



Newsletter *Fall 2025*

P.O. Box 787, Summerland, B.C. V0H 1Z0

Phone: 250-486-2235 • Email: bremmer@mtkobau.bc.ca



The grade seven students of the South Okanagan and Similkameen schools are in line for an OSPS presentation on local Flora, Fauna and Fungi in the Spring of 2026. Following the very successful pilot project that operated in Summerland, Penticton, Oliver and Keromeos during March, April and May of 2025, the program is open to schools, public and independent in this region. Students learned about the types of animals, plants and fungi indigenous to the South Okanagan Similkameen valleys and the surrounding biomes.

Should you wish to be in touch with us to investigate this free presentation please phone 250) 486-2235 or email bremmer@mtkobau.bc.ca . We will be happy to present to your students.

EDITORIAL

Well, the fall of 2025 is going pretty much the same way that the spring and summer of 2025 went. We are still subject to huge surprises (or maybe not) that do not make a lot of sense and seem not to fit into any rational pattern of society. One major problem with living in these times is that realistic priorities and requirements are subserved to scrambling to understand the latest big, great, wonderful, best actions that occur.

One area that evidently fits as an example of this is the full out race to develop economic projects that will save our nation, province or community. To do this governments, large

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and small, ministers and opposition parties all tend to want to veer off from the track that we have been on to try to right innumerable errors from the past. The fast-tracking of indigenous consultation, environmental reviews and the wishes of big industry seem to be carrying the day. Of course, this mode of operation negates many regulations, norms and consensus agreements based on long arduous work over decades of activity. Further there is seldom any review of these procedures, and importantly their underlying rationales, evident in the change of direction.

If a course of action was relevant and valuable in December of 2024 what makes it less so in November of 2025? As the OSPS presentation to the B.C. Legislative Budget Committee urged our lawmakers to consider, we must not discount, quit on or renege on evidence and truth that we have been acting upon. We must continue to establish a value for our natural world and that value must accrue to the people, flora, fauna and systems that maintain our planet. While we

are still a very long way from solving problems such as climate change, the decreasing biodiversity, or clean potable water for the people and animals of our world, we must continue to strive for solutions and recognize their importance for maintaining our world.

While the value of diverse forests, glaciers, water sources, and clean air may not be easily calculated in dollars, yen, rubles or pounds, it is in fact invaluable for the life on this planet. Consider the great forests of the Americas, the bogs of northern Europe, and the ice flows of Antarctica, and the roles that they play in maintaining the climate that our ancestors, and the environment around them, developed in. This environment and the natural systems and subsystems that maintain it are priceless. We cannot construct an economic project that can rival it. There is no question that on balance we must not forsake our efforts to repair and conserve our natural environments. Starting in the valleys of the Okanagan and Similkameen rivers is the very least that we can do.

B.C. approving thousands of hectares of logging in endangered caribou habitat, report finds

Satellite monitoring identified 5,713 hectares of forest proposed and approved for logging across the ranges of three of B.C.'s most at-risk caribou herds.

Thousands of hectares of old-growth forest — critical habitat for British Columbia's endangered southern mountain caribou — are currently slated for logging or have already been approved, according to a new report. Research released Wednesday (July 2, 2025) by three conservation groups — Stand.earth, Wilderness Committee and Wildsight — used a satellite monitoring tool to identify 5,713 hectares of forest proposed and approved for logging across the ranges of three of the most at-risk herds: Columbia North, Groundhog and Wells Gray South.

That's an area equivalent to about 14 Stanley Parks, said Eddie Petryshen, a conservation specialist at Wildsight. "It means the future extinction risk of these caribou herds is being decided today with those decisions on pending and approved cutting permits," said Petryshen. "You log and disturb more and more of their habitat, you increase the extinction risk for these caribou."

He pointed to science going back decades that shows road building and logging removes attracts deer and moose as shrubs come up in the absence of trees. In turn, predators like wolves arrive with few barriers standing in the way of them and endangered caribou.

Study relied on satellite data, government documents

The analysis used a satellite tracking system, known as Forest Eye, built in 2023 with the help of the satellite firm Planet Labs. The Stand.earth tool systematically tracks forest cover change across the province. Workers manually verify alerts flagged by the system to ensure forest cover loss occurred due to logging activity. The satellite imagery was then layered on top of maps showing core caribou habitat and pending and active cut blocks.

The three herds — which are thought to be the most viable within the mountain caribou's southern range — were found to have 58 per

cent of their habitat at risk of logging. The Columbia North herd's habitat was found to face the highest risk of logging at 76 per cent. "Columbia North, in particular here in the Kooteney and Columbia region, is kind of our last shot at having caribou in this region for the long term," Petryshen said.

Ministry 'unable to comment' on report's findings

An unattributed statement from the Ministry of Forests said logging and road-building plans in caribou habitat rely on a number of experts — including foresters, geotechnical engineers, hydrologists and biologists — to manage impacts on caribou. "We are unable to comment" on the more than 5,700 hectares of core caribou habitat the report flagged as slated for logging "as we don't know how it was determined," the ministry statement said.

A separate unattributed statement from the Ministry of Water Lands and Resource Stewardship noted B.C. has implemented predator reduction, material penning, and habitat protection in all three caribou herds targeted in the conservation groups' analysis. The ministry said the province's Caribou Recovery Program, which launched in 2020, was currently in the external engagement phase, meaning "the program and First Nations are engaging with tenure holders and interest groups." "The goal of this process is to identify effective habitat protection and management thresholds that will support recovery of the caribou herds," the ministry said. The Columbia North, Groundhog and Wells Gray South herds are part of that process, alongside six other herds, the statement added.

Claims over pending logging come amid BCTS pause

Of the nearly 2.2 million hectares of total habitat area, about 41 per cent is already considered disturbed from activities like clearcut logging, mining, hydro power projects and resource roads. That's above a 35 per cent

habitat disturbance threshold the Ottawa considers acceptable under the species' federal recovery strategy. The latest analysis comes shortly after BIV reported BC Timber Sales halting "new investments" in unprotected core caribou habitat of the Columbia North herd. At the time, the Ministry of Forests said the logging pause was part of a collaboration with First Nations, industry, as well as local and federal governments.

The goal, according to the ministry, is to "refine our knowledge, align shared priorities that support caribou and other objectives like mitigating wildfire risk and responsibly securing timber supply to support the economy." The ministry failed to answer several questions, including how much forest the logging pause will impact, how long it will last, and how it foresees the pause will impact caribou and the forestry industry. It also failed to clarify whether the province would be rolling out logging pauses in other parts of the province. "I think it's a bold move by BCTS, and it's something other licensees should consider — because right now, we're not seeing the leadership of the province and the federal government on this file around caribou," said Petryshen.

The pause in new developments does not include existing logging approvals. Earlier this month, Petryshen said he came across an ancient forest cutblock north of Revelstoke, B.C., in the heart of the Columbia North herd's core critical habitat. Less than a kilometre away, he said he found caribou scat. "Just heartbreaking sort of scene when you when you have been working to try to recover these caribou," he said.

Signs of recovery overshadowed by long-term habitat decline

B.C.'s caribou populations have seen a 51 per cent decline since 1991. Ten herds are now considered either locally extinct or functionally extirpated, according to B.C. government data. The latest surveys suggest recovery actions — including maternal penning and predator reduction — have helped to reverse that trend, and have already saved

Continued on next page

Clearing the air on the threat from wildfires

THE GLOBE & MAIL EDITORIAL BOARD
- OCTOBER 22, 2025

When serious wildfires break out in Canada, a debate invariably ignites between two camps. There are those who argue that the fires are becoming worse and those who say these conflagrations, while terrible, are only blips in an improving trend. This raking over of the ashes is of more than academic importance.

If the situation is in fact becoming worse, then it behooves Canadians to act. The country must prepare better, invest in more firefighting resources and change, as necessary, how and where we live. But if there is no worsening trend, and the fears are the byproduct of alarmism and ignorance, then there is no urgent need to change course.

A new academic paper shows that there is some truth to both arguments: there are fewer fires but they are getting bigger. However, the paper, published this month in the *Canadian Journal of Forest Research*, shows that fires are becoming worse in the ways that matter. It also cites research indicating that fires are increasingly likely to burn over the winter, in types of forests not normally conducive to fire and in wetlands that have traditionally acted as protective barriers. And it warns that Canada's fire trends are likely to continue for decades due to climate change.

Wildfire ash is accelerating glacier melt in the Canadian Rockies

the lives of an estimated 1,500 animals across the province.

The Columbia North herd has grown in recent years — from 147 individuals in 2017 to 209 individuals in 2023. But those represent modest gains at a time the herd's core critical habitat keeps shrinking, say biologists.

Despite government recovery efforts and

The paper updates existing fire research covering the period from 1959 through 2015 to add nine more years, up to and including 2024. It does show that the total number of fires each year has trended down for decades. So the naysayers are right about that. But just having fewer fires doesn't mean things are getting better. When it comes to wildfire, size matters.

The number of large fires — defined as those bigger than 200 hectares — has been increasing by an average of three per year for decades, the paper shows. Most alarming, the very large fires — those that exceed 20,000 hectares — are getting bigger, and accounting for an increasing proportion of the area burned. What this adds up to is a great deal more damage. And that is the metric that really counts.

For 57 years, from 1959 through 2015, the average area burned in Canada annually amounted to 1.96 million hectares, equal to nearly 20,000 square kilometres. The long-term trend was supercharged in the last decade, which included three of the worst fire years recorded in Canada. From 2016 through 2024, the average area burned annually was 2.84 million hectares, a 45-per-cent jump from the years through 2015.

Northern Manitoba wildfire evacuees' return delayed because of mould, rotting food in homes

That increase translated into enormous additional devastation. If the scale of annual conflagration since 2016 had matched the average over the previous 57 years, about 79,000 square kilometres of Canada would not have burned. That's an area greater than New Brunswick.

requirements listed under Canada's Species at Risk Act, caribou sub-populations lost twice as much habitat as they gained between 2000 and 2012, found one 2020 study. "Despite this high level of existing disturbance, the B.C. government continues to approve new logging permits," the conservation groups' analysis concludes.

The report also criticized the province for

So it's time to retire the debate over whether fires are getting worse. They are. It's time to shift attention towards reacting accordingly. Fire cannot be eliminated. In fact, it is necessary for the propagation of some types of trees. But there are many things Canadians can do to mitigate their risk. On an individual level, people can minimize the threat to their own home through the FireSmart approach, which includes measures such as cutting back greenery and blocking embers from getting into roof vents. When large-scale fires do bring palls of smoke, people can reduce the health danger by using air barriers and filters to create a clean room in their home and by scaling back outdoor exercise.

Governments can approve more controlled burns to remove fuel from forests or create fire-breaks around communities or infrastructure. They can also beef up fire-fighting capabilities so that crews can tackle blazes in more places at once, during a season that is now longer than the historical norm. And government can offer better support to people forced to evacuate their communities, as recently called for by Manitoba's Advocate for Children and Youth.

Wildfires are a terrifying phenomenon with the potential to destroy homes and lives. They may eventually force Canadians to abandon some of the more fire-prone parts of the country. And their power is being amplified by climate change, which is leading to warmer and drier weather. It can be tempting to hope that the problem will simply go away. But this belief cannot be allowed to hold back action. Assuming that a declining overall number of fires means there is no crisis is to miss the forest for the trees.

failing to implement recommendations under the Old Growth Strategic Review, including putting high-risk old-growth forests off-limits to logging. It also challenged the government to direct office staff to withhold approvals for new logging and road construction in critically endangered caribou habitat.

STEFAN LABBÉ



Haine's Point – Posed on the furthest piece of Haine's Point jutting into Osoyoos Lake are Donna and her dog Panda. Haine's point is the traditional territory of the Syilx people and is today protected as a Provincial Park located on the outskirts of the city of Osoyoos at the junction of B.C. highways #97 and #3. A beautiful site for summer recreation it is also a wonderful spot for autumn strolls and nature walks.



Syilx Hatchery – The Okanagan Nation Alliance has been instrumental in leading the reintroduction of Sockeye salmon into the Okanagan River. Located on the Penticton Indian Band land not far from the river as it flows through the city of Penticton the hatchery augments the salmon population freed up to migrate up the river to Okanagan Lake.

Parks are Common Currency

BY BRIAN HOREJSI – COMMON GROUND

July 19, 2018

July 21 is Parks Day across Canada. I urge you to give some thought to the places we call parks, to the benefits they deliver, and to the “idea” of park: Why we like them, why we need them, and why we need more and more well-protected parks. Imagine, “something” that can be shared by, and is “owned” by, every citizen, rich or poor, employed or not, rural or urban, for you today, and for generations to come. Parks Day should be a day to celebrate.

As society has grown and the value of natural areas has evolved, Parks are now largely associated, at least in the minds of Canadians, with landscapes that protect land, water and wildlife and still allow vast numbers of people (a seriously problematic and threatening situation) to mentally and physically decompress in a place that is not like the rest of the world, or at least not the everyday world people have to survive in.

Over a century ago, parks, and as time passed and other lands were added to the public list of national assets, these lands were labelled the “commons.” It was a troublesome label for the political and economically powerful; it spoke of common bonds, common thought, and common actions. Since then the world’s “privateers” have been busy attempting to weaken and neutralize this greatest of all democratic concepts.

We live in a world of strange disparity; citizens who own the public common ground often have a strangely detached relationship with it, yet those organizations and corporations who do not (yet) own parks are acutely aware of the value, the uniqueness, and the inherent appeal these lands hold; they know that they can reap huge financial benefits by exploiting and controlling the allure of parks to virtually every segment of society.

Garrett Hardin describes it well in his book, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” in which he addresses the orchestrated disconnect between the citizens of a country and their land. By virtue of our citizenship, we are all entitled to “our piece” of the commons, of public lands, including parks. We cannot divide national parks into 34 million parcels, but we are entitled to our “piece” by exercising our equal right to influence the purpose for, and manner in which those lands are established and managed.

This lightning rod, this equalizer, this common share, is a concept that does not sit well with powerful special interests, like corporations, the arrogant wealthy who desire luxury

homes in parks, Indigenous people who think parks should preferentially accommodate their religious culture, and even city councils. I took this opportunity to write Catherine McKenna, federal environment minister responsible for national parks, suggesting she mark parks day by announcing public hearings regarding the official designation

and establishment, and size, and particularly, management direction, for the South Okanagan national park; and make sure the park was subject to entirely professional public service management (it can be done), and protect against Indigenous religious-cultural intrusion into park management. The culture I want to see reflected is Canada’s national park culture.

I asked the local municipal government what was on the agenda for Parks Day and I was disappointed to hear mostly “silence” is not an expected attribute, but every city should be thumping its collective chest about its parks.

An impressive announcement would have been a decision to naturalize all of Skaha Lake Park. That would be a celebration!

Dr. Brian L. Horejsi is a wildlife and forest ecologist. He writes about environmental affairs, public resource management and governance and their entrenched legal and social bias.

From CBC ‘What On Earth’

The Big Picture: Renewables, led by solar, are stepping up

Renewables are more than meeting the rise in global demand for electricity, according to a new report from global energy think-tank Ember. In the first half of 2025, more solar and wind power generation was added worldwide than the increase in electricity demand. Most of this increase consists of solar, a particularly bright spot. A report from the International Energy Agency echoes this optimism; they are projecting that global installed renewable power will more than double by 2030, and 80 per cent of that rise will be solar. But Ember also warned that renewables face growing challenges in the U.S., where President Donald Trump’s administration has repealed policies to support solar and wind while promoting coal plants.
— Inayat Singh

The Big Picture: Corporate climate targets are stalling

Canadian companies are moving slower on decarbonization target-setting, according to a new report from the Institute for Sustainable Finance. The Queen’s University think-tank says about half of the firms listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange that report their carbon emissions have some kind of emissions target, but with wide variations between industries. Telecommunication and utility companies are leading the way in setting targets, while the energy sector is lagging behind. The report also said that the number of companies putting out net-zero targets has stalled — because of recent controversy over the term ‘carbon neutral’ and the exit of financial firms from the Net-Zero Banking Alliance.
— Inayat Singh

wildlife tracking identification guide

<p>Red Squirrel</p> <p>5 Toes</p> <p>3cm Front 4.5cm Back</p>	<p>Mouse</p> <p>Front <1cm Back <1.5cm</p>	<p>Weasel</p> <p>1-3.5cm</p>
<p>Raccoon</p> <p>5 Toes</p> <p>4-8cm Front 5-10cm Back</p>	<p>Muskrat</p> <p>2.5-3.5cm Front 3.5-7cm Back</p>	<p>Beaver</p> <p>6-10cm Front 12-17.5cm Back</p>
<p>Black Bear</p> <p>5 Toes</p> <p>8-13cm Front 15-23cm Back</p>	<p>Grizzly Bear</p> <p>13-18cm Front 25-30cm Back</p>	<p>Human</p> <p>20-35cm</p>

*Tracks are not to scale *Lengths given are adult measurements *Tracks can vary a lot! This guide is intended to give you a basic introduction to tracking.

wildlife tracking identification guide

<p>Deer</p> <p>2 Toes</p> <p>5-9cm</p>	<p>Elk</p> <p>8-13cm</p>	<p>Moose</p> <p>10-18cm</p>
<p>Red Fox</p> <p>4 Toes</p> <p>5-7.5cm</p>	<p>Coyote</p> <p>6-7.5cm</p>	<p>Wolf</p> <p>10-15cm</p>
<p>Bobcat</p> <p>4 Toes</p> <p>4.5-6.5cm</p>	<p>Cougar</p> <p>7.5-11cm</p>	<p>Snowshoe Hare</p> <p>10-15cm Back 5-7.5cm Front</p>

*Tracks are not to scale *Lengths given are adult measurements *Tracks can vary a lot! This guide is intended to give you a basic introduction to tracking.

Book Review

Three recent books by two female scientists and a female science reporter have made it to the top of our recommendation list this fall. Though none is specifically about our region, all three have interesting information, ideas and suggestions for environmentally conscious conservationists in the Okanagan and Similkameen valleys. The publications are *Tapestries of Life; Uncovering the Lifesaving Secrets of the Natural World* (2020) written by Anne Sverdrup-Thygeson and translated into English by Lucy Moffatt, Robin Wall Kimmerer's *The Serviceberry; Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* (2024), and *Water Always Wins; Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge* (2022) by Erica Gies.

Each of these well researched offerings inform the reader of a need that the current human environment requires and offers examples of how they effect and interact with the natural world. However, each also attempts to find evidence of how the natural world may, in

fact, contain the answers that will help not only the environment but the human residents as well.

In *Water Always Wins* we read about floods, droughts, and spoiled water located around the world. The causes or natural patterns of these serious events are discussed with reference to how the environmental systems have worked in the past. Ever the reporter, Gies provides the reader with attention catching vignettes and first-person accounts of harrowing and sobering occurrences from around the world. Her inclusion of wonderful pictures helps the reader to envision what is being discussed.

Wall Kimmerer, also the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, uses the Serviceberry, known locally as Saskatoons, to discuss the needs of residents to plan, conserve, and share natural and farmed resources. Her story about the neighbours that gifted her some of the culturally significant berries and expected nothing in return leads to ideas about gift economies and a natural way of living. The

concept of it takes a village to accomplish a task is explored with a conservationist focus. As an added benefit this book has some wonderful line sketches of some of the flora and fauna mentioned.

Though first published in Norway *Tapestries of Life* has a focus that can be described as world-wide. Sverdrup-Thygeson reports on naturally occurring plants, animals, and substances that can be dangerous and at the same time useful to humans. The professor of conservation biology relates how some very important life forms are being lost to the future and that others are also on their way to extinction.

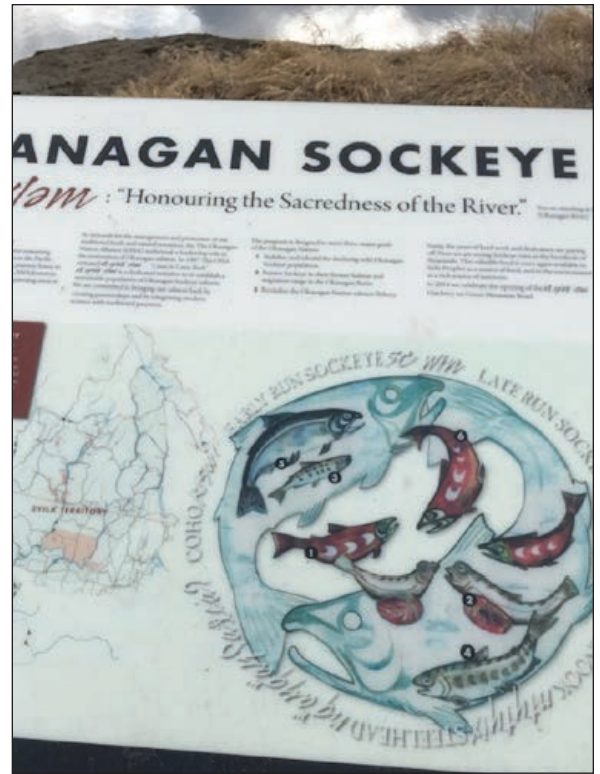
Should you be wishing to provide someone with a great read over the coming winter any one of these books would fit the bill, although *The Serviceberry* is a little short. If your goal is to provide a gift that takes a little longer to devour then the recommendation would be to share all three titles with the person. Be the benefactor that shares information with someone you care about.



The OSPS book review reports on three volumes which reflect on conservation and the value of nature. The three books not only speak about needs but also about activities that mitigate harm. All three are written by female authors based on scholarly research. The books are *Tapestries of Life; Uncovering the Lifesaving Secrets of the Natural World* (2020) penned by professor Anne Sverdrup-Thygeson and translated into English by Lucy Moffatt, professor Robin Wall Kimmerer's short read, *The Serviceberry; Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* (2024), and *Water Always Wins; Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge* (2022) by Erica Gies.



Spawning Sockeye – Here they come. The work to accomplish the refurbishing of the Okanagan Salmon Fishery is paying dividends. Thanks to governing entities all along the Okanagan River, food for humans, various animals, and the plants abutting the river is on its way to returning in a yearly pattern the way that it did before the Okanagan was cut off from the Pacific Ocean by ‘progress’.



Fish sign – The mitigation of the Sockeye Salmon run on the Okanagan River takes on historic meaning for the region. The Syilx people have fished for the fish in this area for centuries. The Okanagan Nation Alliance are acting on behalf of twenty-first century people engaged in traditional food sourcing.



Okanagan Nation Alliance scientific staff measurement and assessment in aide of the Okanagan salmon fishery.

Quotation for the Moment:

“The first great gift we can bestow on others is a good example.”

—Thomas Morell

ONA Develop a Program for the Reinvigoration of the Okanagan River

The Okanagan Nation Alliance are doing what many of the indigenous people along the rivers of British Columbia, Washington and Oregon are engaged in. The First Nations on these rivers are reclaiming the salmon runs that have historically been a major source of food for them. From eliminating dams, establishing fish ladders and educating their people to investing in hatcheries and environmental restructuring, the bands and tribes have been actively establishing revitalized traditional fisheries.

Over the past spring and summer, the ONA built a functioning 'detour' for migrating Sockeye salmon to navigate their return to Okanagan Lake for the first time in decades. The fish ladder which allows the salmon to bypass the dam at the head of the lake in Penticton was constructed with the use of

heavy-duty machinery, individual workers and the latest in environmental engineering. Long envisioned, the project was just the latest in a program to return the Okanagan River to a migration route for the beleaguered Sockeye salmon, a First Nations' food source.

While the salmon and their river habitat are prehistoric in nature and have interacted with the people for multiple centuries, the individuals working on this program are very much involved with twenty-first century planning, technology and understanding. Along with the recent erection of a hatchery facility to supplement the numbers of salmon in the river the opening up of the migratory route allows the salmon runs to be rejuvenated to the numbers of early last century. The Syilx people, through their governing bodies are working diligently to reestablish the river as a resource maintaining entity. Stewardship

of the river and the lands adjacent to it is being conducted by the ONA and its bands from the international border at Osoyoos to Okanagan Lake. During the runs in the fall, a walk along the river as it flows through Oliver or Penticton will reveal a great mass of fish attempting to 'return' to their prehistoric home.

The reinvigoration of the Sockeye salmon and their habitat in Okanagan River allows for the teaching and practice of traditional activities but with modern spins on them. It also provides for the reestablishment of an important First Nations' food source. However, most critically it makes wonderful sense from a conservation and ecological perspective and provides hope that positive things can happen for all of us.



Fish Ladder – a recent renovation of the dam at the South end of Okanagan Lake houses a bypass for the returning Sockeye for the first time in nearly a hundred years. A project undertaken by various levels and forms of governments has resulted in a return to a natural state, abetted by twenty-first century technology.



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CO2 in the atmosphere has reached highest level in 800,000 years: WMO report

Ahead of key climate summit, UN agency warns CO2 levels are growing faster than ever

The Associated Press · Posted: Oct 15, 2025, 9:15 AM PDT |

Heat-trapping carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere jumped by the highest amount on record last year, soaring to a level not seen in human civilization and “turbo-charging” the Earth’s climate, causing more extreme weather, the United Nations weather agency said Wednesday.

The World Meteorological Organization said in its latest bulletin on greenhouse gases, an annual study released ahead of the UN’s annual climate conference, that CO2 growth rates have tripled since the 1960s, reaching levels not seen in at least 800,000 years.

Emissions from burning coal, oil and gas, alongside more wildfires, have helped fan a “vicious climate cycle,” and people and industries continue to spew heat-trapping gases while the planet’s oceans and forests lose their ability to absorb them, the WMO report said. The Geneva-based agency said the increase in the global average concentration of carbon dioxide from 2023 to 2024 amounted to the highest annual level of any one-year span since measurements began in 1957. Growth rates of CO2 have accelerated from an annual average increase of 2.4 parts per million per year in the decade from 2011 to 2020, to 3.5 ppm from 2023 to 2024, WMO said.

“The heat trapped by CO2 and other greenhouse gases is turbo-charging our climate and leading to more extreme weather,” said WMO deputy secretary-general Ko Barrett in a statement. “Reducing emissions is therefore essential not just for our climate but also for our economic security and community well-being.”

Climate Analytics CEO Bill Hare called the new data “alarming and worrying.” Even though fossil fuel emissions were “relatively flat” last year, he said, the report appeared to show an accelerating increase of CO2 in the atmosphere, “signalling a positive feedback from burning forests and warming oceans driven by record global temperatures.”

“Let there be no mistake, this is a very clear warning sign that the world is heading into an extremely dangerous state — and this is driven by the continued expansion of fossil fuel development, globally,” Hare said. “I’m beginning to feel that this points to a slow-moving climate catastrophe unfolding in front of us.”

WMO called on policymakers to take more steps to help reduce emissions. While several governments have been pushing for further use of hydrocarbons like coal, oil and gas for energy production, some businesses and

local governments have been mobilizing to fight global warming. Still, Hare said very few countries have made new climate commitments that come “anywhere near dealing with the gravity of the climate crisis.”

The increase in 2024 is setting the planet on track for more long-term temperature increases, WMO said. It noted that concentrations of methane and nitrous oxide — other greenhouse gases caused by human activity — have also hit record levels.

The report was bound to raise new doubts on the world’s ability to hit the goal laid out in the 2015 Paris climate accord of keeping the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times. United Nations climate chief, Simon Stiell, has said the Earth is now on track for 3 C.

Meanwhile, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s global data for this year through June reveals that carbon dioxide rates are still rising at one of the highest rates on record, yet not quite as high as from 2023 to 2024. The agency’s monthly data for the long-running Hawaii monitoring location for 2025 through August also showed CO2 rates are still increasing, but not as much as between 2023-2024.