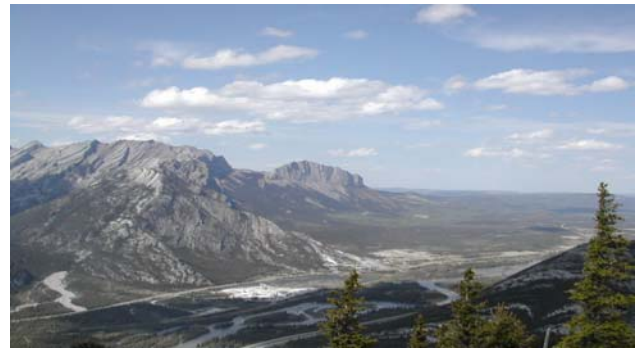


CPAWS

CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY
CALGARY/BANFF CHAPTER

Volunteer Handbook

Version 2008



Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Calgary/Banff Chapter

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Office hours are Monday to Friday 9:00-5:00

Errands, banking, meetings and lunches take staff away periodically.

Please call before going to the office.

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)! This manual will give you an overview of CPAWS, at the local chapter and national level, and its volunteer program. *Please feel free at any time to approach the Outreach Manager with questions or comments.* Volunteers are an essential part of our organization and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our team! We hope you have a very positive and rewarding experience!

- The Staff and Board of CPAWS-Calgary/Banff



Pika, Moraine Lake, photo by Rochelle Coffey

About CPAWS

CPAWS is Canada's Grassroots Voice for Wilderness. Our mission is to establish new parks and make sure nature comes first in their management. Since 1963, CPAWS has played a key role in saving almost 400,000 sq. kms of Canada's spectacular wildlands. Built from the ground up, we have over 20,000 members across Canada and thirteen regional chapters where people who are passionate about nature can get actively involved.



Mission Statement

CPAWS envisages a healthy ecosphere where people experience and respect natural ecosystems. CPAWS will achieve this by:

- Protecting Canada's wild ecosystems in parks, wilderness and similar natural areas, preserving the full diversity of habitats and their species;
- Promoting awareness and understanding of ecological principles and the inherent values of wilderness through education, appreciation and experience;
- Encouraging individual action to accomplish these goals;
- Working co-operatively with government, First Nations, business, other organizations and individuals in a consensus-seeking manner, wherever possible.

CPAWS believes that by ensuring the health of the parts, we ensure the health of the whole, which is our health too.

CPAWS National

Our results say it all! Over the years, CPAWS across the nation has played a key role in saving over 100 million acres of Canadian wilderness including:

Kluane	Nahanni	Pacific Rim	Tatshenshini
Puskaskwa	Gwaii Haanas	Spray Valley	BCNorthern Rockies
Grasslands	Wind Valley	Whaleback	Willmore Wilderness

...just to name a few!

We organize our campaigns into 5 major program areas:

- The Boreal Forest—working along with other groups to save at least 50% of the great Boreal Forest
- Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) - connecting habitats in the Rockies and saving the last mountain ecoregion on earth to retain a full complement of native species
- Algonquin to Adirondacks and northern Appalachians—protecting wildlife corridors for wolves, lynx, marten and moose
- Oceans and Freshwater Lakes—protecting the biodiversity of Canada’s marine areas and great freshwater lakes and advocating for marine and freshwater protected areas on all three coasts and the Great lakes.
- National Parks forever—protecting our national parks for current and future generations.

Individual chapters often work together on a national or regional campaign, as well as have their own local campaigns to protect wilderness and parks in their areas.



The CPAWS Calgary/Banff Chapter

Every CPAWS chapter is a little different, with different numbers of staff, unique programs, fundraising and campaigns. The Calgary/Banff Chapter has been a champion of southern Alberta's wild places since 1968. We have undertaken many campaigns in Banff National Park to ensure nature preservation is the top priority of park managers. We were vital in securing the two-year Banff Bow Valley Study which made many important findings about the impacts of development in Banff and have worked closely with Parks Canada and other stakeholders to improve the ecological integrity of Banff and other national parks. In the last ten years, we have worked with other conservation groups and agencies to help protect the wildlands surrounding Canmore in the Bow Valley, and played an important role in protecting the Spray Valley, the Elbow-Sheep Wildland, Willmore Wilderness Park and the Whaleback.

Monthly Chapter Meetings — Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly Chapter Meetings, held the second Monday of every month. Meetings consist of reports and discussions about current issues, and presentations by guest speakers on a variety of conservation and environmental issues. Please refer to our website or sign up on the listserv to access the latest information about meeting locations and guest speakers.

Special Events — CPAWS Calgary/Banff holds several public events during the year including the **Capture the Wild Photography Contest** and **The Wild Gala**. In the fall of 2008, these very successful events will be held for the 10th consecutive year! Funds and awareness raised through these and other events help support our conservation and education work. We also attend several small events throughout the year to further awareness and education about CPAWS and our major conservation campaigns.

Communications — Our Chapter newsletter **Green Notes**, published twice per year, provides members with up-to-date information on wilderness conservation campaigns and other important, related news. CPAWS members also receive the National newsletter **Canadian Wilderness**. The chapter publishes materials on all major campaigns. Our website also has detailed information relating to our campaigns and organization, and is updated regularly. We also have two email listservs, one for members and one for volunteers, which keep subscribers up to date and on alert for action items.

Education — For 10 years CPAWS Calgary/Banff has been delivering customized programs about diversity, ecosystem management, wilderness and other concepts relevant to the CPAWS mission. We currently offer programming on endangered species, grizzly bears, and environmental stewardship. In the spring of 2008 we will be piloting a brand-new and original water program. We also offer teaching kits as supplemental resources for educators. In addition to classroom programming, we offer full-day educational hikes and field studies in Kananaskis Country and Fish Creek Provincial Park. Since its inception in 1996, it has brought the principles of conservation ecology to 2,500+ teachers, over 25,000 students and taken over 5,000 people on educational hikes!

CPAWS Calgary/Banff Operating Principles

CPAWS speaks on behalf of wild landscapes and the wildlife that dwells there. We do this by encouraging understanding of the status and dynamics of natural systems, including those factors which pose threats. We believe that a well-informed and articulate citizenry is essential to the consideration of environmental issues. Accordingly, we seek to educate, to inform, and to provide a vehicle by which citizens can express their environmental concerns. In doing so we apply the following principles:

1. **We rely on accurate information and credible analysis.** The outputs of decision-making can only be as good as the inputs. Therefore, we constantly strive to find the best possible data on which to base our own decisions, and present that data and credible analysis as the basis for policy-making. Sound science is always encouraged and sought out.
2. **We promote the precautionary principle.** Due to the complexity of natural systems, our knowledge of them will forever be incomplete. That, however, cannot be a reason for avoiding facing issues. Where there is a reasonable basis to believe that a given activity may have a negative impact on a natural system, we advocate the exercise of caution in favour of nature.
3. **We are politically non-partisan.** We support principles and policies, not individuals or parties.
4. **We respect other perspectives and interests.** We recognize that there are other legitimate interests in society. The holders of those interests are to be respected, and productive opportunities to work together with them should be explored. In many cases economic and social goals are compatible with sound environmental protection.
5. **We seek fairness and certainty in policy and legislation.** Environmental protection measures must be clear, and applied openly, even-handedly, and uniformly. Where, as sometimes happens, the changing state of our knowledge indicates that a change in the rules is necessary to protect the environment, compensation options should be explored to those whose legitimate plans have been disrupted.
6. **Success is “on the ground”.** Rhetoric and process are not environmental protection. We judge our progress by the degree to which we have achieved the maintenance of ecological integrity in our targeted areas. This approach provides us with sound benchmarks by which to judge our success. This also means that we seek to create solutions, not problems.
7. **We are efficient.** We seek the maximum progress from our efforts and resources. In some cases that means targeting a key decision-maker with a particular piece of information. In others it may mean a broad campaign of public education and involvement.

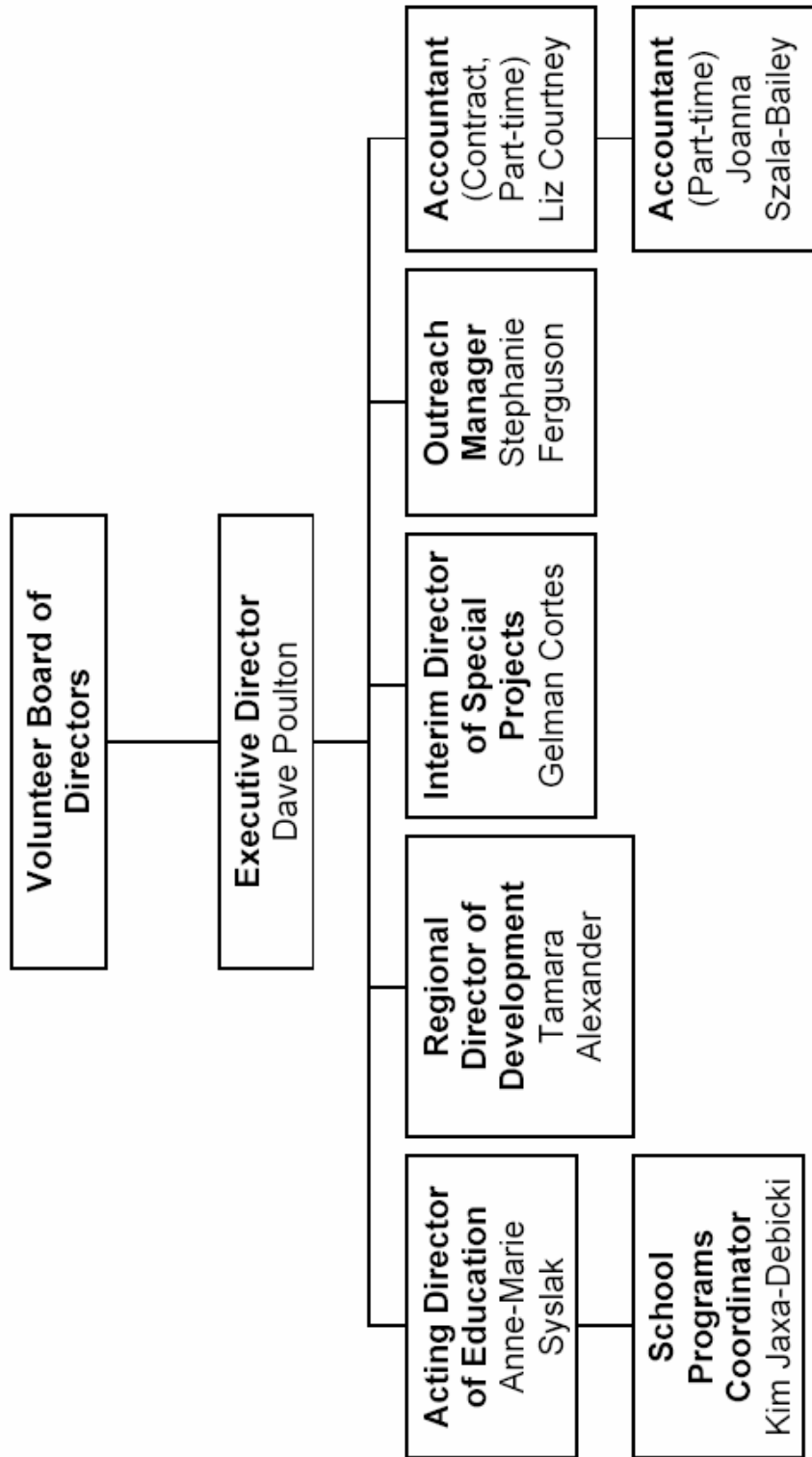
8. **We seek to instill confidence in free democratic debate.** We believe that our values are best advanced in an atmosphere of vigorous and open public debate. We thus seek to involve citizens in environmental and wilderness issues. We promote open and responsive government and responsible media.
9. **We seek to improve from our experience.** Every day of our work reveals ways to strengthen our programs and enhance the effectiveness of our activities for the protection of wilderness.

A History of Success

Working together with other conservation organizations, CPAWS Calgary/Banff has a strong record of accomplishing protection through our campaigns and programs. Over the past 15 years, the staff and volunteers of CPAWS Calgary/Banff have achieved these goals:

- Pressured the government of Alberta to end the Grizzly Bear hunt until current research on their population status is completed (2006)
- Completed the “Selected Ecological Resources of Alberta’s Castle Carbondale: A Synopsis of Current Knowledge” in partnership with Shell Canada and Martin Jalkotzy of ARC Wildlife Services (2005)
- Expanded the Spray Valley Provincial Park and Bow Valley Wildland Park through a finalized Management Plan for the Evan Thomas Provincial Recreation Area (2004)
- Twinning approved for 12.5km of the TransCanada Highway lying east of Lake Louise with significant input from CPAWS and other ENGO’s (2003)
- Advised federal officials on environmental mitigation for G8 Summit Legacy wildlife crossing structures in the Bow Valley (2003)
- Established Spray Valley Provincial Park (2000)
- Defeated the flawed Alberta Natural Heritage Act (1999)
- Pressured for the Kananaskis Country Recreational Development Policy (1999)
- Established the Whaleback Protected Area (1999)
- Established the Bow Valley Protected Area (1998)
- Completed the Banff/Bow Valley Study on Ecological Integrity (1996)
- Established the Elbow-Sheep Protected Area (1995)
- Pressured for an Environmental Assessment to be required for Bow Valley RV Park (1994)
- Wind Valley saved from development (1992-3)

CPAWS Calgary/Banff Organizational Structure



CPAWS Calgary/Banff – Current Conservation Priorities

National Parks Management— Our chapter has been actively involved for many years in promoting the management of our national parks to ensure the maintenance and restoration of their ecological integrity. This concept has been accepted into law and policy, and we are working with Parks Canada and other stakeholders to see that it is properly implemented.

The Castle Wilderness—Located north of Waterton Lakes National Park (of which it was once part) and south of the Crownsnest Pass, the Castle Wilderness is one of the most ecologically important areas of Alberta. One of the narrowest points in the chain of the Rocky Mountains it is used by large mammals such as grizzly bears, wolves, and elk to move between protected areas in Montana and the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rockies. It is also a unique landscape in its own right, home to many rare plant species. However it is being damaged by oil and gas activity, forestry, and abusive motorized recreation. CPAWS is working hard to see this area receives legal protection it needs from the Alberta government.

Kananaskis Country—Over the past few years much of Kananaskis Country has received protective status, but only about 55% is protected. 45%, the southern and eastern parts of K-Country are still open to industrial development and resource extraction activities and we must make sure that this important part of the eastern slopes is not degraded.. CPAWS is working to see that protected areas are properly managed so their natural values are not diminished.

Bow Valley—CPAWS continues to be active to see that the critical habitats and wildlife movement corridors in the Bow Valley, outside of Banff National Park, are kept in natural state useable by wildlife.

Y2Y— The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) is a vision for a network of core protected areas combined with an interconnected series of wildlife corridors running 3,200km up the Rocky Mountains from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to the northern Yukon. This coalition is made up of individuals and over 200 science-based conservation organizations, including the CPAWS Calgary/Banff and Yukon Chapters.

Volunteer Leaders Program Projects— The participants in the volunteer leaders program create and execute their own short-term conservation projects every year. Volunteer leaders from 2006-2007 protested the proposal of a new town in Seebe and the 2007-2008 volunteer leaders have contributed dozens of hours to a national CPAWS campaign to expand Nahanni National Park Reserve in the NWT. Currently the 2007-2008 Volunteer Leaders are beginning work on their own projects. Some of these include the development of a volunteer stewardship program, research on ATV issues in Alberta, and raising awareness for marine issues.

Volunteer opportunities with CPAWS Calgary/Banff

Specialized Positions – These positions require a regular commitment from only one or two people. These roles are fun, full of variety and are at the heart of the organization. Some examples include Facebook coordinator, Green Notes editors and Staff Assistants. These are great opportunities if you have some free time Monday to Friday 9 to 5, or know you can work from home independently and consistently, want to improve a wide range of skills or build up your resume, or just want to work directly with staff while learning the “behind the scenes” operations of CPAWS.

Events – We have three types of regular events; the Wild Gala, CPAWS Casino, and Outreach Events. New special events may also arise depending on national and local campaign goals. These are great opportunities for those wanting a lower level of commitment. You can sign up for positions as you go, one shift at a time and usually up to a couple of months in advance. Events are always fun and pack a lot of action into a short amount of time.

There are several kinds of positions for the Gala and the Casino for which you are trained at the beginning of your shift. Outreach events require staff for CPAWS booths at community events such as the EcoLiving Fair, Banff Film Festival or Canmore Folk Festival. These events are ideal if you are interested in working with people and educating the public on conservation issues and CPAWS. If you live outside of Calgary, such as in Banff or Canmore, outreach events are also a great way to volunteer with CPAWS.

Special Programs/Projects – These are typically seasonal or temporary opportunities and require a large number of volunteers to complete a particular program or project, described below. These programs represent CPAWS efforts that could not happen without dedicated volunteers. If you want to get your hands dirty (sometimes literally!) and have fun while getting big results, one of these programs may be for you.

Volunteer Leaders Program – 10 to 15 applicants are selected every spring to participate in this 10 month program. The participants receive extensive training on topic such as advocacy, leadership and fundraising. They are guided by the CPAWS Calgary/Banff Executive Director and Outreach Manager to, in groups, develop their own conservation campaigns and eventually, lead other volunteers. For detailed information about the program and application process please see the Volunteer Leaders page of our website.

The Big Wild – The Big Wild is a joint program by Mountain Equipment Coop (MEC) and CPAWS to save at least 50% of Canada’s remaining wilderness. It includes the Big Wild Challenge, where volunteers agree to document their wilderness adventures through blogs, pictures, and/or video, while raising money for CPAWS initiatives. The program will be launched in late March 2008, and volunteer positions are still in development. Go to www.bigwild.ca for more information, and speak to the Outreach Manager if you would like to be contacted when Big Wild volunteer positions become available.

Stewardship – Even protected areas sometimes need a hand! Volunteers can sign up for stewardship events held in the spring, summer and fall months, located in Calgary, Banff National Park, or Kananaskis Country. The tasks given to CPAWS volunteers vary by event and may include garbage pick-ups, weed pulls, and trail maintenance. These are great ways to get outside with friends and family, and have a direct, positive impact on our wilderness areas. As event details become available they will be described on the CPAWS Calgary/Banff website, but be advised you should register with the Outreach Manager before attending an event. Over the winter you may contact the Outreach Manager to be notified when stewardship events are scheduled.

Wilderness Warriors – These volunteers are guided by one or more of our graduated Volunteer Leaders in the execution of one of our wilderness campaigns. Dependent on the nature of the particular campaign, common activities you may be engaged in include collecting letters, writing for local papers, and planning/participating in awareness events. This is an excellent way to get activism and advocacy experience. If you want to be on the front lines of our wilderness campaigns, this program is for you.

Other Ways to Help

Quick Opportunities – These are extra opportunities for current CPAWS volunteers most frequently delivered via on our volunteer listserv. Some opportunities for volunteers emerge very quickly and may require some level of expertise in a certain field or familiarity with CPAWS. The only way to complete these jobs in time is to contact and recruit current volunteers through email. Some opportunities from the past have included commenting on environmental impact assessments and calling monthly donors just prior to the holiday season.

Got an Idea? – You might have a great idea or talent to contribute to CPAWS, like documentary filmmaking skills, graphic design, or know of an issue we should get involved with. CPAWS has limited resources, staff and volunteers; we are looking for well developed ideas and a plan on how you specifically can help, not just complaints! Contact us to discuss the possibilities.

Donate – If you support the volunteer program, but just don't have the time to get involved right now, you can still help CPAWS by becoming a member.

How to Volunteer with CPAWS Calgary/Banff

Research, self-screen and apply.

Read this handbook, go to www.cpawscalgary.org and rwww.cpaws.org. We hope that we are the organization you would like to volunteer for! Thoroughly go through the available volunteer opportunities and think about what you would be interested in and suited for. Then fill out an online volunteer application form. If you do not have internet access, call the Outreach Manager at 232-6686 for a package. You can feel free to copy and paste parts of your resume into the online form or send a copy along to the Outreach Manager at sferguson@cpawscalgary.org.

Meet with the Outreach Manager.

After you send in your application form, if there are available opportunities, the Outreach Manager will arrange a time to meet with you and determine the best volunteer opportunity for your skills, interests and availability. You may choose to become a member and support CPAWS that way as well.

Start your volunteer work.

When you begin as a CPAWS volunteer your email address will be added to the volunteer listserv and you will receive an orientation package. It is important to read your orientation package thoroughly and keep the Outreach Manager updated on any changes in your contact information. You can now start your volunteer work as discussed with the Outreach Manager. You will receive orientation and training based on your position, which may be extensive if you are working in the CPAWS offices or simple on-the-spot training before a shift at an event. Be sure to communicate with your assigned supervisor or resource person if you have *any* questions or problems.

Follow up and evaluate.

Evaluate how you are doing and advise the Outreach Manager at pre-determined dates, often every 3-6 months. If the project ends, the volunteer opportunity changes or personal circumstances require you to change the nature of your volunteer commitment or discontinue your volunteer commitments be sure to discuss this with the Outreach Manager.

Rights and Responsibilities of CPAWS Volunteers

As a volunteer, you have the right to:

- Be given worthwhile volunteer jobs.
- Be kept informed and up to date.
- Be trusted to do your job the best way you know how.
- Be trained and supervised in a supportive and positive environment.
- Give feedback in the appropriate way using the proper methods.
- Be given recognition.
- End your volunteer experience, with notification if possible, optionally providing a reason.

As a result, you have the following responsibilities:

- To accept only doable assignments.
- To familiarize yourself with all materials in this handbook and other conservation and education materials where appropriate.
- To respect confidences of the organization and it's staff and volunteers.
- To respect professional attitudes and methods.
- To abide by the operating principles of the organization.
- To state your limitations and concerns.
- To bring issues forth to the Outreach Director so that they can be addressed.
- To notify the Outreach Director of an inability to do the assignment in the timeframe agreed upon, so that it can be reassigned to someone else.
- To respect confidential information about the organization, staff and other volunteers.

CPAWS has the right to:

- Decline or dismiss unproductive or dissatisfied volunteers and refer them to Volunteer Calgary. Please note that every reasonable effort will be made to address issues and solve problems with all due respect to the volunteer. A focused effort is put into preventing these things from occurring in the first place.
- Know the limitations and expectations of volunteers.
- Expect communication from volunteers about progress of assignments.

CPAWS recognizes having the following responsibilities:

- To utilize volunteers to accomplish goals within a timeline and budget.
- To define jobs, expectations and to provide personalized service when needed.
- To create a positive, challenging and rewarding work environment.
- To prepare staff to work with volunteers.
- To provide a full circle evaluation, including getting feedback from the volunteer and the staff person regarding the progress of the assignment and the satisfaction and performance of the volunteer.
- To keep the private information of each volunteer confidential and use it only as appropriate and relevant to CPAWS and the volunteer program.

Policies & Procedures

(A complete set of Policies and Procedures for the Volunteer Program will be provided by the Outreach Manager upon request.)

Supervision & Complaints, Suggestions, Concerns

Volunteers are responsible to the Outreach Manager or another designated staff or volunteer leader. CPAWS appreciates your time and energy and wants you to enjoy your volunteer experience. Please feel free to see the Outreach Manager at any time should you have difficulties with tasks or aspects of your volunteer placement. CPAWS wants you to feel like a part of our team and would appreciate your comments or suggestions.

Time Commitments & Attendance

Please be sure to advise your main contact of your time commitments and the days you are available to help. Should you be unable to come in on one of your scheduled days or shifts we ask that you call and advise us with as much advanced notice as possible. Anytime you work on an assignment, it would be very helpful if you could record the hours you have donated.

Reference Checks

CPAWS reserves the right to do reference checks on all new volunteers. CPAWS also may require a criminal records check, especially for education program. Should you require a letter of reference for the work you have done, please speak to your main contact and s/he will be able to assist you further.

CPAWS Recognition

Volunteer appreciation and recognition comes in various forms. CPAWS feels it is best to develop a relationship with each volunteer, determine what type of appreciation and recognition is valued by the volunteer, then try to accomplish that wherever possible and within the means of the organization. Some types of recognition and appreciation include:

- Informal verbal appreciation from staff
- Formal verbal recognition at meetings or events
- Recognition in print in the chapter newsletter and website
- Letters of reference for jobs well done
- Promotion to “mentor” new volunteers
- Outings and get-togethers to celebrate accomplishments
- Specialized training, at the discretion of the Outreach Manager and Executive Director
- Notes and thank you cards

Support CPAWS by becoming a member

It is increasingly important that volunteers support the organization through purchasing a membership in addition to giving your time and energy and skills. The larger the membership base, the stronger and more credible CPAWS is to the general public and decision-makers. For your membership, you will receive both the local and the national newsletters, which will keep you informed and up-to-date on issues and will help you see and understand "the bigger picture", of which you -- the volunteer -- play such an important role. It's just one more way you can make a difference! Your membership counts!

Membership is only \$35 (or more if you choose) per year. You will receive a charitable receipt and both the national and chapter newsletters twice per year! Special Donations are much appreciated throughout the year.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – Calgary/Banff Chapter

1120, 1202 Centre Street SE Calgary Alberta T2G 5A5

Tel: (403) 232-6686

Email: info@cpawscalgary.org Website: www.cpawscalgary.org

Date: _____

Name: _____ **PH #** _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

PC: _____

CASH CHEQUE CREDIT CARD \$100 \$50 \$35

Other \$ _____

My credit card # is _____

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

~ THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT! ~

The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders.

-Edward Abbey

Notes



This handbook was printed on 100% recycled paper.