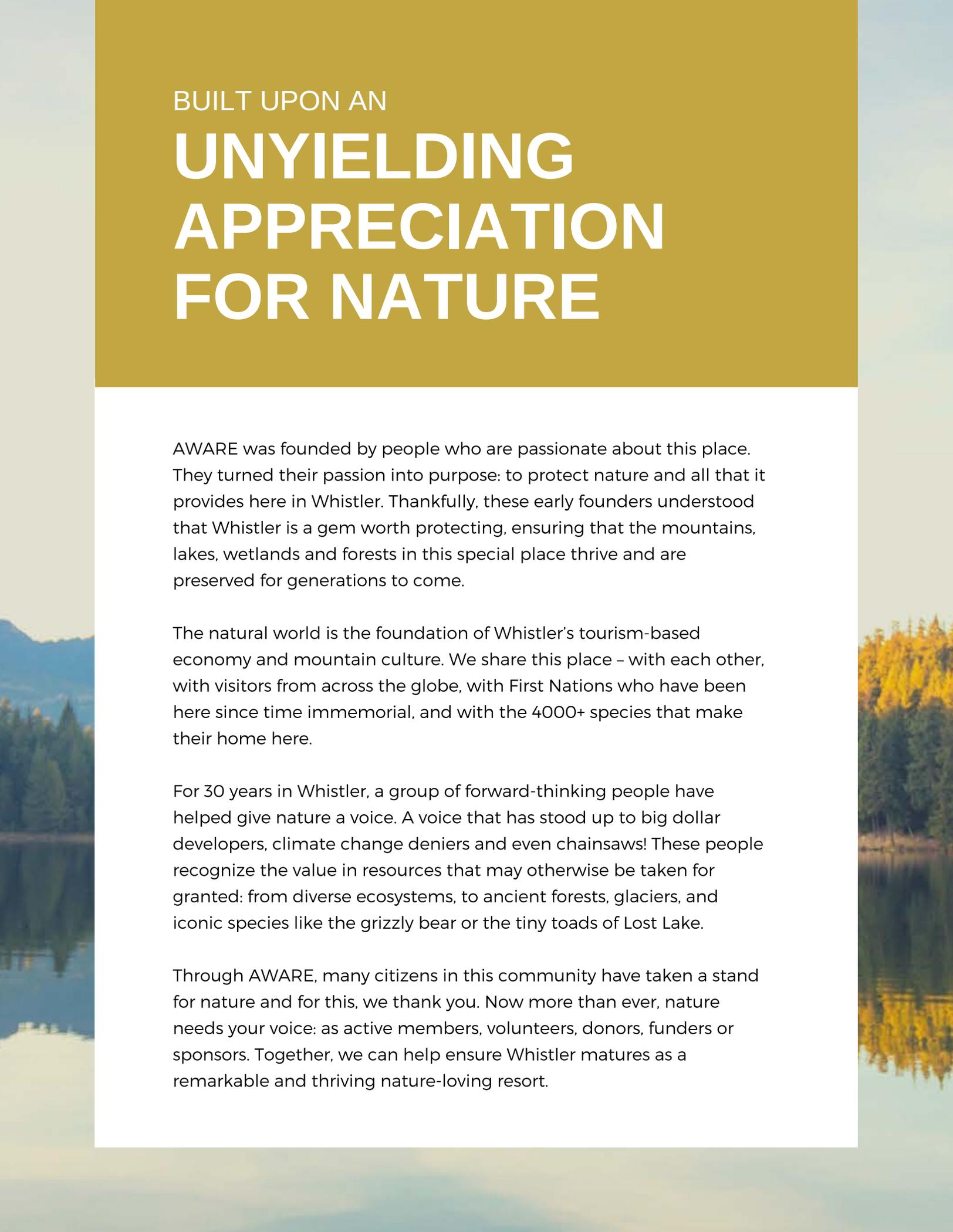


CELEBRATING 30 YEARS
OF WORKING FOR THE
WHISTLER ENVIRONMENT



Association of
Whistler Area Residents
for the Environment

1989 - 2019



BUILT UPON AN UNYIELDING APPRECIATION FOR NATURE

AWARE was founded by people who are passionate about this place. They turned their passion into purpose: to protect nature and all that it provides here in Whistler. Thankfully, these early founders understood that Whistler is a gem worth protecting, ensuring that the mountains, lakes, wetlands and forests in this special place thrive and are preserved for generations to come.

The natural world is the foundation of Whistler's tourism-based economy and mountain culture. We share this place – with each other, with visitors from across the globe, with First Nations who have been here since time immemorial, and with the 4000+ species that make their home here.

For 30 years in Whistler, a group of forward-thinking people have helped give nature a voice. A voice that has stood up to big dollar developers, climate change deniers and even chainsaws! These people recognize the value in resources that may otherwise be taken for granted: from diverse ecosystems, to ancient forests, glaciers, and iconic species like the grizzly bear or the tiny toads of Lost Lake.

Through AWARE, many citizens in this community have taken a stand for nature and for this, we thank you. Now more than ever, nature needs your voice: as active members, volunteers, donors, funders or sponsors. Together, we can help ensure Whistler matures as a remarkable and thriving nature-loving resort.

LASTING LEGACIES ON THE LANDSCAPE

Secured Wildland Zones in the Sea to Sky Land and Resource Management Plan

AWARE was instrumental in securing the inclusion of wildlands zones to put new controls on land use to reflect areas cultural, recreation, tourism and wildlife values.

Emerald Forest Conservancy

protected in perpetuity to provide natural habitat for animals and plants with the condition recreational opportunities will not compromise habitat values.

Built Wildlife Viewing Platforms

At the North end of Alta Lake and on Old Mill Road at Lost Lake Park. Helping people learn about local wildlife with reduced disturbance.

Recorded the Areas Oldest Living Tree

A 1200+ year old Yellow Cedar in the Callaghan Valley just 10 meters downhill from a recently logged area.

Protected River of Golden Dreams Wetland Corridor

Preserving 70 acres of habitat from infill against original plans for 'Green Lakes Golf Course' to run alongside the river.

Supporting Tiny Toad Migrations

Partnered to secure grants for some of the first fencing to prevent Yellow Listed Western Toad toadlets from getting squished! We still help with volunteers at each annual migration.

Resisting Development of Alpha & Millar Creek Wetlands and Connected Uplands

Since the early 90's AWARE has repeatedly pushed back on development on one of the largest remaining upland-wetland ecosystems. The wetlands are now protected but the uplands are still vulnerable to future development.



PIVOTAL MOMENTS



1989

CITIZENS UNITE ON RECYCLING

Led by Michelle Bush, a dozen locals meet at Cittas to find a way to bring recycling to Whistler. AWARE is formed in 1989, early directors hosted monthly recycling collections and drove recyclables down the old highway to the nearest facilities.

1991+

NEST UNITS OR BED UNITS

As the Resort Municipality of Whistler adopts community recycling, AWARE's focus shifts to habitat conservation (protecting "nest units") as development spreads across the flat valley bottom.

1997

RIVER OF GOLDEN DREAMS CORRIDOR SAVED

The River of Golden Dreams wetlands corridor survives because AWARE members push back on golf course development plans, saving 70 acres of riparian habitat.

LATE
1990S

THE WAR IN THE WOODS

Area environmental groups and Indigenous groups rally together with protests to protect 1,300+ year-old Douglas Fir trees from logging in the Elaho Valley near Squamish. The area was later protected.

1999

PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK (PAN)

AWARE members support identification of a PAN to help safeguard Whistler's important natural areas and their ecological connectivity (now aligned with Development Permit Areas).

2000

EMERALD FOREST BECOMES PROTECTED

Thanks to AWARE's voice at council meetings, intelligent controls on rampant development were put in place so that sensitive areas like the Emerald Forest are protected.

EARLY
2000S

PROPOSING AN OLYMPIC WILDLIFE LEGACY

Understanding the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games would bring change to the Callaghan Valley, AWARE lobbied VANOC to protect the adjacent upper portion of the Soo Valley as a legacy for nature and future generations. These efforts were ultimately unsuccessful.



2003

SMALLER FOOTPRINT FOR OLYMPIC PARK

AWARE successfully advocates for a reduction in the footprint of the Whistler Olympic Park due to concerns about habitat fragmentation, increased area use, and wildlife disturbance.

2006

WHISTLER 2020: VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

AWARE is one of the early adopters of The Natural Step and the subsequent W2020 community sustainability vision. The vision and community-driven process was recognized as world-leading.

2007

GRAPPLING WITH MOTORIZED RECREATION

Recognizing growth in motorized recreation AWARE conducts a snowmobile survey which is then used to create the case for designation of non-motorized zones.

2008

REGIONAL LAND USE LEGACIES

The Sea to Sky Land and Resource Management Plan sets the rules for land use in the region. AWARE provided a voice for nature through ongoing engagement and with others pushed for the inclusion of use restricted 'wildland' zones.

2009

ADVOCATING FOR RED-LISTED WETLANDS

With over 70% of Whistler's wetlands already lost, AWARE members protest development on an area of red-listed wetland for a new oversized transit yard in preparation for the 2010 Winter Games.

2014

WHISTLER U DEVELOPMENT QUASHED

AWARE successfully lobbies to see the development of a university on the uplands next to Millar and Alpha Creek wetlands quashed. We continue to monitor development proposals for the 'Zen' lands that overstep existing zoning.

TODAY

STEWARDS FOR A MATURING RESORT

AWARE continues to advocate for ecosystem and habitat protection in Whistler so this beautiful place will inspire and delight generations to come.



STRENGTHENING AWARE'S CORE TO GROW IMPACT

After the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, AWARE was in trouble. Volunteer Board Directors had needed to step back from programs and community engagement aside from keeping members up to date on local issues. An extraordinary meeting of stakeholders was held to determine whether Whistler still needed an organisation like AWARE and if so, how it could shift to have greater impact.

Stakeholders agreed that an independent voice on environmental issues was still important in Whistler. They identified that securing seed funding for a part-time staff person was essential for AWARE to help elevate the environmental agenda, create nature-based programs for the community and continue to advocate on behalf of nature and community members.

Thankfully, the Community Foundation of Whistler (CFOW) stepped up, committing to support capacity-building at AWARE. This helped address a funding gap that many charities like AWARE face – traditional grant funding projects with measurable physical outputs and short time frames. This was a new model of support for the CFOW and it was a game changer for AWARE.

THE GROWING IMPACT OF CFOW'S SEED FUNDING MODEL

Starting in August 2013, funding from the CFOW's Environmental Legacy Fund rejuvenated AWARE so the group could continue to work on environmental issues that matter to our community. Thanks to CFOW stepping outside the box and supporting core capacity, AWARE has developed new environmental programs and actions, secured project grants, built new partnerships, and made a measurable impact once again. For this, we are eternally grateful.



ARTICULATING OUR PRIORITIES

AFTER AWARE REGROUPED WITH THE COMMUNITY, IT FORMALIZED THREE KEY PRIORITIES WHICH HAVE BEEN DRIVING IT EVER SINCE.



SAFEGUARDING HABITAT, BIODIVERSITY AND WILDERNESS

We work to safeguard diverse local habitats and their species, to educate the public about Whistler's wilderness backyard and to maintain connectivity of ecosystems, which support wildlife and human health.



BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

We empower our community to participate in, and act upon, goals for mindful consumption within the urgent context of unsustainable resource use and climate change.

Engaging community members to make smart energy choices, use efficient transportation, consider the impacts of products, food and water, as we seek a more sustainable future.



CONNECTING PEOPLE AND NATURE

We utilize education, appreciation and experience to encourage a love of nature. Promoting awareness, inspiring responsible stewardship and fostering respect of the natural environment, which is the foundation of our local mountain culture and quality of life.

GIVING NATURE A VOICE

WHY WE ADVOCATE

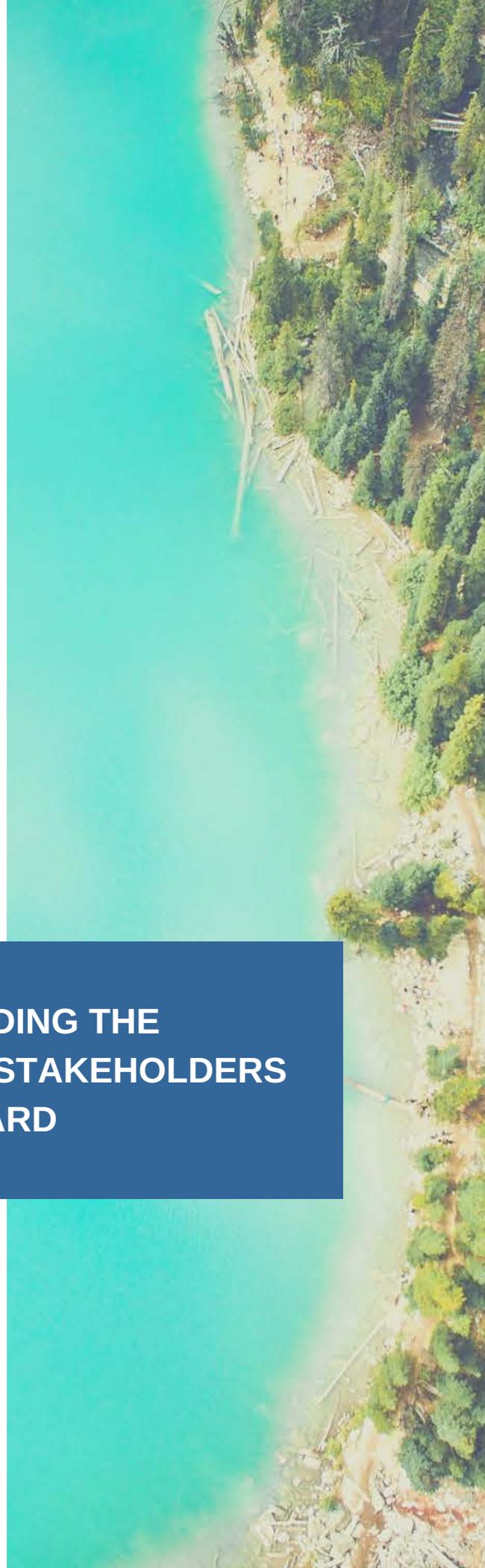
We advocate to give nature a voice in decision making processes that determine how we utilise natural resources, the landscape and set direction for our shared future.

We approach our advocacy with a focus on science, solutions, and engagement of others. Thoughtful decision-making can only happen when different perspectives are shared and understood.

**AT AWARE WE BELIEVE IN FINDING THE
COMMON GROUND AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS
AS A PATH TO MOVING FORWARD**

HOW WE ADVOCATE

- Engaging in public comment processes
- Connecting community with emerging issues through print and online media
- Participating in committees of council



PROGRAMS

A highlight of AWARE'S current programs that take place year after year



GROW WHISTLER

Growing Food | Cultivating Health | Building Community



370+

ORGANIC GARDENERS IN 172 GARDEN BOXES



WHISTLER NATURE CAMP

Inspiring the environmental stewards of tomorrow



640+

CAMP ATTENDANCES



ECO-ACTIVE

Connecting large groups with hands-on projects



730+

HOURS VOLUNTEERED



ECO-CITIZEN

Educating people how to look after our natural backyard



700+

PEOPLE REACHED IN FIRST 2 MONTHS

More programs

Kids Nature Club // EcoFLIX // Green Drinks & more at www.awarewhistler.org



"It's wonderful to grow your own food with no chemicals"
-Sue, GROW gardener

"This is the best thing in our whole neighbourhood"
- Jessica, GROW gardener

PROJECTS & EVENTS



ONE-TIME PROJECTS

POLLINATOR GARDENS

Located near the Community Gardens at Spruce Grove and Bayley Parks

CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOPS

Connecting teens with local climate actions

NATURAL ELEMENTS

Naturalising a schoolyard to create natural learning spaces

STEP INTO NATURE

Learning about nature through guided nature hikes

OLD TREE MAP

Sharing 10 years of research of Whistler's old and ancient trees

SPECIAL EVENTS

A NIGHT WITH GRIZZLIES

Learning about local threatened grizzly populations

OLD FOREST SYMPOSIUM

Gathering scientists to learn about unique old forest values

FOREST FIRE SYMPOSIUM

Examining the changing future of our forests in a warming climate

CLIMATE REPORTS

Elizabeth May on COP 21

Gwynne Dyer on geopolitical context to climate change

More information at www.awarewhistler.org

ZERO WASTE

AWARE's waste reduction initiatives across various sectors



EVENTS

ZERO WASTE HEROES

Our social enterprise reduces waste one event at a time



70K

USERS IN THE FIRST 5 YEARS



YOUTH

ZERO WASTE IN SCHOOLS

Connecting students in the region with zero waste action



1520

STUDENTS ENGAGED IN TWO YEARS



BUSINESSES

On-site support, training, workshops, guides and more to reduce and divert waste



140

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED



ACCOMMODATIONS

Pilot projects, site support, training & tools for property managers and occupants



400+

UNITS SUPPORTED



COMMUNITY

Zero waste workshops, clothing swaps, community garage sales and more



770+

ANNUAL ZERO WASTE EVENT ATTENDEES

More projects

Kids Nature Club // EcoFLIX // Green Drinks & more at awarewhistler.org

"Trash talk! A fun, engaging and hands-on workshop that left children thinking and talking about ways to reduce waste at school and at home." -Nina Moore, Whistler Waldorf Teacher



LOOKING AHEAD

AWARE's work will continue to focus on our three priorities:

- Connecting People with Nature
- Building Sustainable Community
- Safeguarding Habitat, Biodiversity and Wilderness Values

Our programs and projects will continue to address key issues:

TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SAFEGUARDING BIODIVERSITY

PROMOTING A CONSERVATION MIND-SET

KEY ISSUES FACING OUR COMMUNITY

Mitigating and adapting for climate change will be vital to Whistler's future success. By collaborating to create positive change and putting ideas into action, AWARE can inspire not only in our own community, but also visitors from around the globe.

The changing climate, population growth, development and increasing backcountry use amplify the threat of biodiversity loss. AWARE will continue to advocate for habitat, biodiversity and wilderness values as we seek a balanced use of the landscape.

AWARE's programming promotes a conservation mind-set, as it applies to both natural area and resource use. We will continue to work to change behaviours around water, waste, energy, fuel and overall consumption patterns because only then will we create real change.



WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Without the support of members, donors, volunteers, and community AWARE would not exist, and neither would the accomplishments we have created together. We exist because this community not only believes in protecting this natural environment, but does something about it.

Join us today - in whatever capacity you can - and help to stand up for what we stand on.

"THERE IS NO MORE NEUTRALITY IN THE WORLD. YOU EITHER HAVE TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION, OR YOU'RE GOING TO BE PART OF THE PROBLEM." -T. SIEDNER

DONATE

- Make a one time donation
- Give monthly
- Consider in-kind donations
- Legacy giving through a Will or to AWARE's endowment fund

DEVOTE

- Support through a membership
- Volunteer
- Join an AWARE committee
- Ask about becoming a Board Director

LEARN

- Take part in projects & programs
- Attend events
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter

Visit www.awarewhistler.org today

THANK YOU

Many have contributed to AWARE's journey over the past 30 years. It is a privilege to serve a community where people recognize the ability we each have to make a difference and what we can achieve together. Our thanks to:

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Volunteers, donors, and members: Your engagement is the cornerstone to AWARE. We recognize your generosity and we thank you.

BUSINESSES & PARTNERS

The support and knowledge you have shared with us to help propel our collaborate efforts knows no bounds, and we are forever thankful.

FUNDING PARTNERS

Endless gratitude to our funders, whose contributions have helped bring our programs and projects to life for the benefit of both people and planet / nature.





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