

Species at Risk Act Consultation, Cooperation and Accommodation Project in British Columbia

Presenter Biographies

Jean Polfus, Senior Species at Risk Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Climate Change Canada



Jean Polfus is a conservation biologist who is interested in interdisciplinary approaches to conservation that respect the lives and experiences of people that depend on natural resources for their livelihood. She received her B.A. from Dartmouth College, M.S. from the University of Montana, Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba and was a Liber Ero Postdoctoral Fellow. Currently, Jean is a Senior Species at Risk Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Climate Change Canada, in Kelowna, BC. Her

work has focused on building collaborative research projects with Indigenous partners to better understand relationships among caribou populations and people in order to inform and prioritize management efforts. She is interested in helping to find creative ways to decolonize the language we use to describe caribou by collaborating with Indigenous communities and focusing on Indigenous languages and descriptions of caribou biodiversity from an Indigenous perspective. Jean has an expertise in art (drawing, illustration, painting, photography and design) which complements and enhances her professional interests through science communication and outreach tools. In her free time Jean enjoys skijoring, taking photos, and spending time outdoors with her two young children and dogs.

Ross Vennesland, Senior Species at Risk Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Climate Change Canada



Ross Vennesland is a wildlife ecologist who is deeply committed to the conservation of biodiversity. Ross studied at Simon Fraser University where he earned a Master of Science degree studying the Great Blue Heron, and has worked as a consultant and for the provincial and federal governments. Most of his career has been focussed on the protection of species at risk and their habitats. Ross is currently a Senior Species at Risk Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service out of Delta, British Columbia. Through his career he has been fortunate to work on a diverse array of creatures including birds, fish, plants, mammals, amphibians and invertebrates. From slugs that jump to bears that roar. Ross credits his love of the environment to his childhood roaming the coast of British Columbia and wouldn't think of living anywhere else. When not working, Ross enjoys wood working and carving, hanging with his kids, and outdoor recreation such as skiing and mountain biking.

Undine Thompson, Senior Consultation Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Climate Change Canada



Undiné Thompson is a conservation biologist who loves working with both people and species at risk in the hopes of improving the quality of life and futures for both. She received a Bachelor of Environment in Environmental Geography and Biology from Simon Fraser University and a Master of Environment in Impact Assessment focusing on the impacts of climate change on culturally significant species within endangered ecosystems. Her deep respect for nature took root in her youth, which was spent exploring the southwest coast of British Columbia. Currently, Undiné is a Senior Consultation Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Climate Change Canada, in Delta, BC. Over the last decade her work has focused on working together with Indigenous peoples and the broader public on species at risk recovery in British Columbia. Undiné loves learning and sharing knowledge about the geography and natural history of British Columbia and, in her free time, she enjoys photography, beading, gardening, and exploring with her five year-old son.