The striking images captured by award-winning nature photographer Florian Schulz have garnered him well-deserved international recognition. His work in the Yellowstone to Yukon region beautifully unfolds in the recently published *Yellowstone to Yukon – Freedom to Roam*, which was named by the Independent Book Publishers as one of the Ten Outstanding Books of the Year, under the category “Most Likely to Save the Planet.”

Although Schulz is passionate about composition, lighting, and drama, getting the perfect photo is not all that counts. Getting people involved in the protection of the natural world is an important part of his work. “The vision of Y2Y is a gift that future generations will be able to cherish forever,” Schulz writes. “Through my work, I hope to fuel the new conservation movement of connectivity and perhaps, sharing my photography will move people’s hearts to get involved in saving North America’s greatest treasure.”

Schulz has graciously allowed us to illustrate our annual report with his breathtaking images. To learn more about the German photographer and view a gallery of his photographs, visit www.visionsofthewild.com.
People from all over the world hold cherished memories of traveling through the beautiful western mountain ranges of Canada and the United States. For many, the most vivid recollections are of animals: spotting a cow moose and calf, catching sight of a coyote, watching an eagle soar through the clear air. Even the gray jays and chipmunks at roadside picnic areas offer a delightful connection to wild nature. Perhaps the biggest thrill of all comes from seeing a bear – especially a grizzly – digging in a field of wildflowers or rambling across a grassy meadow.

Those memories are precious – as is the landscape which makes them possible. The Yellowstone to Yukon region stretches nearly 2,000 miles from Cokeville, Wyoming (latitude 42°) to Peel River, Yukon Territory (latitude 66°). The region contains some of the most spectacular wilderness in the world, and provides a home for a rich diversity of wildlife as well as many human communities. This place represents one of the world’s last, most hopeful chances to hold onto a vast, fully functioning mountain ecosystem. A place where trout and salmon spawn in clean rivers, and where healthy forests and highlands support all the native species – from wolves to human beings – that comprise the unique natural heritage of the Y2Y region.

Simply put, the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) is committed to making sure our children and subsequent generations can also be inspired by the sight of bears and eagles, and be one of the many species sustained by this healthy environment. But achieving this, in such a big and complex region is not so simple. It calls for an equally big vision and dedicated network of proponents. To that end, Y2Y serves as guide and connector to facilitate partnerships among more than 290 organizations, institutions, foundations, aboriginal tribes and bands, and individuals working in the region. (See the complete list of our partner organizations on page 15.)

Since its conceptual foundations in the early 1990s, Y2Y has evolved into a new model of how to make conservation happen on the ground. Ours is a catalytic organization focused on making things happen through connections: between those who study the environment, those who work on behalf of the environment, and those who provide funding and other resources for this important effort. Ultimately, these connections lead to on-the-ground conservation in key areas linking habitats from the lodgepole forests of Yellowstone to the black spruce forests of the Yukon.
Looming over familiar, long-standing challenges such as habitat fragmentation, clear-cut logging practices, and pollution is global climate change which has emerged as the most critical environmental issue of our time. The Yellowstone to Yukon region is one of the world’s few remaining landscapes with the geographic variety and biological diversity to allow species stressed by a changing climate to adapt, whether that’s to migrate 100 miles north to avoid excess heat, or move 500 feet up a mountain to find a new food source. A healthy Y2Y region offers animals and plants the space they need to adapt to changes that are already underway.

With good planning and a coordinated effort, we can – and must – preserve the natural integrity of the region for generations to come. We at Y2Y have been working at it for 10 years, and our efforts are producing tangible results, examples of which you’ll see throughout this year’s annual report. Please join us in working to conserve this natural treasure for the world, and for the future.

Rob Buffler, Executive Director
Y2Y was officially established in 1997 by conservationists and scientists who saw that true conservation would first require understanding the landscape as a whole, then conservation priorities could be set for the entire region. Through the integration of scientifically sound research, stewardship, and strategic partnerships we seek to ensure that the world-renowned wilderness, wildlife, native plants, and natural processes of the Yellowstone to Yukon region continue to function as an interconnected web of life – an ecological whole that sustains its wild and human communities for current and future generations.

The Power of Partnering
Based in Canmore, AB, and Bozeman, MT, Y2Y links environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs), businesses, foundations, and individuals working to conserve the nearly 2,000-mile Yellowstone to Yukon region, which includes five American states, two Canadian provinces, and two northern territories. The growing Y2Y network currently includes more than 290 partners representing more than one million voices for conservation – a 12 percent increase over the previous year. (For a complete listing of our partner organizations, see page 15.)

Our primary role is to serve as a guide and connector for our partners. As a guide, we commission scientific research and synthesize the work of others to better envision the region’s overall condition and conservation needs. We organize and share that information to provide a ‘big-picture’ context that clarifies conservation priorities and helps organizations and funders work more collaboratively and effectively. As a connector, we link conservation groups with the latest scientific findings, as well as with funding sources so they can implement strategies in Priority Areas under the greatest threat.

Making connections is essential to the grand vision that drives Y2Y: ensuring the existence of healthy, intact, and connected wildlife habitat throughout the Yellowstone to Yukon region.

To ensure successful conservation efforts, Y2Y provides financial support to partners so they can implement key research and outreach projects. In 2006, Y2Y provided more than $240,000 to partner groups and individuals to carry out research, as well as strategic, on-the-ground conservation work. Those projects are listed in this annual report under the Priority Areas to which they are related.
Climate change is arguably one of the most profound ecological and social concerns of our time, and an issue in which Y2Y can play a crucial and positive role. With public commitment, especially related to land use and community planning, humankind may be able to moderate predicted climate-related changes and lessen the potential environmental consequences.

Responses to climate change take two forms: mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation involves taking action to reduce the human causes of climate change, such as using clean energy sources instead of fossil fuels. Adaptation involves biological, behavioral, or physical adjustment to changing conditions. For example, North American red squirrels, experiencing warmer spring temperatures and a corresponding increase in available food, adapt by reproducing earlier in the year. This could affect other species sharing the same habitat. Climate induced habitat change will also affect grizzly bears’ range and food habits. In the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, for instance, two important sources of food are particularly vulnerable. Whitebark pine, which produces a nutritious high-calorie nut, is in serious decline due to a blister rust that will become more deadly in a warming climate. The availability of army cutworm moths, an important source of pre-hibernation food, is also expected to decline with a warming climate.

The mitigative value of Y2Y is ‘preemptive’: instead of planting trees to sequester carbon, we preserve the forests that already exist. Instead of reintroducing species to ensure genetic diversity, we make sure that at-risk species have the habitat they need to stay viable.

In terms of adaptation, the vast and varied landscape of the Yellowstone to Yukon region will give animal and plant species the space and resources they need to adapt to climate change. This is one of the world’s few remaining landscapes with the geographic variety and biological diversity to facilitate an opportunity of this magnitude. The region’s enormous north-south extent combined with its mosaic of mountain micro-climates gives it a unique and important position in preserving biodiversity in western North America.

Specifically, the Y2Y Conservation Initiative and the Yellowstone to Yukon region will help relieve the possible effects of global warming by:

- Conserving a large area of connected landscape, providing plants and animals the ability to move to more habitable locations or occupy a new niche in their traditional territory;
- Offering linked, north-south habitat zones that offer safe wildlife migrations;
- Providing various elevations to allow both plant and animal species to ascend to higher ground;
- Maintaining an ‘around the mountain’ element, allowing plants to drift to other slope aspects in order to survive; and
- Sustaining as many native plant species as possible to reduce the invasion of exotic species.

Large landscape initiatives like Y2Y offer an important remedial response to global warming. We will continue to focus on protecting the health and biodiversity of the Yellowstone to Yukon region, in the broadened context of the earth’s changing climate.
The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative has two main programs: Science and Action, and Communication and Awareness. These programs complement and support each other in the effort to achieve Y2Y’s long-range conservation goals.

**Science and Action**

The Science and Action program provides an understanding of how the vast Yellowstone to Yukon region functions ecologically. We have invested considerable resources in collecting and synthesizing scientific data from original as well as existing studies, and are developing three fundamental strategies to set region-wide conservation priorities. These will result in a suite of Priority Areas and Priority Issues, based on the ‘umbrella species’ approach of conserving a landscape’s keystone species, such as the wide-ranging grizzly bear. If the keystone species is conserved then many other species with coincident habitat needs are conserved as well. Our completed Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy is now guiding regional, collaborative conservation planning in Priority Areas across the region. Y2Y’s Avian Conservation Strategy will be completed in 2007, followed by the Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

**Communication and Awareness**

Y2Y’s Communication and Awareness program creates public awareness of and financial support for conservation efforts throughout the Y2Y region, and ensures that partners and supporters stay informed about what is happening with our initiatives.
Ten years of Y2Y-funded ecological research and cooperation with partner groups have provided a solid foundation for large-scale conservation planning in the Yellowstone to Yukon landscape. Based on this collaborative and scientifically rigorous investigation, our three key conservation strategies lie at the heart of our mission to maintain and restore the Y2Y region. We use these conservation strategies as a focusing lens—looking through them to identify critical landscapes or Priority Areas, assessing immediate threats and capacity limitations, and prioritizing our work.

In 2006, we fine-tuned the grizzly bear strategy, finished drafting the avian strategy, and laid the groundwork for the aquatic strategy.

**Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy**

The Y2Y Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy is the most extensive, coordinated large-landscape grizzly bear conservation effort in the world. However, our grizzly bear strategy isn’t just about protecting grizzly bears. By protecting an ‘umbrella’ species like the grizzly bear, we also protect a whole array of other animals and plants with less extensive needs. This premise was integral to the development of the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy and lies at the heart of our work to conserve the biodiversity of the entire Y2Y region.

The goal of the strategy is to ensure that large, interconnected populations of grizzly bears and other wildlife exist throughout the Yellowstone to Yukon region for current and future generations. Securing critical habitat is one key element. Another, equally critical strategic piece is attaining a mutually safe and comfortable level of coexistence between bears (as well as other wildlife species) and human communities. In 2006, we used new research data to update our conservation strategy and more precisely map Priority Areas in the Yellowstone to Yukon region. As a result:

- Several smaller areas were merged to create two primary Priority Areas: the Cabinet-Purcell Mountain Corridor Priority Area, and the Crown of the Continent Priority Area. These two areas are the only places left in the Y2Y region where substantial populations of grizzly bears move back and forth between the US and Canada. This intermingling is crucial to the health of grizzly bear populations in the Lower 48.

- The boundaries of both the Muskwa-Kechika and Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks Priority Areas were extended to include key habitat and protected areas. This adjustment puts a third Priority Area, Peace River Break, into a better position to allow grizzly bears to move between Muskwa-Kechika and the Parks.
Avian Conservation Strategy

The Y2Y region is a critical migratory pathway for avian species ranging from songbirds to swans to eagles. Our avian strategy, which is now being finalized, will be one of the largest, most comprehensive bird conservation strategies ever developed. It is more complex than the grizzly bear strategy since 20 different species are involved – a list chosen to represent the region’s full suite of key bird habitat types ranging from uplands to wetlands. The strategy will take into consideration climate change, which already appears to be affecting the migratory behavior of certain birds, including golden eagles.

In 2006, we completed the data analysis and produced maps highlighting key habitats and ‘hot spot’ areas of bird diversity. Results will be published in 2007, to be followed by a concerted effort to raise support for further developing the avian strategy. These resources will then be used to develop and implement regional collaborative plans with partner organizations throughout the region.

Aquatic Conservation Strategy

In 2006, we laid additional groundwork for this third critical strategy by funding an investigation of the ecological health of the Upper Bow River watershed in the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks Priority Area.

Mountains constitute the figurative water towers not only for every species living in the Y2Y region, but for those living in the vast watersheds of the North American continent – including the watersheds of the Columbia, Missouri, Fraser, and Yukon rivers. Clearly, we must understand what’s happening in the headwaters in order to best manage water resources.

The issue of climate change will be foremost in our thinking for this strategy, as changing weather patterns affect snowpack behavior, stream flows, and average precipitation. These changes can affect everything from the spawning cycle of trout to the ability of trees to resist insect and disease infestations. Our aquatic strategy will address both stream hydrology issues and species-related concerns. For instance, the north/northwest areas of the Y2Y region represent some of the only watersheds left in North America without invasive or introduced fish species, and our strategy will identify key areas that those native fish need in order to survive. The development of the aquatic strategy will be a Y2Y focus for 2007.
Every puzzle has its pieces. In the jigsaw of Y2Y’s Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy, there are two principal types of pieces: core areas (such as the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem) and a variety of linkage zones. Linkage zones are more than simple corridors; they are habitats with sufficient food and resources to support minimal wildlife populations and to accommodate the continual residence and movement of species between core areas. It will take both core areas and linkage zones to fulfill the vision of contiguous wildlife habitat from Yellowstone to the Yukon.

Eight Priority Areas have been identified as key to achieving our goals for the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy (1 through 8 below). As the avian and aquatic strategies are completed, new Priority Areas related to those strategies will be identified. The pristine northern watersheds (9 through 12) described at the end of this section have been initially identified as Priority Areas under the emerging Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

**Current Status, Activity, and Achievements in Y2Y Priority Areas**

1. **Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem**
   - The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is essentially the southern anchor of North American grizzly bears. Yellowstone grizzly populations are relatively healthy now, but research shows that if the Yellowstone bears remain isolated, they may eventually die out. Viability of Yellowstone grizzly bears will be greatly enhanced if we increase their connectivity to other bear populations and improve coexistence with human communities. The long-term future of Yellowstone grizzly bears will also be made more secure by the re-occupation of suitable, currently unoccupied habitat that is part of the grizzly bear’s historic range.

**Provided Funding Assistance to:**

- **Earthfire Institute:** $2,000 towards producing a film *Interconnections: Wildlife By-Ways* which highlights the importance of preserving wildlife migration routes and offers practical suggestions for people who want to save these precious places;
- **The Predator Conservation Alliance:** $1,500 for efforts to prevent conflicts between grizzly bears and humans in critical corridor habitats in the Madison Valley of southwest Montana; and
- **The Predator Conservation Alliance:** $25,000 for their pilot project compiling public opinion of grizzly bear and wolf management options prior to delisting in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
2. High Divide
This Priority Area will provide a critical link allowing bears and other wide-ranging animals to live and move between the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Central Idaho Complex.

Conservation Action:
Y2Y collaborated with regional partners to initiate a plan for coordinated conservation action. We will continue this work by gathering available information, identifying the work currently underway, determining any gaps, and prioritizing areas of importance in order to maintain and restore wildlife habitat and connectivity in this Priority Area.

3. Central Idaho Complex
One of the key goals of the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy is to have grizzlies re-occupy the Central Idaho Complex and re-establish connections to the Cabinet-Purcell Mountain Corridor to the north and the High Divide area to the east. Although currently unoccupied by grizzly bears, the Central Idaho Complex boasts some of the finest grizzly bear habitat in the southern Y2Y region – food is plentiful and people are scarce. A study done at the University of Alberta showed that if a healthy population of grizzly bears occupied the Central Idaho Complex, the likelihood of grizzly extinction in the US would be greatly reduced.

Grizzly bears once lived in the area, but their habit of congregating on salmon streams at predictable times of the year made them vulnerable to hunting. Ironically enough, the numbers of salmon returning to spawn were declining at the same time, and the two factors probably contributed to the eventual elimination of grizzly bears from the region.

Conservation Action:
Y2Y collaborated with WildWest Institute (formerly the Native Forest Network) and provided $29,000 to determine if past logging activities in forests exacerbate the effect of fire exclusion throughout three of Y2Y’s Priority Areas – the Cabinet-Purcells, Crown of Continent, and the Central Idaho Complex.

4. Cabinet-Purcell Mountain Corridor
The Cabinet-Purcell Mountain Corridor is one of only two remaining areas in the Y2Y region where grizzlies can move back and forth between Canada and the US (the other is the Crown of the Continent ecosystem). This Priority Area, therefore, plays a critical role in connecting Canadian grizzly bears and other carnivores with less robust populations in the US and is integral to the idea of getting bears back into the Central Idaho Complex.

A large management area exists in the northern portion of the region, but otherwise there is relatively little protected land. The region’s two trans-boundary populations of grizzly bears live in close proximity to human settlements. Thus, the successful coexistence of humans and bears is vital. The immediate goals for the area are to stabilize the smaller population of 30 to 40 bears, and to maintain the relative stability of the larger population of 60 to 70 bears. Over the long term our goal is to link those populations to the Central Idaho Complex.

Conservation Action:
Developed a collaborative, comprehensive conservation action plan.

Working with more than 36 Canadian and American partners, Y2Y was instrumental in developing a
comprehensive plan for coordinated conservation action within this ecologically critical mountain region. The plan identified five project goals to achieve connectivity in the region. These are:

- Secure linkage zones by buying key parcels of land; for example, by working with landowners to establish conservation easements;
- Restore linkage zones in areas where roads have been removed, but where habitats are still fragmented due to the road’s footprint or other remaining impact;
- Decrease human-caused grizzly bear mortality through hardware-based efforts such as fencing garbage dumps or providing bear-proof garbage containers to reduce the incidence of “problem” bears, which must often be killed;
- Promote the coexistence of human and wildlife communities by supporting programs like ‘Bear Aware,’ which help people learn how to live in harmony with wildlife;
- Conduct research and monitoring to make sure our work is effective and helpful, and that our efforts are improving natural connectivity for wildlife.

Secured significant funding.

In part because of Y2Y’s large-landscape approach to conservation, the Chicago-based Legacy Fund pledged a multi-year grant enabling the implementation of projects that will help meet the goals listed above. Support from the Legacy Fund, a new donor to the region, was secured through connections developed by Y2Y, built on the support of previous funders to the region.

Retained two local conservation coordinators.

Y2Y contracted conservation coordinators to provide a two-way flow of information: they guide us on local issues, and in turn create a local Y2Y voice, spreading the vision of the organization and mission of the project.

- Katie Deuel, Missoula, MT. Deuel has been organizing meetings for the Cabinet/Yaak Forest Coalition, and created an important sanitation working group in Lincoln, MT to encourage residents to clean up bear attractants such as garbage and pet food. Brochures offering guidelines were distributed to every resident of the county.
- Dave Quinn, Cranbrook, BC. Among other activities, Quinn coordinates Jumbo Wild, the effort seeking to stop development of a ski resort in the Purcell Mountains. If built, the ski area would create yet another barrier impeding wildlife movement in the Y2Y region.

A Fed Bear Is a Dead Bear

This widely used bear-country saying sadly sums it up: bears that scavenge garbage, pet food, back porch freezers, front yard apple trees, and other human-related food sources often lose their lives over it. Keeping a sanitary house and yard is the key to peaceful coexistence between Ursa and human communities – leaving no uneaten food in pet dishes, picking up dropped fruit from trees, using bear-proof garbage bins and food storage lockers, and taking other simple measures which end up making a difference between life and death for the bears.

This is an especially important issue in the Cabinet-Purcell Priority Area, where humans and bears live in close proximity. In November 2006, a mother grizzly and her two cubs were shot and killed while feeding on garbage on the deck of a home in British Columbia. The shooter, who fired through an open window, told authorities he felt the bears were threatening his family. Conservationists say the deaths of the sow and two cubs, one of which was female, is a serious blow to the precarious Selkirk grizzly population. The BC Wildlife Act allows people to shoot bears if they feel threatened, but as a spokesperson for the BC Conservation Foundation’s Bear Aware program said, “If you don’t want the bear on your deck, you don’t put bear food on your deck.”

In a happier story, the Bear Aware program facilitated different groups of interested individuals who spread out across the area to pick up dropped fruit on the properties of cooperating landowners. Owners got clean yards and the reduced likelihood of a bear encounter, and individuals got free bags of apples, jugs of cider, and pies out of the deal.

Y2Y has worked to promote human-bear coexistence in the region, and supports a local conservation coordinator to help promote the Bear Aware program.
Provided Funding Assistance to:

**Wildsight:** $20,000 for work on their campaign in the Purcell Mountains in partnership with Y2Y, to implement the Cabinet-Purcell Priority Area conservation project;

**American Wildlands:** $2,250 for their Corridors of Life program, which addresses threats to habitat connectivity and wildlife movement;

**Yaak Valley Forest Council:** $2,000 for their Yaak Wilderness Campaign; and

**The Idaho Conservation League:** $25,000 to study effects of habitat fragmentation on fishers in north central Idaho. Fishers are an important medium-sized carnivore in forested landscapes.

5. **Crown of the Continent**

The Crown of the Continent Priority Area and the previously described Cabinet-Purcell Priority Area are the two last places in the Y2Y region where grizzly bears can move between Canada and the US. Y2Y has been working extensively with local conservation groups in this area to identify wildlife hotspots in need of preservation, restoration, and management.

Conservation Action:

**Established new relationships with nontraditional partners.**

Y2Y has made strides in developing relationships with nontraditional allies, including the ranching community. Ranchers are an important constituency along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Y2Y now sits on the advisory committee of the Southern Foothills Study, a collaborative effort led by the Southern Alberta Land Trusts Society (SALTS), which aims to predict the future state of the eastern slopes in an effort to inform provincial land-management policy. Y2Y has helped secure funds for research efforts related to the Southern Foothills Study being conducted by the University of Calgary.

**With Miistakis Institute, completed a draft conservation document outlining issues facing the region.**

Working with Miistakis Institute, we completed a synthesis of current scientific knowledge that addresses the ecological importance of and threats facing the Crown of the Continent. Y2Y will use this document with our partners to better understand the conservation needs of the region and determine what actions are required to secure its future.
New local conservation capacity in the region.
Y2Y provided support for grassroots conservation organizations within the Crown of the Continent to increase their capacity to find appropriate conservation solutions for their local communities.

Provided Funding Assistance to:
- **Grizzly Bear Alliance:** $2,000 to initiate a BearSmart Community program in Canmore, AB and the Crowsnest Pass area;
- **Miistakis Institute for the Rockies:** $2,000 for their monitoring project to identify wildlife crossing locations along Highway 3 in the Crowsnest Pass;
- **National Parks Conservation Association:** $1,500 to complete fish population assessments for the BC portion of the Flathead River;
- **Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition:** $2,250 for the campaign to designate a park in recognition of the Piikani First Nation and in memory of Andy Russell, who received an Order of Canada award and was a respected conservationist, writer, filmmaker, rancher, and wilderness guide; and
- **Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation:** $20,000 to research the decline of whitebark pine, an important food source for grizzly bears, and to develop suitable restoration plans.

6. Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks
This string of internationally renowned parks represents an existing connection between the healthy, protected habitats of Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenai National Parks. The Canadian Rocky Mountain Park complex holds one of two grizzly bear populations deemed large enough to sustain itself within the Y2Y region over evolutionary time (the other population is located in the northern Y2Y region).

Banff National Park is the site of the only long-term study of highway over- and underpasses for wildlife in the world. This information is proving enormously valuable in the new field of ‘road ecology’ and in highway construction and reconstruction plans. Although early results of this long-term study initially appeared disappointing, because it didn’t appear that animals used the passes, the fact has emerged that it just took animals some time to adapt. Currently, researchers are optimistic about the effectiveness of road crossing structures. DNA studies are now being conducted to measure not just the number of crossings, but to track specific individuals using the passes. This will provide important information on the gender and age of animals using the structures.

Conservation Action:
Y2Y co-developed and co-sponsored Picture a Province, a first-of-its-kind conference intended to bring together partner groups and potential funders in southwest Alberta. Participants included 33 implementation partners and 64 foundation and individual funders. We will be following up with participating organizations in 2007.

We attended a two-day climate change workshop hosted by the Alpine Club of Canada, to network and gather information.

Provided Funding Assistance to:
- **Western Transportation Institute:** $17,120 to do a study on the ecological integrity of the Upper Bow River and its watershed. Preliminary results released in April 2007 identified research needs of the Upper Bow River and its watershed. (This will be an important piece in the Aquatic Conservation Strategy.)
7. Peace River Break

This Priority Area is a vital north-south ‘pinch point’ in the Y2Y region, and is also one of very few regions with an east-west link. Unless the area is secured, southern and northern grizzly populations will be terminally separated. There are few partner organizations in this area but several major threats, most notably a hydro dam, coalbed methane development, and mining. Y2Y will dramatically increase its work in the Peace River Break Priority Area in 2007.

Conservation Action:
Y2Y held initial talks with regional partners to discuss a plan for coordinated conservation action within this Priority Area, with the ultimate goal of maintaining north-south connectivity between the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks and Muskwa-Kechika Priority Areas.

8. Muskwa-Kechika (MK) Management Area

The MK’s comprehensive management plan is one of Y2Y’s success stories. The Muskwa-Kechika management plan sets a world standard for the balance of environmental sustainability and economic stability. The plan balances conservation and use, enabling economic development while also protecting a large, intact, and predominantly roadless wilderness. Two Y2Y board members were on the advisory board for the MK area during the plan’s development.

Conservation Action:
We supported Mining Watch Canada, the Center for Science in Public Participation, and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society BC in their efforts to build the capacity of local aboriginal communities to address resource extraction in their traditional territories.

PRIORiTY nORTHeRn WaTeRSHEdS

These four northern watersheds are distinct from one another, but share common threats such as invasive species and resource extraction. Each watershed will have an important presence in Y2Y’s developing Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

9. Greater Nahanni Watershed

Conservation Action:
Y2Y provided input and support for the Deh Cho Land Use Plan, a land use framework of the Deh Cho First Nation that will balance the needs of the landscape with the economic and cultural needs of the Deh Cho people. The land use plan is an exceptional example of holistic, cumulative impacts planning and provides balance between environment, social and economic needs – dovetailing well with the Y2Y vision.

Provided Funding Assistance to:
CPAWS-NWT: $955 to provide education and outreach to local communities regarding the seven bat species inhabiting the Nahanni Watershed. Most of the seven species had not been previously identified in the area; CPAWS national office: $4,425 to hold a major gathering of its chapter organizations in order to better coordinate efforts for a national agenda, including the coordination of a Y2Y program within CPAWS; and Wildlife Conservation Society: $20,000 for their efforts in studying seasonal migration of the Nahanni-Liard caribou herd in order to identify suitable movement corridors to ensure the long-term survival of the herd.


These key watersheds will provide an important foundation for the development of the Y2Y Aquatic Conservation Strategy in 2007. Wolf Lake and Upper Liard are among the few remaining intact watersheds in the region. CPAWS-Yukon recently released a conservation plan for the Peel Watershed incorporating the Y2Y vision of large-landscape conservation and preservation.
 Effective communication is critical to achieving our vision of people working together to maintain and restore the unique natural heritage of the Yellowstone to Yukon region. Our Communication and Awareness program distributes the results of our scientific research, informs our partners of each others’ work, and inspires people, policymakers, and funders worldwide to join us in maintaining one of the world’s last intact mountain ecosystems.

**American Museum of Natural History Photographic Exhibition**

On July 19, 2006, the Yellowstone to Yukon photographic exhibition opened at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Showcasing 47 works by such renowned photographers as Florian Schulz, Peter Dettling, and Tom Mangelson, this extraordinary display portrays the beauty of the region, and illustrates both challenges and solutions for reconciling development and wildlife conservation. The museum estimates that more than two million people had viewed the exhibition by January 2007, when it was originally scheduled to end. However, instead of taking down the display, the museum extended the show’s run to mid March. The exhibition has raised awareness of the Yellowstone to Yukon region for an audience largely unfamiliar with the area.

**Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture Photographic Exhibition**

Y2Y’s exciting partnership with the Burke Museum and Mountaineers Books has resulted in a major photographic exhibition at the Burke Museum in Seattle, Washington. Planning began in 2006 for the exhibition that will open in June 2007 and feature 45 to 50 stunning photos of the Yellowstone to Yukon region by award-winning photographer Florian Schulz. Plans are also in the works to tour the exhibition throughout North America following its six-month run in Seattle.

**Science Communication Training Workshop**

In partnership with the Wilburforce Foundation, Y2Y organized a Science Communication Training Workshop that paired scientists working in the Yellowstone to Yukon region with high-profile media professionals. During the May 2006 workshop, 19 scientists learned skills and techniques to effectively communicate their research to media, policy makers, and non-technical audiences. At the same time, five media professionals learned about the Y2Y vision and about significant conservation achievements in the region. All participants gained new insights and knowledge, and one journalist wrote a *New York Times* feature story on wildlife highway crossing structures.

This compelling *NYT* piece caught the attention of other journalists, who created related articles in the *Toronto Star*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Calgary Herald*, and a major newspaper in the Netherlands. Magazines such as *Environment Yale – The Journal of the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies*, *Nature’s Best Photography*, and *Outdoor Photographer* featured photographs and editorial content on the Yellowstone to Yukon region. *The Current*, a popular CBC radio news program, broadcast a feature piece on the Y2Y vision with a focus on wildlife overpass structures.

The *NYT* story also piqued the interest of Washington State Senators Erik Poulsen and Ken Jacobsen, who were inspired to propose legislation mandating that state agencies such as Washington Fish and Wildlife collaborate with Y2Y.

**Banff Mountain Film Festival and North American Tour**

A grant through the Wilburforce Foundation allowed Y2Y to sponsor the popular Banff Mountain Film Festival and its North American Tour. Attended by more than 12,000 people, the festival provided a tremendous opportunity to engage with diverse audiences. Y2Y raised awareness through a new display booth at this event in Banff, and on tour stops in Minneapolis, MN; Bozeman, Missoula and Kalispell, MT; Calgary, AB; Sun Valley, ID; and Arlington, MA. A special event during the festival in Banff raised awareness of and funds for Y2Y; the $6,700 was given to the following three groups working in the Banff, Alberta area:

- **UTSB Research**, Banff AB, to produce a series of education and awareness materials on stewardship and best practices in Canada’s National Park ski hills.
- **Friends of Banff National Park Radio**, Banff AB, to develop and air a series of six radio programs featuring the people and nature of the Upper Bow River.
- **Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA)**, Calgary AB, for their efforts to encourage an environmental ethic and promote shared values of Alberta’s Bighorn Wildland.

**The Pressure is Hard to Bear Awareness Campaign, Calgary, Alberta**

Calgary, with its population topping one million, is the largest human community adjacent to the Yellowstone to Yukon region. As such, the city is a natural place in which to launch an extensive public awareness campaign. Calgarians are well positioned to help preserve the Y2Y region, which will become an even more significant treasure as urban congestion increases, as development encroaches more deeply into wildlife habitat, and as changes become “hard to bear.”
The Pressure is Hard to Bear campaign had two main goals. The first was to raise awareness and encourage people to visit the Y2Y website, where they could learn about the region’s ecological value and the conservation efforts being undertaken by our partners. The second was to raise financial support for Y2Y within the rapidly expanding Calgary population.

The outdoor advertising campaign centered on the CTrain, Calgary’s light rail transit system. Three trains were decorated with large, attractive exterior murals depicting a photograph of a skeptical looking grizzly bear and the bold headline ‘The Pressure is Hard to Bear’. There were also 12 interior advertising placards with the same message, providing exposure for people both riding the train and watching it pass. An estimated one million weekly CTrain users were exposed to the message during the 12-week campaign. A similar poster installed at the Calgary International Airport was seen by an estimated 2.4 million people.

Improved Connections
In December 2006, our semi-annual Y2Y publication, Connections, jumped from eight to 12 pages of educational and program-related content. We refocused it in order to make it more relevant and valuable to partners, members, and donors. Among other changes, we increased coverage of the important work being done by our partners in the Yellowstone to Yukon region. The distribution list grew to 3,000 in 2006, a 66 percent increase from 2005 and clear indication of the growing interest in Y2Y.

Laughter Gone Wild! Fundraising Event
Canadian comedian Rick Mercer headlined this year’s Laughter Gone Wild! entertainment and auction fundraising event in Canmore, AB. Sold out three weeks in advance, the evening proved to be a great opportunity for more than 400 people to learn about the important work Y2Y is doing. The fundraiser was a huge success, with ticket sales generating $17,000 and an additional $12,000 raised through the auction.

Communication Tools for Partners
The growing Y2Y network currently includes more than 290 conservation and communication organizations, an increase of 40 partners from 2005. In 2006, most of the 290 partners, as well as interested individuals, used our electronic Y2Y Listserv to communicate and share information. In addition, 1,800 individuals received Y2Y’s electronic Conservation News, a compilation of conservation-related articles from across North America that is distributed three times a week.
More than 290 organizations – representing a total of more than one million voices for conservation – share the Y2Y vision and work diligently on behalf of the wildlife, landscape, and human communities that comprise this priceless stretch of territory.


ONTARIO: Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES: CPAWS – North West Territories Chapter.

YUKON: CPAWS – Yukon Chapter, Friends of the Yukon Rivers, Yukon Conservation Society.


COLORADO: Western Mining Action Project.


INDIANA: Wolf Park.

MISSOURI: Missouri Department of Conservation.

MINNESOTA: Trumpeter Swan Society.


NEW YORK: American Museum of Natural History.

OREGON: Conservation Biology Institute, Hell's Canyon Preservation Council, The Wild Salmon Center, United We Stand.

VIRGINIA: American Bird Conservancy.


Aboriginal people knew the Yellowstone to Yukon region as Dene Eocene, or “People’s Trail.” For 10,000 years, tribes and bands have lived in, traveled through, and been sustained by the waters, lands, and creatures of the continent’s northern backbone.

Shoshone, Nez Perce, Salish, Blackfeet, K’tunaxa, Kaska Dena, Deh Cho, and dozens of other Aboriginal groups are intimately familiar with this land. Today these tribes and bands manage many millions of acres. After federal, state, and provincial governments, they are collectively the region’s largest landowners. Aboriginal people, and their traditional knowledge of this place, are essential to the success of the Y2Y vision.

Since Y2Y was conceived, we have worked to build effective relationships with Aboriginal people. In 2006, that work was strengthened by grants from the Vancouver Foundation, Northern Environmental Support Trust, and Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation, which enabled us to initiate or deepen relationships with key bands and tribes, explore new ways to cooperate, and begin developing joint projects. We traveled to five of the six key Native American reservations in the US portion of the region, meeting with dozens of tribal conservation staff and leaders. In 2007, we will initiate a similar effort in Canada.

The tribes and bands are accomplishing phenomenal conservation work and marshalling significant resources, a fact which underscores the importance of working with them. Here are some highlights of the ongoing work by and with Aboriginal people:

- The Nez Perce Tribe has a 100 year vision to restore the rivers and streams of Central Idaho, and has several dozen staff members out on the land making it happen. Since 1996, they have secured more than $18 million in grants to support restoration of salmon and steelhead habitat, and have recently been nominated for a US Forest Service award for...
this effort. Their hands-on work includes many miles of road decommissioning, stream bank stabilization, riparian restoration, road/stream crossing inventories, off-site livestock watering, weed inventories and treatment, and campground improvements.

- The Nez Perce have been instrumental in the successful reintroduction of grey wolves to Idaho. Central Idaho is key to Y2Y’s vision of wildlife habitat connectivity between the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the US-Canada trans-boundary area to the north.

- The Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribe is playing an instrumental role in one of the continent’s leading highway mitigation projects. Largely because of their involvement, the upgrade of Montana Highway 93 between Evaro and Polson includes 42 wildlife crossing structures that enable animals to move safely within and beyond their immediate territories – an essential tool for achieving the Y2Y vision.

- Because of Y2Y’s outreach efforts this year, members of the Nez Perce, Salish-Kootenai and Coeur d’Alene tribes are now participating in conservation strategies in the Cabinet-Purcell Priority Area.

- The Eastern Shoshone, Northern Arapaho tribes and Y2Y are exploring the possibility of collaboratively reintroducing bison to the Wind River Reservation. Bison are one of the region’s historic, keystone ungulate species; their historic habitats comprise large portions of the Yellowstone to Yukon region that are also important to other species, and they are integral to the culture of many of the region’s Aboriginal tribes and bands.

We are pleased with the results of this year’s work with Aboriginal people, and look forward to the further unfolding of this effort.
2006 FINANCIALS
unaudited financial report (all in US dollars)

**Balance Sheet**
December 31, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash in bank</td>
<td>197,675</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>391,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>589,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Receivable and prepaid</td>
<td>14,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Assets</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>604,364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>76,469</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
<td>477,895</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Total Liabilities and Net Assets** | 604,364 |

**Statement of Operations**
January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>1,229,706</td>
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<tr>
<td>Released from restriction</td>
<td>74,485</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>100,876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>73,270</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,478,337</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>881,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>129,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>149,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,161,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Funds</td>
<td>235,143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Net**                      | 82,175 |

| Programs                     | 76%    |
| Administration               | 11%    |
| Fundraising                   | 13%    |
By the end of 2006, forty-nine individuals had contributed $1,000 or more to our First One Hundred Stewards campaign. We acknowledge with special thanks the following individuals, whose contributions help ensure the Yellowstone to Yukon region is preserved for generations to come.

Anonymous (5)
Beartooth Capital and Robert and Marisa Keith
Neil Buell
Rob Buffler and Sally Caudill
Canmore Leader/Banff Crag & Canyon
Lael and Charles Chester
Camilla and Peter Dalglish
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Davenport
Steve Duerr
Amy and Philip Duff
Karen Fossum
Albert Foster
Wendy Francis
Charles Godchaux
Elizabeth and Charles Goodyear
Linda and Charles Goodyear
Jeremy Guth
Dave Hadden
Peter Heymann and Nicole Piasecki
Dianne and David Hoaglin
The Hoenigman Family Foundation
Larry and Carolyn Hursh
David Johns
Paul and Jacqueline Kalra
Robert and Michele Keith
James Klos and Jane Leibbrandt-Klos
Caleb Kramer and Ryan Allen
Ernest LaBelle and Frances Pollak
Lafarge
Harvey Locke
Josephine and William Lowe
Dustin and Julia Lynx
John McAlpine
Stephen and Denise Meador
Heidi Nitze
Gil Ordway
Phil Peabody
Bob Peart
Penelope and Ben Pierce
Farwell Smith and Linda McMullen
Allan Ross Taylor
Christine Torgimson
Upper Bow Fly Fishing Co.
Albert and Susan Wells
T.W. Williams and Candace Merrill-Williams

Foundations
We are grateful for the support of the following foundations which have demonstrated their belief in the Y2Y vision through their donations. Their generous partnership is fundamental to our success. We could not have achieved the results we have without the support of our valued foundation partners.

Anonymous (3)
Alberta Ecotrust Foundation
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks & Wildlife Foundation
Arthur B. Schultz Foundation
Bullitt Foundation
Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation
Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation
Fanwood Foundation
Henry P. Kendall Foundation
LaSalle Adams Fund
Legacy Fund
Northern Environmental Support Trust
Patagonia, Inc.
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
The Calgary Foundation
The David Rockefeller Fund, Inc.
Shell Environmental Fund
Vancouver Foundation
Wilburforce Foundation
Woodcock Foundation

Membership Program
In 2006, our membership base grew through direct mail appeals, open houses, and public events. We continue to build our database of potential members. With our fall 2006 campaign, “Join the Pack and Help Us Howl,” we secured 107 new and renewed members in six weeks.

Diversifying Y2Y’s Funding Base
To sustain Y2Y efforts, we continue to research new funding sources such as government funds, businesses, and American and Canadian foundations. We also hold fundraising events and work to increase our membership numbers.
Board of Directors

In 2006, we achieved our goal of diversifying the Y2Y Board of Directors by adding several new members. We benefit significantly from our board members’ wide range of expertise. Thank you to outgoing board members Robert Ament, Melodie Creegan, Steve Duerr, Dave Hadden, Beth Russell-Towe, and Wayne Sawchuk – your contribution will be valued for years to come.

Richard Baldes, Co-Founder
Wind River Alliance, WY
Susan Chatwood, Epidemiologist
Arctic Research Health Network, NT
Charles Chester, Author and Research Associate
Brandeis University, MA
Jeremy Guth, Trustee
Woodcock Foundation, PQ

Jodi Hilty, Assistant Director
Wildlife Conservation Society’s
North America Program, MT
David Johns
School of Government, Portland State University, OR
Stephen Meador, Chief Financial Officer
Abbeville Family Partnership LP, LA
Bob Peart, Senior Partner
The Nexus Learning Group Inc., BC

Contractors

Contracting key consultants with targeted expertise helps us achieve our goals in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Darren Aschacher, Website Management
Katie Deuel, US Conservation Consultant
Cynthia Lane, Conservation Science Advisor
Harvey Locke, Strategic Advisor
Marcy Mahr, Conservation Science Consultant
Dave Quinn, Contractor Cabinet-Purcells
Christine Torgrimson, Strategic Advisor
Staff
The dedicated staff members on the Y2Y team evolved in 2006 in response to our growth and strategic plan evolution. Listed clockwise from top left, they are:

Rob Buffler, Executive Director
Lynne Hately, Grants Manager
Neil Darlow, Conservation Program Manager
Penelope Pierce, US Regional Director
Nicky Blackshaw, Communications Manager
Sean Britt, Conservation Director
Lorraine Laplante, Director of Marketing and Member Services
Marlis Strebel, Executive Associate
Molly Goodyear, Development Consultant
Jane Bewick, Business Director
Nancy Ouimet, Program Associate

Y2Y Staff photo by Tara Nicholson