

Province Provides Bear Smart Funding for Communities

On May 4 the provincial government announced \$40,000 in funding for community programs in a goal to reduce bear-human conflicts and save the lives of bears.

The funding will help communities participate in the Bear Smart program, a conservation measure that encourages communities, businesses and individuals to work together to address the causes of bear-human conflicts. The aim is to both reduce the potential for human injury and the number of bears destroyed each year.

The Bear Smart program is based on a series of criteria that communities must achieve in order to be recognized as being "Bear Smart". For full details, check the "Bear Smart" Community Program web page at: <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/bearsmart/bearsmintro.html>.

To help communities pursue "Bear Smart" Community status, the Ministry and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (the "Trust") in partnership with the Guide Outfitters Association of B.C are issuing a limited, one-time only call for applications for funding. This call is directed to municipal governments and local community conservation organizations.

A Few Rules

- The maximum one-time, grant amount is \$5,000 per community
- A commitment of matching resources from the community is required.

Time Frame for Grant

- June 28, 2004 to March 31, 2005

Check the WLAP website: http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/eeeb/info/wildlife_human_interaction/

Eligible Activities

1. Preparation of a bear hazard assessment of the community and surrounding area.
2. Preparation of a bear/human conflict management plan that is designed to address the bear hazards and land-use conflicts identified in the previous step.
3. Implementation of a continuing education program, directed at all sectors of the community.
4. Development of a bear-proof municipal solid waste management system.

Application Evaluation:

Funding priority will be given to those communities that have:

- a history of bear-human conflict;
- a commitment by the community to pursue "Bear Smart" status; and,
- matching community resources.

The application will also be evaluated on proposal quality and must contain enough detail to assess the merit of the project, including budget information that clearly indicates how the grant money will be used, the source of matching resource and where the matching resources will be applied.

Application Submission

- Applications **must be submitted** using the format available for download on the Ministry website, http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/eeeb/info/wildlife_human_interaction/.
- Applications **must be submitted by email** before **4:30 pm, June 18, 2004**.
- A review committee will evaluate applications from the perspective of funding priority and proposal completeness.
- Successful applicants will be advised as soon as possible.