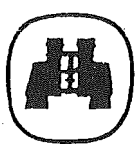
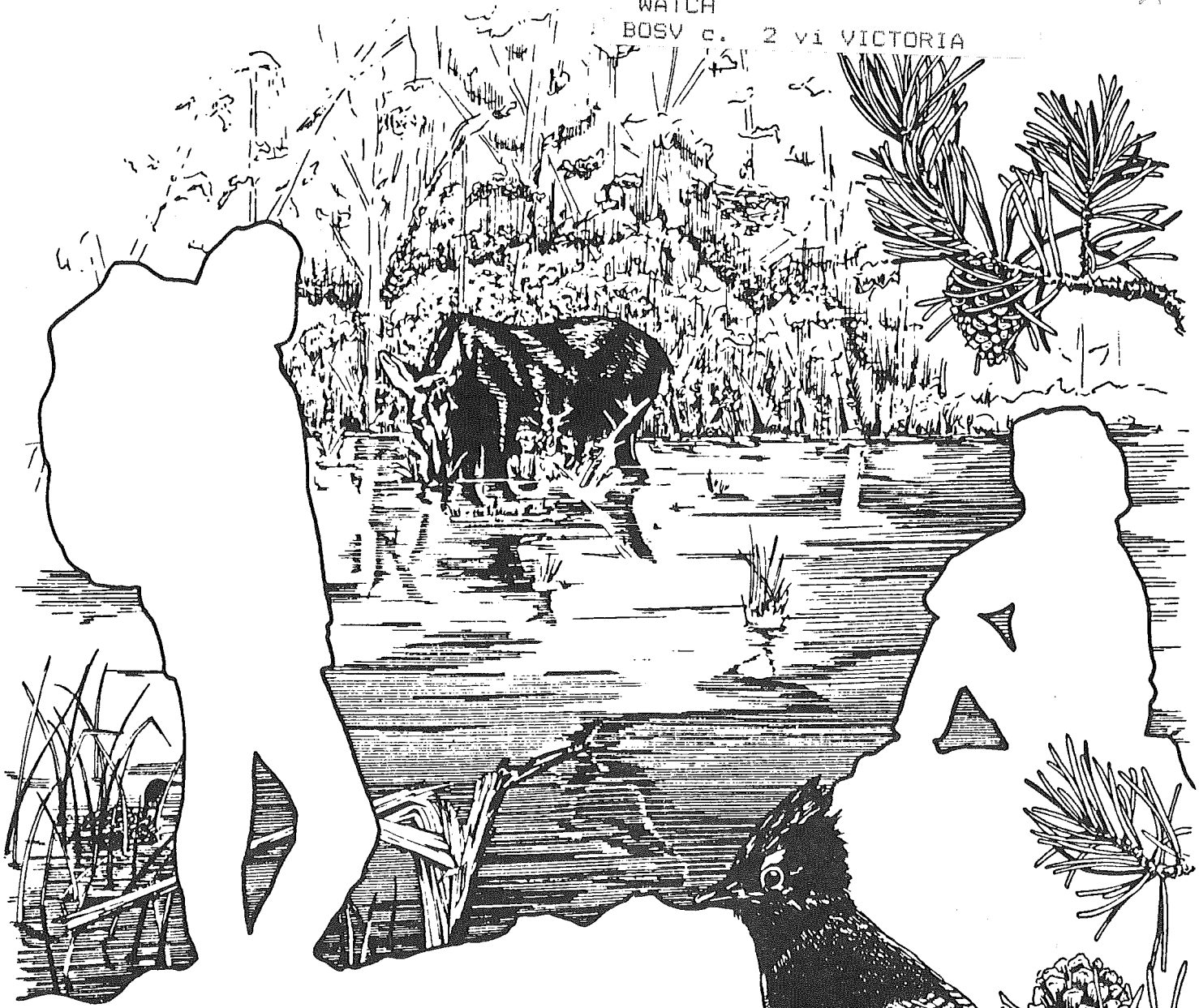


333.9515/B862/1990  
BRITISH COLUMBIA. MINISTRY  
BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDLIFE  
WATCH  
BOSV c. 2 v1 VICTORIA

BOSV  
c. 2  
v1



# BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDLIFE WATCH

**BC**

Ministry of Environment  
WILDLIFE PROGRAM

333.9515 B862 1990  
"PROTECTING THE LIVING LAND"

c. 2 v1

bib61002

## **"BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDLIFE WATCH"**

The intent of the Viewing Program is to encourage public understanding and appreciation of wildlife, fish and habitat in British Columbia. It is an inter-agency initiative designed to promote recreational, educational and commercial opportunities to view wildlife and fish in their natural habitats. The viewing program was formally established in 1989 with approval of a 5-year, 1.7 million dollar program.

British Columbia contains a variety of habitats that support rich and diverse populations of wildlife and fish. Approximately 24 percent of B.C. residents participate in wildlife viewing activities which contribute an economically significant 2.5 million dollars to the outdoor adventure tourism market. And in British Columbia there is a lot to see! On a world scale, B.C. has 60% of the Barrow's Goldeneye, 50% of the Trumpeter Swans, 50% of the Blue Grouse, 25% of the Bald Eagles, and 20% of the Harlequin Ducks. With respect to mammals, B.C. has 100% of the Vancouver Island Marmot, 75% of the Stone Sheep, 65% of the California Bighorn Sheep, 60% of the Mountain Goats and 25% of the Grizzly Bears. And those are only the exceptional species; there are many hundreds of others, more common but no less interesting!

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

The goals of the program include:

- to provide increased opportunities to view wildlife and fish in their natural habitats;
- to promote the growth of tourism and economic benefits associated with fish and wildlife viewing;
- to protect fish, wildlife and their habitats;
- to provide opportunities for increased public knowledge and awareness of wildlife, fish and their habitats.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The program also requires the integration of fish, wildlife and habitat management. Habitat embraces all forms of private and public ownership as well as diverse range of land uses. The program strategy is to maximize the social and economic value of wildlife and its habitat and provide protection of viewing sites from competing land use demands. The following guiding principles have thus been adopted:

- to involve other government agencies, commercial interests and the public in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Wildlife Viewing program;
- to promote and integrate the recreational, commercial, and educational use of wildlife, fish and their habitats;
- to emphasize wildlife in their natural habitat;
- to provide for the integration of viewing and hunting, except where the public or wildlife are at risk.

### **WHO'S INVOLVED?**

The Wildlife Viewing Program is directed by the Wildlife Program of the Ministry of Environment in consultation with various viewing committees.

The program is guided by the Wildlife Viewing Tourism Committee with broad public representation from members of the B.C. Federation of Naturalists, B.C. Wildlife Federation, the B.C. Guides and Outfitters Association, the Marine Tour Operators Association, and Coastal, Interior and northern Forest Industry Associations. The Ministries of Environment, Forests, Parks and Tourism are also represented.

The Wildlife Viewing Committee is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the program. This is a working level committee comprised of personnel from regional and headquarters Wildlife Program, Recreational Fisheries Program, Ministry of Parks and Ministry of Tourism.

Overall program direction and support for interagency cooperation is provided by the Wildlife Viewing Steering Committee with representatives from Ministries of Forests, Parks, Tourism and Environment (Wildlife and Recreational Fisheries Branches).

Societies such as the Salmon Arm Bay Nature Enhancement Society, Somenos Marsh Society, North Peace Nature Club and Okanagan Heritage Society have been active in the promotion of local Wildlife Viewing Areas. Corporate groups such as Fairmount Hot Springs, Radium Hot Springs, Canfor, MacMillan Bloedel, Fletcher Challenge and Western Forest Products have also been supportive of the program.

### **WHY IS TOURISM INTERESTED?**

Wilderness tourism presently generates \$135 million dollars annually in B.C. The Wildlife Viewing Program is expected to produce an additional \$200 million dollars with a predicted growth rate of 20% over the next 5 years.

With hotel occupancy presently peaking only in the summer months, Wildlife Viewing offers fall, winter and spring attractions. With most of B.C.'s wildlife resources in the less urban areas of the province, the Wildlife Program will promote regional economic growth. Communities such as Duncan, Salmon Arm, Creston, Hudson's Hope, Smithers, etc., will benefit. And, British Columbia's "Super Natural" image will certainly be enhanced by an increased focus on the wealth of wildlife resources in the province - spectacular on a world scale!

### **FIVE YEAR PLAN**

Five year plans outline specifics regarding fisheries, wildlife, secondary features, facility requirements, interpretive needs, marketing and management. The strategic objectives of the program over the next 5 years include:

- to develop and maintain 51 world-class viewing sites throughout the Province;
- to identify and promote wildlife viewing opportunities to diversity industry;
- to increase the wildlife viewing component of the adventure tourism market by 20 percent per year;
- to increase public awareness of wildlife and its habitat through program communication and materials.

In order to achieve these objectives Regional Wildlife Viewing Plans and Wildlife Viewing Site Plans will be required in conjunction with communication and marketing strategies.

### **REGIONAL VIEWING PLANS**

Regional Wildlife Viewing Plans identify, inventory and prioritize the various wildlife viewing "products" available within the province. At the local and provincial level, these plans provide an opportunity for public input into the planning of viewing areas. An initial assessment of 300 potential sites identified 51 exceptional sites for potential development. Further inventory and evaluation of viewing opportunities will be coordinated through the development of the Regional Wildlife Viewing Plans.

In 1989/90, Regional Viewing Plans were initiated for the Okanagan, Skeena, Omineca, Lower Mainland and the Kootenays. The 1990/91, plans will include Vancouver Island, Cariboo, Peace, Northeast and Thompson-Nicola. All regional viewing plans are scheduled for completion by March 31, 1991.

### **VIEWING SITE PLANS**

Fish and Wildlife viewing sites will be assessed and selected according to the following criteria:

- quality and reliability of the opportunity for viewing fish and wildlife in their habitats;
- the resiliency of the wildlife, fish and habitat to the impacts of viewing;
- the location of the site and potential use relative to other sites or viewing products;
- security of land tenure;
- the cost of maintaining viewing and interpretive facilities.

In 1989 Viewing Site Plans were completed for the sites listed below (for some of these sites, the development of interpretive materials, viewing platforms and boardwalks has begun):

Pink Mountain  
Osoyoos Oxbows  
Harrison River/Kilby Park

Sidney Spit Park  
Somenos Marsh  
Junction

Lower Skeena  
Boundary Bay  
Strathcona Park

Lower Nass  
Tranquille  
Goldstream Park

333.9515/B862/1990  
BRITISH COLUMBIA. MINISTRY  
BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDLIFE  
WATCH  
BOSV c. 2 vi VICTORIA

By March 31, 1990, Viewing Site Plans are scheduled to be completed for:

Mt. Robson Park  
Courtenay River Estuary  
Okanagan Falls Park  
Syringa Creek

Chilanko Marsh  
Mittlenatch Island  
Dunlevy Creek  
Arrow Lakes

Wells Gray Park  
Nevis Creek  
Stamp Falls Park  
Windermere Valley

Mission Creek  
Manning Park  
Seely Lake Park

By March 31, 1991, Viewing Site Plans may be completed for some of the following candidate areas:

Shaw Creek  
Vaseaux Lake  
Kokanee Glacier Park  
Muncho Lake Park  
Alkali Lake  
Stikine River  
Babine River

McConachie  
Kikomen Lake  
Columbia Lake  
Peachland Creek  
Bowron Lake Park  
Sasquatch Park  
Kootenay Lake

Premier Lake  
Cranberry Marsh  
Ladner Marsh  
Kalamalka Lake Park  
Columbia Wetlands  
Serpentine  
Saltry Bay

Golden Ears Park  
Tofino Mudflats  
Mt. Fernie  
Pitt Addington  
Kipoola Lake/Kobu Mtn.  
Botanical Beach Park

### **THE FUTURE?**

Wildlife Viewing Areas will be established throughout the province and will be promoted through the Ministries of Environment, Tourism, Forests and Parks. Involvement of existing dedicated areas such as Reifel Refuge, Creston Wildlife Management Area and the Adams River will be encouraged.

Communities, fish and game clubs, naturalists groups, tourism operators and guides and outfitters will also be encouraged to participate in the program and to promote wildlife viewing opportunities while ensuring that B.C.'s wildlife resource is protected and its management enhanced. A number of groups such as these have already received contributions from the viewing program to provide leadership for the preparation of viewing plans and site development.

Over the 5-year term of the program, a communication strategy will ensure that promotion of the viewing program is balanced with environmental conservation. This will involve the implementation of the viewing program name "British Columbia Wildlife Watch", the program symbol of binoculars and support for the message of "protecting the living land". The use of the program name, symbol and message will be restricted to products and materials that support the goals and guiding principles of the Viewing Program.

The education and awareness component of the program will research and develop materials to educate and increase awareness of the public, industry and government as to the ecological relationships required to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats. These materials will be used to educate the public directly and in the development of marketing products such as brochures, pamphlets, posters and other communication tools.

The marketing of the Viewing Program will be directed at increasing resident and non-resident participation through cooperation with other ministries, commercial operators and corporate sponsors. Specific marketing strategies will include the development of products such as interpretive signs at viewing sites, highway signs, viewing tours, commercial packages and media releases.

**Remember - Animals are wild in natural habitats so viewers are reminded to bring along their viewing ethics and a good pair of binoculars and discover the magic of British Columbia fish and wildlife.**

Ministry Contact: Ms. Nancy Wilkin, Ministry of Environment, 780 Blanshard Street, Victoria, B.C., V8V 1X4, telephone: (604) 387-9767.

*"They're free to roam - You're free to watch"*