Bragg Creek Wildlife Monitoring Project (BCWMP)

Bragg Creek Trails Association (BCTA) launched the BCWMP in spring 2025 in partnership with Alberta Forestry and Parks and the Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition to collect long-term data on wildlife abundance and movement in the West Bragg Creek (WBC) area. This monitoring data will help us develop science based recommendations for trail management, design, and construction, as well as public education initiatives to promote coexistence between local wildlife and WBC trail users.

The project is expected to continue for a minimum of two years and may extend longer, depending on initial findings and results.

The BCWMP follows established protocols and methodology used in other similar initiatives, such as the Bow Valley Wildlife Camera Monitoring Program. The number of wildlife cameras required (55) is based on the 55 sq. km area of WBC and the scientifically supported standard of one camera per square kilometre, as per the Bow Valley Wildlife Monitoring Program.

Each wildlife camera is positioned to maximize wildlife detection and minimize capturing images of people, meaning cameras are typically placed away from WBC trails. Approximately 95% of cameras will be located well off-trail and are unlikely to capture any images of people. All cameras are situated in the Kananaskis Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ), not within the WBC Provincial Recreation Area.

The BCWMP uses **WildTrax**, which includes enhanced privacy protections:

- **Automatic Human Detection and Blurring:** WildTrax employs Microsoft's MegaDetector technology to automatically identify human presence in images. When humans are detected with high confidence (>95% certainty), the software automatically blurs these images before they can be viewed by volunteers. This ensures that images of people in the Kananaskis PLUZ—whether hiking, resting, or attending to private matters—are automatically protected from human viewing.
- **Controlled Access:** The system allows for multiple levels of access control. Images containing humans are set to "blur for everyone," meaning even project administrators cannot view unblurred images of trail users.

Volunteer Training and Data Security

The project includes:

- Mandatory training for all volunteers on privacy protocols and the WildTrax software
- Clear guidelines on data handling and the automatic blurring system
- Regular audits of volunteer access and data processing
- Secure data storage through the WildTrax platform

Any images of people that are captured will be deleted and not saved. Only a limited number of trained volunteers will handle image processing, following standard protocols. Privacy rights for WBC trail users will be safeguarded by adhering to these protocols.

The BCWMP follows the *Remote Camera Survey Guidelines: Guidelines for Western Canada*—published by the Alberta Remote Camera Steering Committee (RCSC)—and *Wildlife Cameras for Adaptive Management (WildCAM)*, specifically sections 8.2 (Data storage/archival) and 8.3.4 (Human images).

The BCWMP is outlined in the **West Bragg Creek Master Plan** (see page 46):

https://braggcreektrails.org/west-bragg-creek-trails-master-plan/

*This plan was approved by AFP and BCTA in January 2024 after extensive public consultation. The BCWMP is also included in the Board-approved **BCTA Strategic Plan 2030**, the **BCTA Board-approved 2025 Strategic Priorities**, and the **BCTA Board-approved Environmental Stewardship Committee Terms of Reference**.*