



Reducing Conflict with Large Carnivores in the Waterton Biosphere Reserve

With support from the Government of Canada's [Habitat Stewardship Program](#) (Prevention Stream), the Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association (WBRA) led a one-year project in 2014–2015 to reduce human–carnivore conflicts on private lands in the [Waterton Biosphere Reserve](#).

WHY THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT

Located in southwestern Alberta, the Waterton Biosphere Reserve is one of 18 biosphere reserves in Canada and encompasses ecologically diverse landscapes in the Canadian Rockies and prairie grasslands. Farmers and ranchers share this landscape with several large carnivores, including wolves, cougars and bears. Rural communities are experiencing high rates of human-carnivore conflicts, often related to livestock and animal feed. Most conflicts are associated with the [Northern Grey Wolf](#) (*Canis lupus occidentalis*) and the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada assessed [Grizzly Bear](#) (*Ursus arctos*).

WHAT WAS DONE

The WBRA worked with landowners and other partners to reduce attractants for carnivores and mitigate the economic impact of human-carnivore conflicts for landowners. The project reduced attractants by removing livestock carcasses, installing fences around calving pens, and replacing or retrofitting grain bins to be bear-proof. The WBRA collected details of previously completed predator management projects in southwestern Alberta to produce a summary document highlighting the successes of landowners who have taken steps to reduce human-carnivore conflicts. The document provides examples of proven techniques for reducing conflicts and can be used as reference material for landowners. In addition, the WBRA produced three technical guides to support landowner efforts, communicated techniques through social media, and completed a short film about living with large carnivores.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS PROJECT

- Removed more than 850 livestock carcasses from 500,000 ha of land owned by 92 producers.
- Completed six new attractant reduction projects to reduce sources of conflict with large carnivores.



Credit: Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association

▲ Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos*)

- Held three public meetings to educate citizens and engage landowners, residents and leaseholders in stewardship activities such as dead livestock removal and other human-carnivore conflict management projects.
- Conducted bear-safety workshops with a group of high school students, a 4-H club, and a Cub Scout troop to raise awareness and encourage participation in conflict reduction practices.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROJECT

The WBRA made significant progress toward improving landowner relationships with large carnivores in the Waterton Biosphere Reserve. Additionally, large carnivore mortality was reduced.

INVESTMENT: 2014–2015

Habitat Stewardship Program Funds:	\$21,800
Partner Support Leveraged:	\$70,050
TOTAL:	\$91,850