reduce the need for trapping and killing of beavers as a result of the training. We expect them to complete the program within 18 months of beginning it (in January 2022).

4. The Fur-Bearers has created and maintained relationships with numerous professors at the University of British Columbia, as well as other educational institutions like University of Calgary and University of Windsor. Team members from The Fur-Bearers are regular speakers at UBC classes, and involved with student projects (as second markers as well as community partners) related to wildlife.

5. Numerous informal partnerships arose through the 2021-22 fiscal year related to coexistence and negative encounters with wildlife. The Fur-Bearers regularly communicated with the BC Conservation Officer Service (Ministry of Environment), numerous individuals in the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, the Vancouver Park Board and Vancouver City Council, and many other government committees and agencies.





# Strategic Plan Review

## Goal: Refine and Execute Programs and Campaigns

### Make Fur History

1. Trap warning signs and other common-sense updates to provincial legislation and policy were largely delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both in terms of available government resources as well as The Fur-Bearers' internal resources (COVID-19 on fur farms, and the Stanley Park crisis pulled focus as critical opportunities). However, positive conversations were held and we expect that trap warning signs will be put to stakeholders in the next one or two fiscal years. This project will be refocused for 2022-23 and beyond based on this information.

2. Mink farming was successfully banned in British Columbia in our 2021-22 fiscal year. In addition to an in-depth report on the state of fur farming as COVID-19 crept across the industry (check out our fur farm report at [TheFurBearers.com](https://TheFurBearers.com) – incredible work, Aaron!), The Fur-Bearers were in regular communication with Ministry of Agriculture officials, political leaders and others. We teamed up with the BC SPCA, Humane Society International – Canada, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs to develop a BC-based campaign microsite; this site contained action items that automatically sent communications to the Ministry, numerous educational assets, and a petition that was introduced to the provincial legislature in April 2022. We also worked with Dr. Jan Hajek, an infectious disease specialist at Vancouver General Hospital. At the time of this writing, next steps are to present the petition and seek legislative changes that would end the farming of all fur-bearing species in the province.

*More on next page*





# Strategic Plan Review

3. A private members' bill related to fur farming at the national level was read into the legislature in the 2022 calendar year. The Fur-Bearers have collected information showing the differences in policy province-by-province related to fur farming, and filed Freedom of Information requests across provinces for information on their COVID-19 responses. Focus has largely been on British Columbia in the last fiscal year, due to the three outbreaks of COVID-19 on farms and the availability of information regarding this.

4. The Fur-Bearers has partnered with renowned wildlife photographer John E. Marriott and the Exposed Wildlife Conservancy to develop a documentary series on trapping, specifically snares, that will also be cut for festivals and other viewing opportunities. In our 2021-22 fiscal year, The Fur-Bearers successfully fundraised for our financial contribution to the project and worked closely with EWC on the early stages of planning and development. The series is expected to be released publicly in November 2022 (our next fiscal year).

5. Content related to fur farming and trapping was updated throughout the fiscal year on [TheFurBearers.com](http://TheFurBearers.com), and our [MakeFurHistory.com](http://MakeFurHistory.com) URL was redirected to that portion of our standard site. A microsite regarding BC fur farming was also developed internally and played a role in netting several thousand petition signatures and the ultimate banning of mink farming in the province.





# Strategic Plan Review

## Goal: Refine and Execute Programs and Campaigns

### Outreach and Education

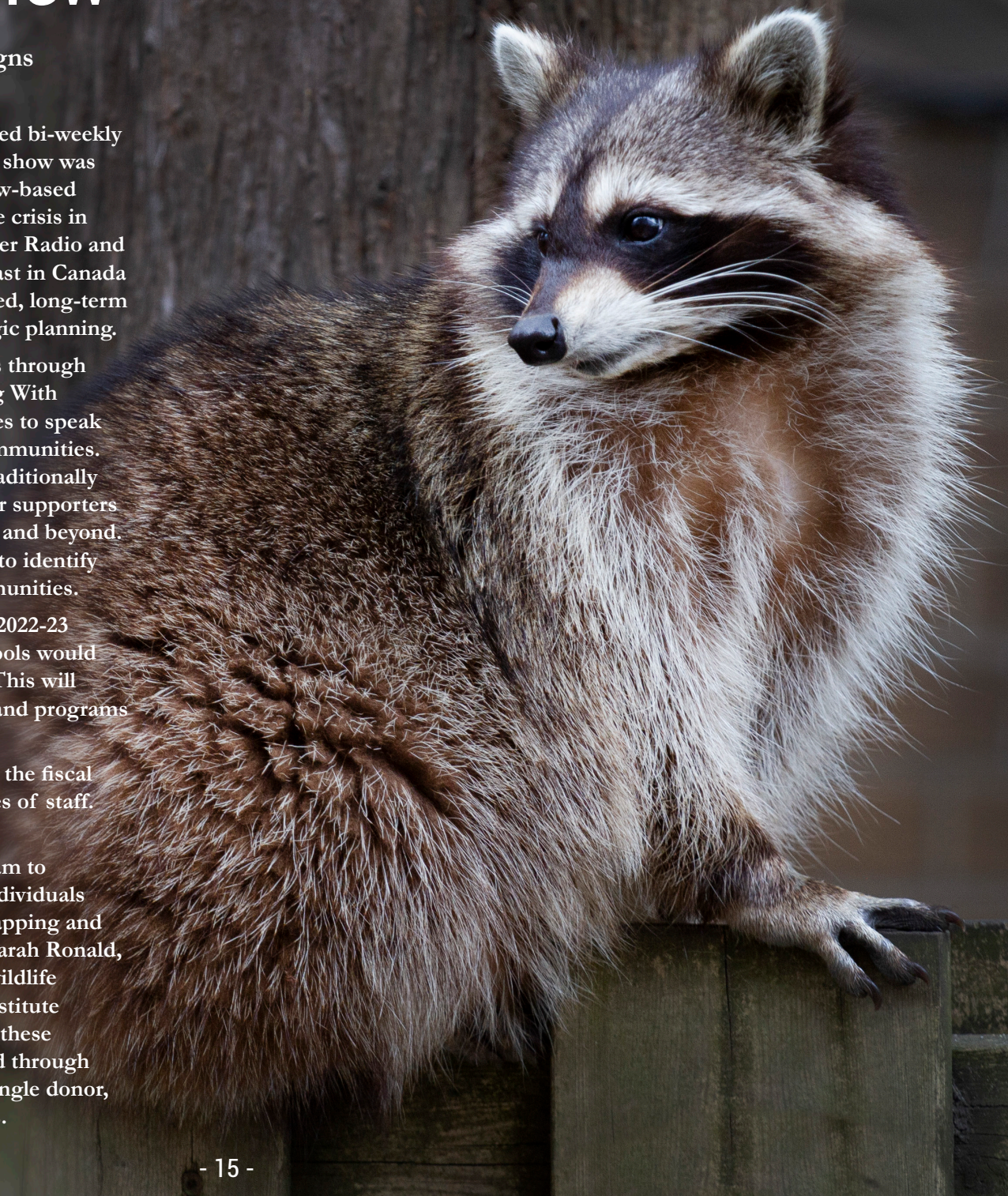
1. The Defender Radio podcast was adapted to be issued bi-weekly instead of weekly; however, on the off-weeks, a new, short show was introduced: The Switch. This shorter show is also interview-based and seeks solutions from individuals to combat the climate crisis in achievable, local ways. These updates have led to Defender Radio and The Switch being listed regularly as a top 50 Nature podcast in Canada and the United States, as well as other regions. A formalized, long-term plan is being developed for fiscal 2022-23 as part of strategic planning.

2. The Fur-Bearers actively engages with communities through our two primary campaigns, Make Fur History, and Living With Wildlife. In addition to this, we regularly seek opportunities to speak with media outlets, partner agencies, school and other communities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most in-person events traditionally attended were cancelled, but numerous online activities for supporters and communities are being prepared for the 2022-23 fiscal and beyond. Survey tools are being integrated into campaign planning to identify and focus on specific needs and expectations within communities.

3. The Fur-Bearers will utilize new survey tools in the 2022-23 fiscal year to create a report helping us understand what tools would be most useful for teachers, parents and other educators. This will guide elements of our outreach and education campaign and programs moving forward.

4. The educational colouring book was delayed during the fiscal year in response to temporary change in available resources of staff. The project is being moved to the 2022-23 fiscal year.

5. The Fur-Bearers developed a full scholarship program to promote coexistence through science and the arts. Two individuals were awarded scholarships – Nikki Heim, to create 3D mapping and storytelling elements of her wolverine habitat study, and Sarah Ronald, whose hand drawn animation will help tell the stories of wildlife often labelled as nuisances. A scholarship to the Beaver Institute was awarded to Melanie Whalen. The produced results of these scholarships will be available on our website and promoted through social media. The scholarship program was funded by a single donor, and it is expected to continue to grow in future fiscal years.





# By The Numbers

**101,274**

podcast downloads (277 per day!)

**65,415**

blog views (179 per day!)

**747.7**

hours of YouTube content viewed  
(31 straight days worth!)

**87**

Members of the Legislative Assembly of  
British Columbia received our in-depth  
“It’s Time To End Fur Farming in BC” report

**70**

media mentions  
(1.3 per week, not including syndication!)

**48**

Freedom of Information requests  
(4 per month!)

**4**

legal actions to protect fur-bearing  
animals undertaken





# With Gratitude

The work of The Fur-Bearers is only possible with the support of donors. While we don't have space to thank everyone who made a difference in the lives of animals in our fiscal year, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals, groups, and businesses:

## Grants

Vancouver Foundation  
University of British Columbia  
Mary Matthews Fund  
Vancouver Foundation/Greygates Foundation  
Calgary Foundation  
Kuperman Family Foundation

## Silent Auction Donors

Long Beach Lodge Resort  
Daily Hive Vancouver  
Cotton Auctions & Appraisals  
Very Good Butchers  
Anita Utas art  
Pure Lovin' Chocolate  
MeeT Restaurants  
Canadian Vegan Magazine  
Champions Martial Arts Academy  
LUSH Handmade Cosmetics

Erin Ryan  
Anne Carchesio  
Christine Pinte  
Michael Howie  
Parrish Relics Amulet Jewelry  
PlantBase  
Peace, Love & Kesim  
Whitelotus Design Jewelry  
Better Bears  
Blue Heron Creamery  
Vancouver Island PyroArt Designs  
Fern Cafe & Bakery  
Herbivore Clothing Company  
Camran Monsef  
Kitty Bourne  
Lucy Kovaliv  
Karen Fahrlander  
Vancouver Island PyroArt Designs  
Vegan Supply  
Carol Kelpin  
Forbidden Walking Tours  
Compassionate Learning Academy  
Wilderness Committee  
Go Max Go Foods  
Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre  
Cynthia Heine

The Butchart Gardens  
Sharon Stephenson  
Avril Fishburne  
Marcy Potter  
Tiny Island Designs  
Clue Solvers  
Skin N.V.  
Wild Coast Perfumery  
AnimalStone  
Nice Shoes  
Thistle Designs  
Let's Roam  
Ravenfinds Studio  
Little Tea Peddler  
Summerhill Pyramid Winery  
Granville Island Brewing  
Sea Cider Farm & Ciderhouse  
Jamie's Whaling Station  
The Improv Centre  
Kate Mulvale  
Everything Wine  
The Grinning Goat  
1UP Games  
Roland Koreman  
Pepper The Cat



# From Our Supporters

We receive numerous messages from supporters and members throughout the year. These are a select few:

It's very inspiring that you keep carrying on. Carry on. Carry on.

- Darlene H.

I have often been very frustrated and alarmed with behaviour of the BC conservation officers. Good for you for filing a formal complaint!

- Nancy P.

I first heard about The Fur-Bearers over 25 years ago. I was involved in the sense that I spoke out any time to friends and anyone that would listen about the cruel way Canada allows trapping. I drove many years with one of those big yellow bumper stickers against the leg-hold trap. Keep up the good work.

- Syl B.

Beginning with my grandma, our family has been supporting The Fur-Bearers for over 50 years.

- Roland K.

I am very impressed with the work you do - thank you!!

- Sandra C. Victoria, BC

I appreciate your updates and hope to keep abreast of issues affecting our fur-bearing wildlife, especially wolves, bears and cougars. Thank you for all you do!

- Jacqueline S.





**The  
Fur-Bearers**

This Annual Report was prepared for the Annual General Meeting of  
The Association For the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals in 2022.

It was last updated June 23, 2022.

**TheFurBearers.com**

**604-435-1850**