



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

 ALBERTA INSTITUTE
FOR WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION

2022 HIGHLIGHTS



1,960

Patients Admitted



8,210

Phone Calls Received



8,613

Volunteer Hours Logged



4,300+

People connected with through education events

Faced with HPAI and prevented any in house transmissions



24% increase in active volunteers compared to 2021

Completed 833 rescues and pickups

Saw a 10% increase in patients compared to 2021



2022 showed an overall increase in demand for our wildlife rehabilitation, wildlife hotline, and education programs compared to 2021.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE



This year, Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC) will celebrate its **30th anniversary**. Since our founding in 1993, over **36,000** injured and orphaned animals have been cared for at AIWC. We will be celebrating this amazing milestone throughout 2023, but for now let's look back at 2022.

In 2022, we saw a **10%** increase in patients compared to 2021. We cared for **1,960** animals from various species, including birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. We were also faced with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) arriving in Alberta and killing thousands of animals. At AIWC, we admitted 97 animals that were suspected or confirmed to have this deadly virus. Sadly, we were not able to treat them because there is currently no cure, but we were able to provide them with compassionate euthanasia and saw no cases of in-house transmission of HPAI which is a success.

Our Wildlife Hotline program saw extensive growth in demand as well, you can find out more about this on page five. We hosted educational programs and webinars, reaching over **3,300** students and community members, to promote the conservation of wildlife and their habitats.

Despite our achievements, we also faced challenges in 2022. These include the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which continued to disrupt our fundraising efforts and volunteer recruitment. And, while many have been impacted by inflation, AIWC has been no exception, we also saw higher prices for many staples of our operations, primarily increasing the cost of food for our patients.

Our strategic plan was reviewed and updated by the Board and Executive team in early 2022, supporting AIWC's goals, as well as identifying the challenges we face and how best to support our mission. We are currently undergoing master planning for the land AIWC resides on northwest of Calgary, outlining and identifying what enclosures and facilities will fit our needs now, but also into the future.

Of course, one constant at AIWC is that the demand for our services continues to increase. We are committed to providing the best care possible to Alberta's wildlife and with your support we can continue to meet this demand.

Thank you for all you do and here's to another 30 years of helping Alberta's wildlife in need.

Holly Lillie
Executive Director

Jennifer Kaiser
Chair, Board of Directors

WILDLIFE HOTLINE STATS

The **highest** number of calls we addressed in one day was **73 Calls** on **Saturday, June 4th**.

Organized over **1,103** **Pickups/Rescues**. Often with multiple animals at each pickup. **23%** increase compared to **2021**.

Our busiest month was **June** with **1,551** calls to our wildlife hotline. This was **183** more calls than we received in June **2021**.

5,795 calls received during the ‘**Summer**’ season (May to September); over **71%** of total calls.

8,210 total calls to Hotline in **2022**. **21%** increase compared to **2021**.

404 **Healthy Animals** protected from unnecessary intervention in **2022**.



WILDLIFE HOTLINE



2022 was a year of highs and lows on the AIWC Hotline. Although the start of our busy season was marred by the onslaught of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), our rescue and hotline programs rose to meet the challenge. It is because of their dedication, drive, and cooperation that we hit a record high across the board with our hotline statistics. We were not only able to manage significant expansions in our services but also meet the increased demands of injured and orphaned wildlife in southern Alberta.

The number of calls made to our hotline increased by **20%** from **2021** and has more than doubled since we started tracking these calls in 2018. One of our strongest values will always be the education and support provided to members of the public and their wildlife concerns. In **2022**, we are proud to say that we finished the year with **8,210** calls made to our hotline, and we are so grateful to know we have supported so many individuals throughout the past year, both humans and animals alike.

Our Service Dispatcher program, funded by Canada Summer Jobs, also continues to break records. Our four seasonal staff members in this role were able to complete **207 rescues** and answer **2,627 calls** during their 8-week sessions from May to August of **2022**. Since its fruition in **2019**, our Service Dispatchers have addressed **9,080 calls** from members of the public and completed **833 rescues and pickups** for wildlife in need. Our Service Dispatchers are an asset to our seasonal accomplishments, and **2023** will mark the first year where we hope to add more members to our team to meet undoubtedly more added demands on our rescue and hotline programs.

June continues to be our busiest month, ringing in a total of **1,551 calls** to our hotline, with our busiest single day receiving **73** calls! **71%** of all calls were received from May to September. In addition, patient drop-offs by members of the public were responsible for **257** new admissions at our clinic. Our hotline team was also able to successfully prevent **404** healthy animals from coming into care unnecessarily. We have seen an increase in these occurrences over the past few years, and have found that education provided through the hotline has significantly decreased unnecessary intervention with of healthy wildlife. Healthy wildlife most frequently refers to young babies, suspected to be orphaned, or fledgling birds who are mistaken for injured when they are still learning how to fly.

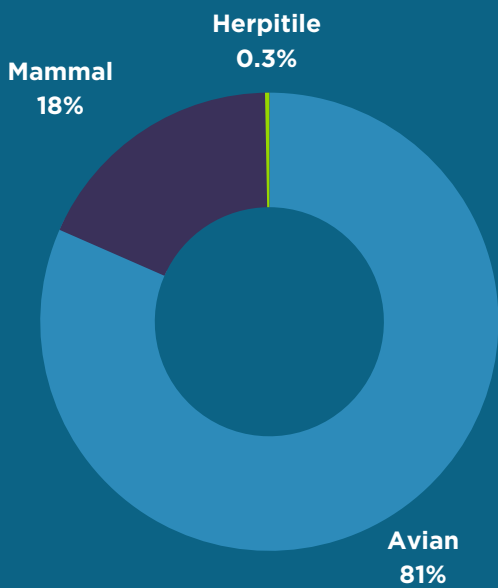
Similar to previous years, the need for our advice regarding 'nuisance' wildlife has also increased. Our staff frequently provides support and feedback regarding co-existing with or deterring wildlife in your own backyard. Such calls are often regarding woodpeckers, gophers, skunks, and squirrels who attempt to make homes in residential areas. Out of the **190** 'nuisance' calls in **2022**, **70%** were directly related to skunk-under-porch concerns. Of course, we know how fond wildlife is of living in and around the structures we build, so we are always happy to lend an ear and discuss methods on how to share your space or humanely encourage them on their way.

We anticipate another record-breaking year ahead of us and are ready to greet the challenge with enthusiasm. We can't wait to help our human and wildlife neighbours in **2023!**

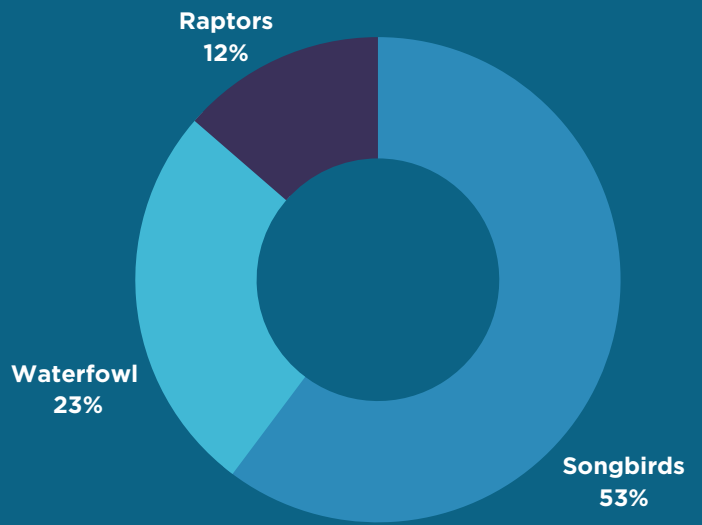
Robyn Cunningham-Dunlop
Office Administrator



WILDLIFE REHABILITATION STATS



AIWC 2022 Admissions
By Species



AIWC 2022 Avian Species
Admissions Breakdown



WILDLIFE

REHABILITATION



AIWC continues to maintain a high standard of care for our patients while yearly admissions consistently rise. As we managed through the Covid-19 pandemic and outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), we were still able to provide each animal with excellent care from our skilled team of staff and volunteers.

In 2022, AIWC admitted 1,960 animals for treatment, a 11.3% increase from 2021. Our patients were 81% avian species, 18% mammal species, and 0.3% herptile species. Our patient success rate was 72% for animals after they had survived their first 24-hours in care.

Of the 1,593 birds AIWC cared for, 53% were songbirds, 12% were raptors, and 23% were waterfowl and aquatic birds. 110 different bird species were cared for, with the most common species being black-billed magpies, mallards, and American robins. We treated 25 different mammal species, with white-tailed prairie hares, striped skunks, and red squirrels being the most common. The predominant circumstances of admission remained consistent with past years, with high numbers of victims of window strikes, vehicle collisions, kidnapped babies, and animals that were caught by domestic cats. AIWC is proud to have released 550 animals back to the wild in 2022.



Amidst the 550 patients released was an adult ferruginous hawk that came into our care in May. Ferruginous hawks are the largest hawk species found in Alberta and are listed as endangered under the *Alberta Wildlife Act*. The hawk was entangled in a barbed wire fence and one of the sharp edges had pierced through their left wing causing a tear in their patagium (wing membrane). The finder was able to restrain the hawk while gently sliding the wing off the barbed wire, careful to not cause further damage.

Upon admission to AIWC, it was noted that other than the patagial tear and a toe wound, the hawk was in exceptional condition and had clearly been thriving in the wild prior to this incident. Our staff veterinarian sedated the patient, sutured the tear closed, and prescribed a course of antibiotics and pain medication.

During this time, Alberta was inundated with an influx of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), a highly contagious and deadly virus that mainly occurs in birds. AIWC had been experiencing a high volume of patients suspected to be suffering from HPAI and had put protocols in place to isolate new patients and mitigate the spread within the clinic. HPAI affects each species somewhat differently, however, birds of prey are highly susceptible and their survival rate is low. It was a priority to maintain the ferruginous hawk's health, as with all patients, and to prevent HPAI transmission within the clinic through the use of personal protective equipment and thorough sanitation.

The hawk was housed indoors until their course of medication had finished. By this time they had become quite fractious and difficult to handle. They were moved into an outdoor flight pen to reacclimate to the weather and begin flight conditioning for release. Thankfully the rehabilitation staff are highly trained on handling difficult animals as this hawk had become quite aggressive in care, which is common within the species. After being outside for a week, their sutures were removed as the wound had fully healed. The patient was flight tested and it was assessed that they were ready for release by the rehabilitation manager and veterinarian. The ferruginous hawk made a full recovery after spending 18 days in care and was successfully released back to the area they were initially found.





Another highlight for AIWC was the surprise of silver-haired bat pups that were born in our care. The mother was brought to our facility after being grounded during a stretch of cold weather and it was determined that she was cold and thin, but otherwise looked healthy. As with all bats, we started hand feeding her to assist her weight gain since bats can have difficulty feeding themselves in captivity. She gained weight quickly and after we trained her to eat on her own, she was moved into an outdoor enclosure for flight training.

Most bat species mate in the fall season with female bats storing their mate's sperm until the following spring when weather is more appropriate and food is abundant for rearing young. Female silver-haired bats typically begin ovulating in late April or early May and their gestation period is 50 to 60 days long. Since the mother bat was brought to AIWC in early May, and the pups were born in early July, we suspect that she began ovulating and became pregnant shortly after arriving at AIWC when she was warm, eating consistently, and felt safe enough to do so. She gave birth to two female pups and was attentive at raising them, with supportive care from the rehabilitation staff. It was a shock to the staff at AIWC and a first for the clinic; baby bats (called pups) had never been born in our facility before.

We performed daily checks on the mother and pups to ensure proper weight gain and assess health, and the mother was compliant with staff's exams on her young. They grew quickly and began flying about a month after they were born, however, they were most commonly found snuggled up under their mother's wings. As with their mother, staff had to train the pups to eat on their own, which they learned quickly and looked forward to their daily insect meals. After it was assessed that the pups had been weaned from their mother's milk, were eating on their own, and flying well, the three were released together in late August to begin their fall migration. Even though staff regularly raise orphaned infants in the clinic, it was heartwarming to instead assist a wild mother raising her young and be successful doing so.

Jessica Hay

Assistant Rehabilitation Manager

VETERINARY PROGRAM



Case #1 -Swainson's hawk 22-1002

A nestling Swainson's hawk was found in a fallen nest and transferred to AWC for care. The hawk presented mentally dull, thin, severely dehydrated, and with a low body temperature. His packed cell volume (red blood cell count) was found to be 8%, which was dangerously low (normal range 35-55%). His blood protein levels were too low to read on our in-house refractometer. His bloodwork indicated a severely low red blood cell count (anemia) and severely low blood protein levels (hypoproteinemia), both of which are potentially life threatening.

This nestling was intensively treated at our hospital with active warming and oxygen supplementation. We also placed an IV catheter in his tiny neck vein in order to administer IV fluid therapy. The nestling was on IV fluids for two days until his condition stabilized. After five days of intensive care his blood values normalized. He was reared by the animal care team and made a full recovery. The Swainson's hawk was released as a juvenile after 52 days in care.





Case #2 - Red Fox 22-1592

The AIWC clinical team received an adult red fox that presented with severe dehydration, lethargy, and deep infected wounds on his sides and belly. He was aggressively managed with IV fluid therapy, pain medications, and antibiotics. His wounds required regular cleaning and dressing until they were healthy enough to close surgically. He required a series of surgeries to repair his wounds that were performed over the course of a few weeks.

Unfortunately, he developed another condition called paraphimosis as a consequence of his extensive wounds. Essentially, his penis was not able to return into his prepuce (the sheath that covers the penis) because of the substantial scarring around the base of his penis. This condition is potentially life threatening in a wild animal because the penis will become damaged and devitalized without the protection of the prepuce, which can lead to severe pain, infection, and tissue death.

In order to save this fox, AIWC recruited the help of a board-certified surgeon, Dr. Amy Little, who works for VCA Calgary Animal Referral & Emergency Centre. She was able to perform a preputial advancement surgery in order to restore proper coverage of the penis in its protective sheath. The fox had an excellent response to surgery. He continued to improve in care and was eventually healthy enough for release after 138 days in care.

Cassandra Lapham-Simpson, DVM
Veterinary Intern

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



We can never express how grateful we are for the team that helps us operate. Our volunteers, summer staff, and members of the wider community made 2022 a very successful year. Our community and our reach continue to grow and allow us to help more wildlife as a result, including minimizing human and wildlife conflict through our education programs.

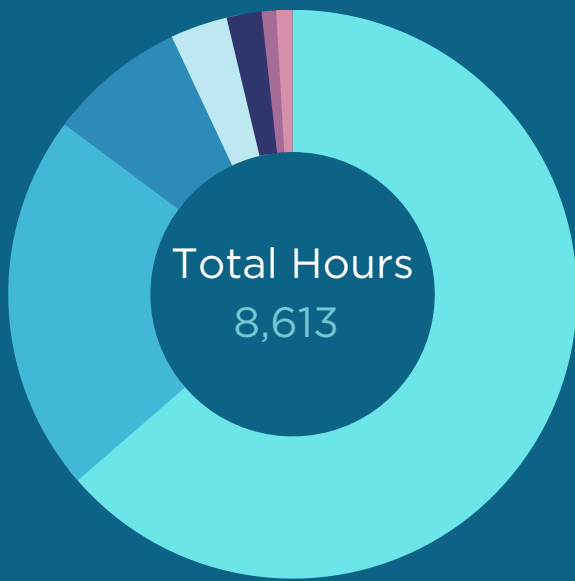
Volunteering

Our volunteer team continues to grow as we went from **133 to 174 active volunteers** by the end of 2022! We saw a **14% increase** in hotline hours contributed by volunteers, and small but significant increase in rescue hours volunteered as well. Despite the challenges of an increase in fuel prices this year, rescue volunteers were still able to drive a total of **107,287 kms** collectively, helping animals to the care they needed. We identified a need to increase our number of public awareness volunteers in order to keep up with the increasing opportunities for us to run booths in our community. That has already helped structure our volunteer recruitment for 2023.





2023 Volunteer Hours



- 63.6% Clinic
- 21.6% Rescue
- 7.8% Hotline
- 2% Facilities
- <1% Newsletter, Blog, and Social media
- <1% Fundraising, Public Awareness, and Office support



192,791 km driven by volunteers





Wildlife educations programs

We were able to **connect with over 4,300 people** of all ages this year through our education and public awareness events. We held **14 booths** at events all over Calgary, playing educational games, raising money and connecting with the community.

Our **8 virtual talks** included topics on rabbits, winter wildlife, bears, wildlife babies, moose, ecosystem balance, and more! Whilst the majority of our virtual audiences were Alberta-based, we also saw attendance from BC, Ontario, and even Australia.

We are so pleased to report the wide range of audiences we spoke to which included school groups, community groups, retirement homes, libraries, and local businesses. It is thrilling to see members of the community from all demographics engage in the material we offer. One of the biggest education events for the year was the Calgary Mayors' Expo in May and June which allowed us to present in-person and virtually to over **1,400 students** all across Alberta.

Through the help of our amazing summer staff, we also started an online collection of learning materials that parents and teachers can access for free and use either in conjunction with, or separately from, our programs. Those resources can be found online at aiwc.ca.

Taz Scully

Community Engagement Coordinator

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

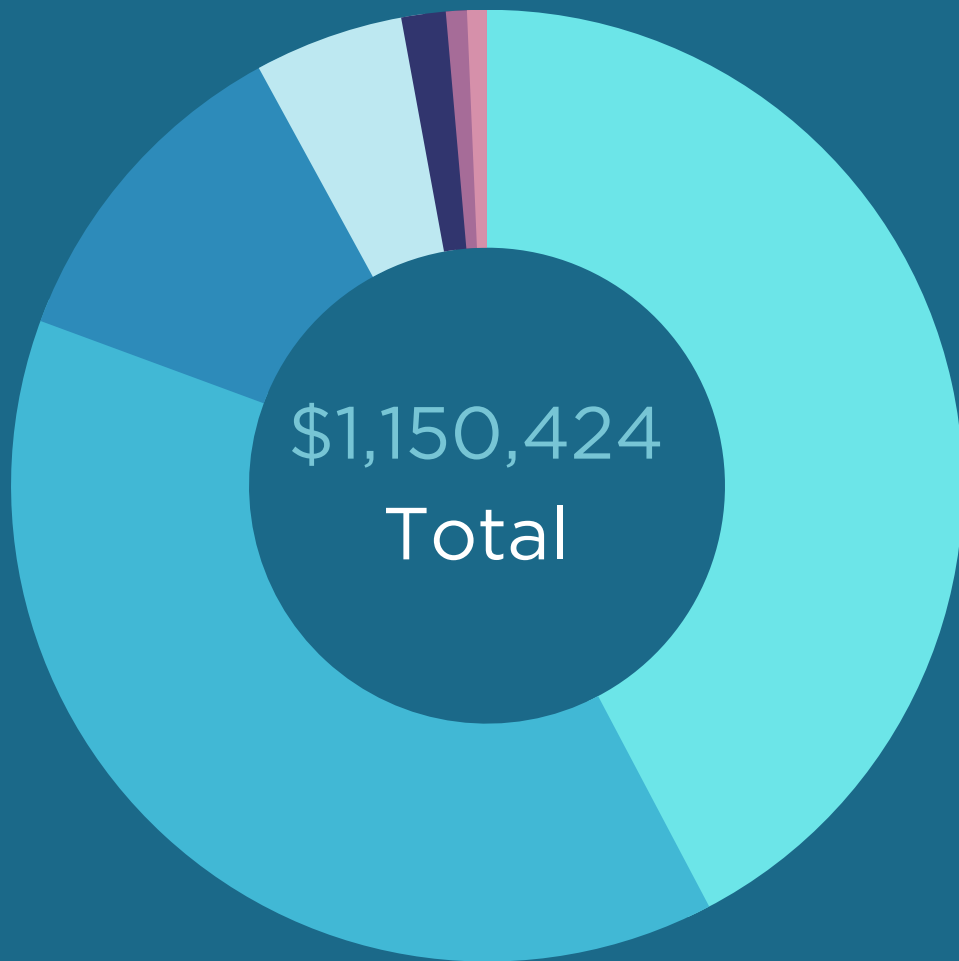


- A. Katherine Checklnd
- A.E. Bowers Elementary School – Mrs. McMurray’s Grade 3 Class
- Airdrie Liquor Store
- Annapolis Capital Limited
- ATCO Electric
- Bears Paw Waste & Recycling Solutions
- Benefaction Foundation
- Bow RiversEdge Campground
- C.H. Andrews Farms Ltd
- Calgary Foundation
- Calgary Properties Lions Club
- Canadian Natural Resources
- Cenovus Energy
- Charities Aid Foundation of Canada
- Cochrane Foundation
- Cochrane Veterinary Care Clinic
- Committee of 10,000
- Donmar Foundation
- Eric S. Margolis Family Foundation
- Form & Build Management Inc.
- Giftfunds Canada
- Grant MacEwan Charitable Foundation
- Harry & Martha Cohen Foundation
- Imperial Oil Resources
- Inter Pipeline Ltd
- Nickle Family Foundation
- Pascal Pascal’s Patisserie
- Paul Dunphy Productions Inc.
- Red Deer & District Community Foundation
- River Path Veterinary Clinic
- Riverbend Campground Okotoks Couture
- Rocky View Chestermere Agricultural Society
- Rocky View County
- Sherling Animal Welfare Fund
- Stantec Consulting Ltd
- Teine Energy
- The Byler Foundation
- The Greygates Foundation
- The Hindle Family Foundation
- The United Church of Canada Foundation
- The Wild Bird Store
- Totem Charitable Foundation
- TransCanada Pipelines Limited
- Western Canadian Spill Service

2022

FINANCIALS

Revenues

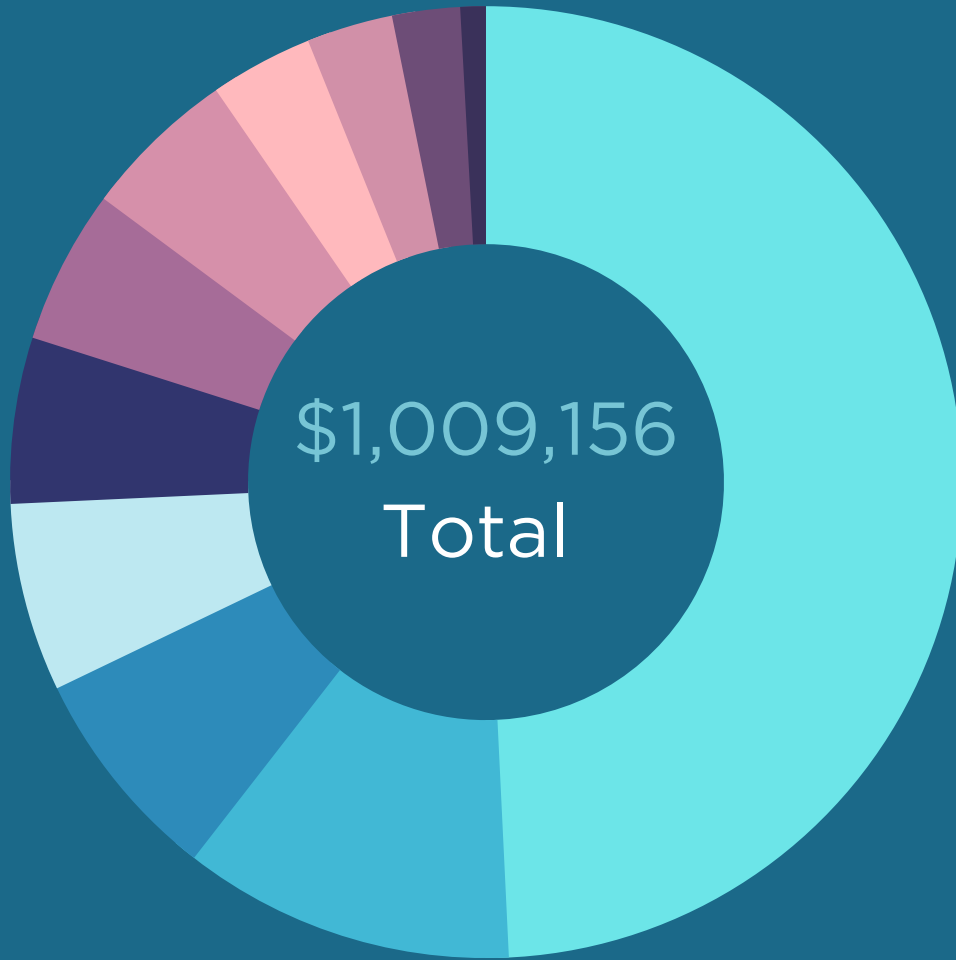


- \$475,889 Donations
- \$431,855 Grants
- \$128,546 In-Kind Travel & Donations
- \$57,074 Casino
- \$16,973 Amortization of deferred capital contributions
- \$7,989 Training & education
- \$7,570 Memberships

2022

FINANCIALS

Expenses



\$519,563 Salaries & Wages

\$119,033 In-Kind Travel

\$77,623 Medical Services

\$67,547 Facility Expenses

\$59,205 Supplies

\$55,357 Office & General Supplies

\$36,949 Amortization

\$30,915 Professional Fees

\$24,307 Fundraising

\$9,144 Travel

** Facility expenses is comprised of: interest on long-term debt, utilities, repair and maintenance, and insurance.*

** Office & General Supplies is comprised of: office, interest and bank charges, training, telephone, and business taxes, licenses, and memberships.*



Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation is located on and services all human and wild residents of Treaty 7 territory. As treaty people, we believe we have a responsibility to care for the lands we inhabit, along with all creatures living on the land with us.

Thank you!

On behalf of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation, and Alberta's wildlife in need, the Board of Directors would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for everyone who has supported, shared, and donated to our important cause: preserving the legacy of wildlife.

Your support and generosity are critical to our operations and to our ability to provide Alberta's wildlife with the expert care they deserve. We could not do it without you and we hope we can rely on your continued support in 2023.

