



# Strategic Plan 2020 to 2025

## Introduction

What is environmental education?

Environmental education (EE) is a long-term investment in the general health and well-being of individuals, communities, ecosystems and the planet.

Effective environmental education supports the development of ecologically literate citizens who value healthy environments. They understand their connection to and impact on natural environments, and through this understanding become motivated to act as environmental stewards and live more sustainable, healthy lives.



[cbeen.org](http://cbeen.org)



## Why is it important?

Growing concerns around energy, climate change, water and ecosystems make the need for environmental education more important than ever. Environmental education initiatives inform and inspire individuals and communities on how to mitigate their impact on the environment, and adapt to a changing world. In addition, the growing understanding of the physical and mental health benefits associated with time spent in nature underlines the importance of our work. By supporting educators, and collaborating with partners, our network will more effectively help our communities to address these issues.

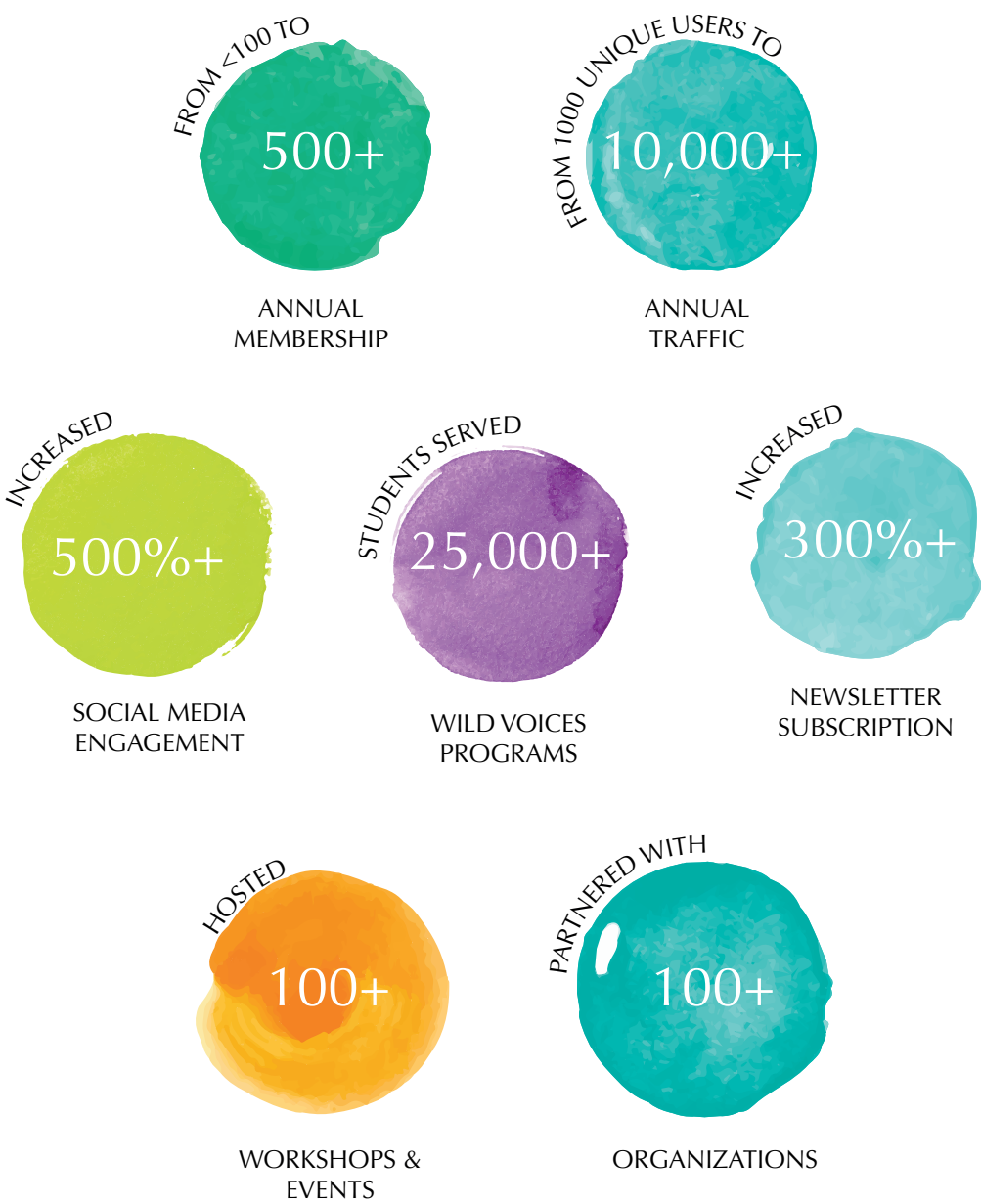
## Why the Columbia Basin?

The Canadian Columbia Basin stretches from the Okanagan in the east to the Alberta border in the west and from Valemount in the north to the United States border in the south. The communities within this region are linked through the water and their citizens' past and future are intertwined historically, socially, economically, and environmentally. The region is also internationally recognized for its biodiversity values.

In 2002, educators from across Basin recognized that they shared geographic and cultural links and also a common interest in environmental education. The Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) was born out of this shared sense of identity and from the common desire to support and promote EE on a regional scale.

## What have we accomplished?

2016-2020 by the numbers:





## Why a network?

Networks facilitate connections and information exchange among individuals who share common professional interests, inspiring innovation and efficiencies at all levels. This is especially important in the largely rural context of the Canadian Columbia Basin where communities are small, geographically dispersed and resources are limited.

CBEEN acts as a regional umbrella network for environmental education that supports, encourages, and empowers environmental educators, fostering environmental stewardship and sustainability, throughout the Canadian Columbia Basin.

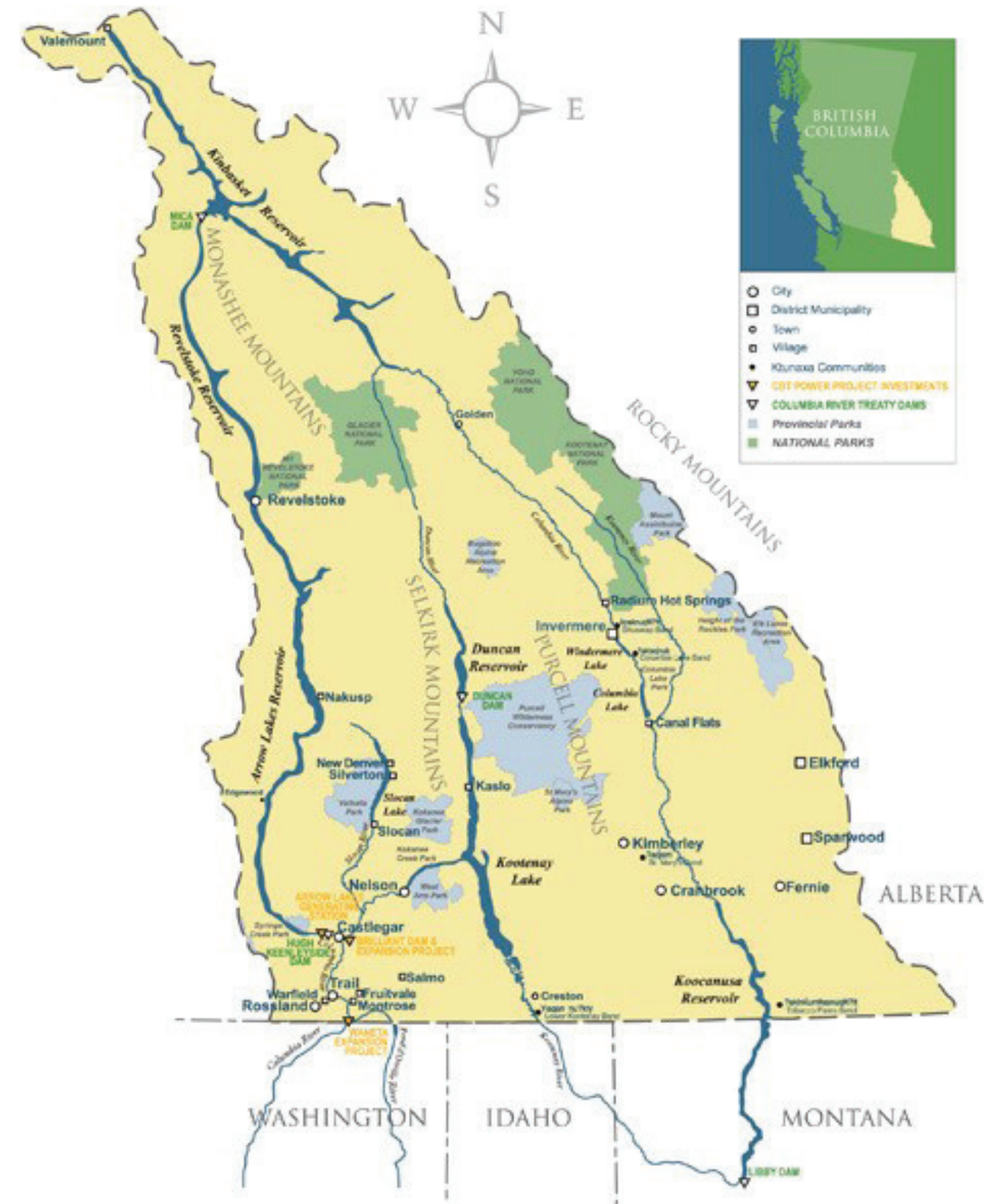
CBEEN has been working since 2001 to build a community of engaged and effective educators by connecting them with the best resources, information, professional development, delivery and networking opportunities available. The network finds efficiencies associated with facilitating and strengthening environmental education throughout the region.

Today, CBEEN is a vibrant network of over 500 members who share a common passion for environmental education in the Columbia Basin and beyond.

## Governance

CBEEN was registered as a non-profit Society in 2004 and a charity in 2012. CBEEN's effective leadership and management ensure its long-term viability as a meaningful and efficient network, non-profit society and registered charity.

It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which ensures effective and ethical governance in accordance with the constitution and bylaws of CBEEN.



## Looking Back to See the Future: Our Natural History



In 2000, the movement towards better integrating environmental education (EE) in school districts across the Canadian Columbia Basin was initiated with a partnership between the Columbia Basin Trust and Wildsight to offer the first school-based EE programming in the region. Following up on this, in 2001, a group of educators came together to develop a regional environmental education network. With support from Columbia Basin Trust and Selkirk College, the Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) was formed. Over the next decade, this network of environmental education organizations and educators have laid the groundwork for the current system for effectively supporting environmental education.



In 2014, with the redesign of BC's K-12 curriculum and the emphasis on place-based, community-based and environmental learning, CBEEN began to take intentional steps to distribute leadership. That year, CBEEN hosted their first Environmental Education Leadership Clinic in partnership with the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM), and amongst other initiatives, the vision for the provincial Classrooms to Communities (C2C) Network took form, with a focus on supporting place-based learning in British Columbia.



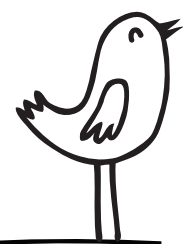
In 2015, CBEEN was recognized with the BC School Superintendent Association (BCSSA) Community Award of Recognition for "outstanding contributions to support and enhance public school education in the Province of British Columbia". This opened a door to work more closely with school districts in the region. In 2016, with six partner school districts, CBEEN brought together teams of teachers, principals and senior leaders from each school district to a Leadership Clinic. The aim: to create a plan to support school districts in responding to the curriculum and embedding cross-curricular environmental education. The value of collaboration between school districts and CBEEN was clear. The Kootenay-Boundary Environmental Education (KBEE) initiative emerged, providing support for teachers to better undertake and deepen rich outdoor and environmental learning.



In 2017, with the support of KBEE and the BC Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA), CBEEN brought together teachers from each school district in the region to create Local Chapters of EEPSA. These local chapters of teacher leaders have proven to be very effective in catalyzing action in and across school districts. As a result, CBEEN, with the support of KBEE, C2C, EEPSA and Columbia Basin Trust, has committed to hosting a series of leadership clinics to further enhance the capacity of this group to undertake key actions leading to positive change in their school districts.

These partnerships were further solidified, and the C2C Network formally launched, when CBEEN, KBEE, C2C and EEPSA played host to the 2018 Canadian Environmental Education 'Classrooms to Communities' Conference with support from partners including Columbia Basin Trust, Wildsight and Columbia Outdoors School. As a testament to this shared success, between 2013 and 2018, CBEEN, KBEE, Wildsight and Columbia Basin Trust each received a Canadian Award of Excellence for their support for environmental education in Southeast BC.

The system that CBEEN has been a catalyst for backbone organization for has enhanced opportunities for educators and students to undertake environmental education as an effective tool to teach and learn.



wildsight



Selkirk College





# A Systemic Model for Supporting Environmental Learning in Southeast British Columbia



## Classrooms to Communities (C2C) c2c-bc.org

Key environmental education partners from across the province

*Growing collaboration, leadership and mentorship capacity for place-based education and environmental literacy in BC.*



## Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA) eepsa.org

Local Chapters are comprised of local teachers from each school district

*Empowered to promote networking, curriculum support, and leadership in environmental education.*



## Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education (KBEE) kbee.ca

Members of the Kootenay Boundary Chapter of the BC School Superintendent Association

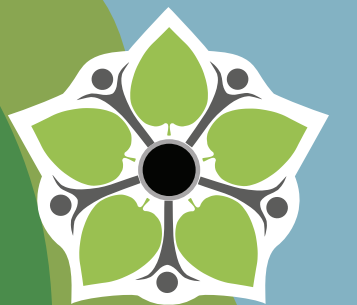
*Encouraging participation in outdoor learning, and removing barriers, in order to support students' understanding of their local environment and empowering thoughtful action, through learning that is outdoor, experiential, place-based and place-conscious.*



## Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) cbeen.org

Member-based network that works in partnership to support educators

*Encouraging environmental stewardship and sustainability by supporting educators.*



## CBEEN Mission

Encouraging environmental stewardship and sustainability in the Canadian Columbia Basin by supporting environmental educators.

## CBEEN Vision

Residents of the Canadian Columbia Basin understand, respect and become stewards of the natural environment, engaging in sustainable lifestyles.

## CBEEN Strategic Goals 2020 to 2025



Maintain a vibrant and engaged network of educators in the Canadian Columbia Basin, and provide this network with excellent environmental education professional development resources and opportunities.



Facilitate collaboration amongst members, partner organizations, and Basin communities to effectively achieve our shared mandates and vision.



Undertake a process to better role model and support diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field of Environmental Education.



Expand network to increase engagement with and support for early years educators.



Maintain a sustainable organization which has effective and ethical governance in accordance with its non-profit and charitable status.



## Goal 1

Maintain a vibrant and engaged network of educators in the Canadian Columbia Basin, and provide this network with excellent environmental education professional development resources and opportunities.

### Objectives

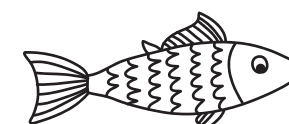
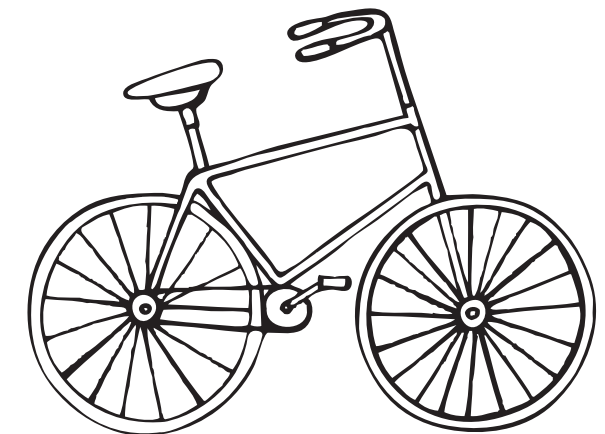
CBEEN will continue to maintain our role as the primary regional network supporting environmental educators across the Canadian Columbia Basin.

CBEEN will continue to support the provision of environmental education programs through the Wild Voices for Kids program.

CBEEN will act as a central hub to share EE information and resources and will provide effective and responsive communications channels through which to share these.

CBEEN will support the professional development of its members by identifying the needs of members and facilitating opportunities to meet these needs.

CBEEN will continue to provide access to outdoor and environmental resources and equipment through the development of the Outdoor Learning Store.

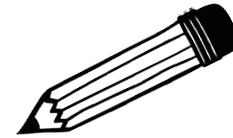






## Goal 2:

Facilitate collaboration amongst members, partner organizations, and Basin communities to effectively achieve our shared mandates and vision.



### Objectives

CBEEN will continue to act as the primary EE regional network, facilitating collaboration and networking amongst educators, partners and communities across the Columbia Basin;

CBEEN will facilitate opportunities to share best practices, innovations, resources and expertise.

CBEEN will utilize effective communications tools and strategies to foster collaboration and information sharing with members and partners and between members and partners.

## Goal 3

Undertake a process to better role model and support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the field of Environmental Education.



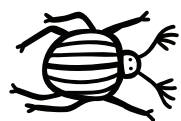
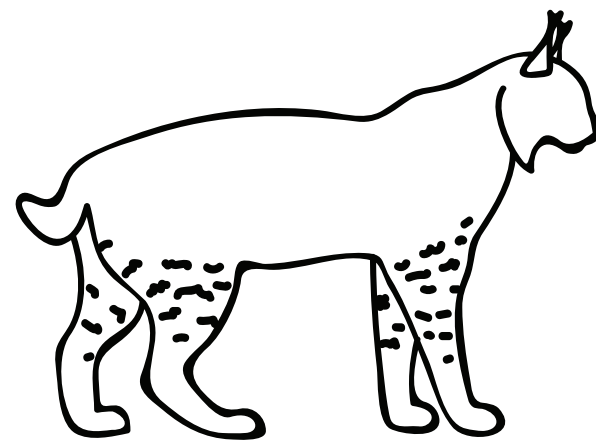
### Objectives

CBEEN will become a more inclusive, diverse and equitable network that is representative of the community it serves.;

CBEEN will collect and make available resources on DEI to better support our network in their understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion in order to allow for them to take positive action.

CBEEN will continue to prioritize seeking ways to authentically engage and support Indigenous educators and communities in ways that meet their needs in better connecting members of their communities, and guests to their communities, with the local land.

CBEEN will provide resources to better support non-Indigenous educators in understanding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives of this region, acknowledging that environmental education in the Canadian Columbia Basin is taking place on Indigenous territory, and cannot be undertaken effectively without this foundation of understanding and knowledge.



## Goal 4

Expand network to increase engagement with and support for early years educators.

### Objectives

CBEEN will undertake the development of a 3-year plan to better engage with and support early years educators in collaboration with our StrongStart, CBAL and Childcare Resource and Referral partners.

CBEEN will implement this 3-year plan and develop metrics to track success.

## Goal 5

Maintain a sustainable organization which has effective and ethical governance in accordance with its non-profit and charitable status.

### Objectives

CBEEN will ensure organizational sustainability through practicing good governance, fiscal responsibility and strategic planning.

CBEEN will diversify its sources of revenue to achieve long-term financial security, including through the Environmental Education Endowment Fund and Outdoor Learning Store.

CBEEN will ensure that the network's activities are in line with their Environmental Operations Policy.

