

“ MIISTAKIS IS ABOUT PULLING TOGETHER RESEARCH AND TRANSLATING THESE RESULTS INTO ‘PLAIN LANGUAGE’ THAT ALL STAKEHOLDERS CAN UNDERSTAND AND APPLY IN THEIR OWN SITUATIONS. **THEY ARE LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL TOOL DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN AND THINKING.** LOOKING AT WAYS OF DOING NEW THINGS WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES. ”

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Miistakis
Institute

Innovative research. Engaged communities. Healthy landscapes.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Throughout 2019/20 Miistakis continued to advance conservation through innovative and collaborative applied research. While we work on many different projects each year it is often hard for us to evaluate our effectiveness as conservation success often takes years, well beyond the life of a project. For example, we may hear years later that one of our research publications was used to inform a planning process, or a citizen may tell us that their participation in one of our citizen science programs influenced their behaviour.

This year, we undertook an organizational evaluation so we could get a better handle on how our work is being used, where our work has had the biggest impact and how our information has had a positive impact on ecosystem conservation. **And we were thrilled with what we heard.** You confirmed that we are providing credible information for environmental public policy decisions and planning, working with local organizations, municipalities, land owners and different government departments. The evaluation also examined relationship development, levels of trust and potential new directions. The results were very positive, very instructive with a strong message of 'stay the course' and 'stick to your niche', so that is what we plan to do. Our full evaluation can be accessed [here](#).

Miistakis made significant strides this past year in advancing our financial security through the establishment of an endowment. With the generous support of the Edmonton Community Foundation's Matching Program for Environmental Organizations program and **tremendous support from our donors** we have established a fund that will allow us to invest in ourselves! At Miistakis, we operate on a project by project basis with no operational or core support. This means we have limited resources to invest in non-project related work. However, with the establishment of this endowment we can spend more time mobilizing our research through delivery of webinars, sharing our knowledge at workshops and conferences, creating communication materials and participating in more conservation dialogues. **We sincerely thank all those that donated to Miistakis over the past year to make this possible!** You can contribute to our endowment [here](#).



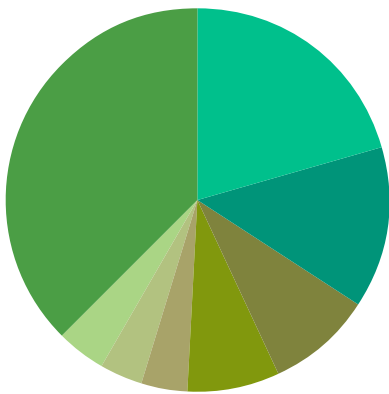
Danah Duke
Executive Director

YOU TOLD US WHAT YOU THINK

This past year, Miistakis undertook an evaluation to review our performance from the perspective of key stakeholders. The evaluation examined relationship development, levels of trust, efficacy of tools, potential new directions, and overall impressions of and benefits provided by Miistakis.

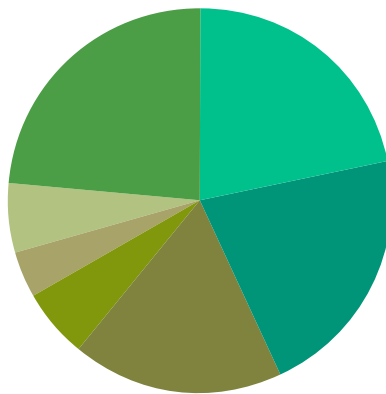
We were particularly interested in the impact Miistakis' work has had and examined how others have used our work to advance conservation.

How Miistakis' Information has had a Positive Impact on Ecosystem Conservation



- Increased our knowledge/ awareness of environmental issue
- Provided credible science to support conservation efforts
- Impacted planning/ design considerations related to environmental issue
- Used to create environmental management programs/ tools
- Used in policy development
- Used in support of funding/ grant applications
- Other
- Don't know / Not sure

Areas Miistakis has had the Biggest Impact in



- Providing credible information used in environmental public policy decisions and planning
- Working with local organizations, municipalities, land owners and different government departments
- Research and resources regarding wildlife and conservation
- Creating public awareness / working with the general public
- Working collaboratively with other environmental organizations
- Other
- Don't know / Not sure

The survey results showed:

96%

of respondents rated Miistakis as good or excellent when it comes to the level of trust in our environmental conservation research.

97%

rated Miistakis' work as relevant to today's ecosystem conservation challenges.

89%

of respondents who used Miistakis' information indicated they saw a positive impact on ecosystem conservation resulting from the information.

“We use Miistakis' information when making funding decisions. We trust the quality of research in terms of laying out priority areas or areas of need.”

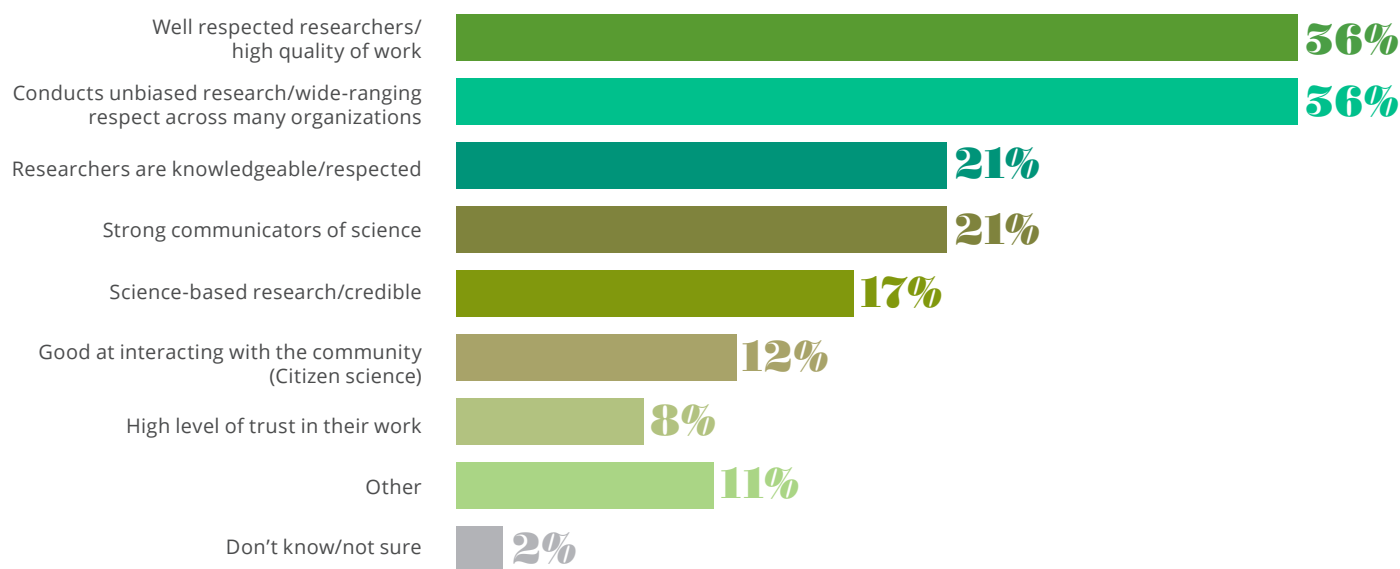
Miistakis' reputation to foster a better understanding of environmental conservation received a very high rating with

95% of respondents rating performance as good (52%) or excellent (65%).

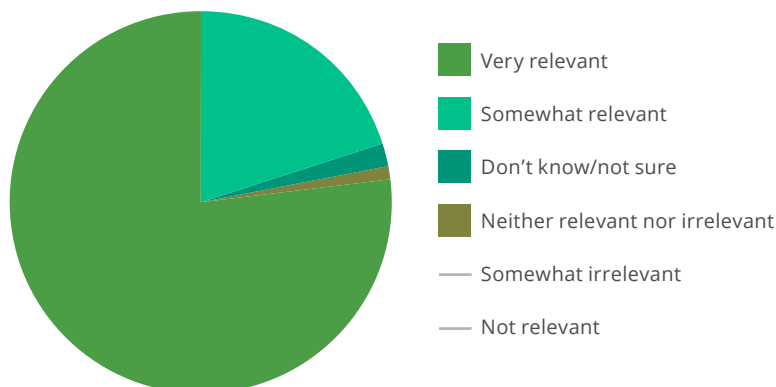
Two percent of respondents provided an average rating, and no one gave a poor or very poor rating.

“Data, program results and reports have provided both within-organization and external validation to our programs. We have also been able to align better with other jurisdictions' approaches to ecosystem conservation.”

Explanations for why 95% of respondents chose a good/excellent reputation



Relevance of Miistakis' work to today's ecosystem conservation challenges



Here is what some of our partners had to say about our impact and how our work has been used to support conservation decision making. The full report is posted on our website and can be accessed here.

“Miistakis research work has had a marked effect in Highway mitigation projects, and specifically with gaining the ear of the Government of Alberta bureaucrats to understand the necessity of this work, both for human safety and wildlife mortality issues. Further, Miistakis’ research in communities, behind the scenes to assist municipalities and lay-persons understand conservation needs has helped pave the way for increased understanding and willingness to move forward on conservation actions.”

“Municipal Flood and Drought Action Planning Primer has been useful to our work in central Alberta working with municipalities on issues related to water security/municipal planning Presentations/forums on citizen science have been helpful for our work to understand the value add of citizen science for data collection and citizen engagement.”

“The information provided by Miistakis helped me craft process recommendations and a toolkit to integrate riparian protection into municipal land-use and water planning processes. These recommendations have been adopted and implemented by our client, and have helped conserve riparian areas.”

“Created an awareness among Municipal elected officials in rural municipalities of the variables and potential impacts of approving more multi parcel rural residential subdivisions. This led to additional investigations at the direction of Council regarding specific cost variables such as fire suppression, road maintenance costs and intangible effects such as impacts of rural residential on agricultural operations.”

OUR CONSERVATION WORK



CITIZEN SCIENCE FOR CONSERVATION

Citizen Science is an approach Miistakis has found beneficial for improving knowledge, engaging decision makers and the public in actions to address conservation challenges. This year we completed two, multi-year citizen science programs, RoadWatchBC that monitored wildlife-road interactions in SE British Columbia and Call of the Wetland that monitored amphibians in Calgary to inform urban biodiversity planning. Pronghorn Xing continues to document pronghorn interactions along Highway 1 to inform road mitigation planning and Calgary Captured engages the public in classifying images in support of an urban wildlife monitoring program.



TRANSPORTATION ECOLOGY

Our transportation network enables people and their goods to move around the landscape but the ecological impact of roads is significant. Recently our work has focused on creating tools and frameworks to identify road sections for mitigation based on animal vehicle collisions and their risk to motorist safety combined with the intersection of animal movement pathways with the road network to identify road sections that are a barrier to movement or cause high animal mortality. In other words, our tools enable planning for road mitigation to address both motorist and animal safety.



HUMAN WILDLIFE COEXISTENCE

Miistakis enhanced watershed resiliency by promoting coexistence with beavers through our continued beaver coexistence collaborative research and outreach, specifically through the promotion of coexistence tools and the ecosystem contributions of beavers. This year we engaged with over 70 practitioners, academics, planners and students at a beaver focused symposium to elevate the dialogue on beaver coexistence. Also, our ongoing monitoring of biodiversity in the City of Calgary using remote cameras will provide insights into recreational use, species richness and diversity, temporal use patterns and distribution to inform urban conservation planning.



MUNICIPALITIES AND CONSERVATION

Miistakis worked to increase municipal capacity to steward their natural environments by developing an [online resource of tools](#) for protecting natural infrastructure, coordinating a strategy for creating consistent municipal wetlands data across the Bow Basin, and expanding application of our [land use suitability tool](#). This year Miistakis also conducted a purpose-based revamp of the [Community Conserve](#) program, and supported specific municipalities with their environment, natural infrastructure, and planning dilemmas.



PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

Miistakis continues to work toward the development of an Alberta-wide private land conservation database, driven by the land trust and conservancy community. This involved project development, communication with land trusts, and discussions at all levels of government. Miistakis also supported the Government of Alberta in their efforts to report nationally on privately-protected areas and OECMs (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures) in Alberta.



CONSERVATION PLANNING AND POLICY

Miistakis worked to provide research support and clarification for a number of conservation policies and initiatives. This included updating our previous work in mountain bike impacts to include e-bikes, providing support and insights to the Alberta Association of Conservation Offsets and the Government of Alberta as they seek to implement effective conservation offset policy, and researching the conservation possibilities and limitations of two provincial land designations, [protective notations](#) and [public land use zones](#).

MIISTAKIS AT MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

As Mount Royal University's only affiliated research institute, the Miistakis Institute explores opportunities to enhance MRU's environmental research capacity, and works with MRU faculty, staff and students to realize environmental outcomes.

Miistakis takes an interdisciplinary approach to all of our research and we are able to enhance students exposure to interdisciplinary research through student internships, student mentorship, student volunteer opportunities, class lectures and case studies. Related to this, we are able to provide integrated work learning experiences by providing employment opportunities, both short and longer term, for students across campus. Most directly, Miistakis provides opportunities for students to enrich their academic experience through participation in research projects.

Over the past year Miistakis engaged 11 students in on-the-ground applied research initiatives addressing complex environmental challenges including 6 summer interns. All of our projects are collaborative in nature allowing student exposure to multiple stakeholders including government, industry, community, environmental not-for-profits and academic partners from other academic institutions.



STUDENT PROFILE: RACHEL PIZANTE

Miistakis has been an amazing support throughout my BSc in General Science at Mount Royal University.

I began volunteering with Miistakis in October 2017, and since then I have completed a research project and an internship, working primarily on two citizen science projects focused on urban biodiversity and engaging citizens in environmental initiatives. Through Miistakis, I have applied the knowledge I have learned during my degree to real world conservation initiatives. This has given me great insight into how conservation is actually done and provided me with an excellent foundation for my future career. Thank you Miistakis!



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 395,768	\$ 892,708
Accounts receivable	93,252	354,174
Accrued project receivables	16,393	11,862
Short term investment (Note 2)	-	120,000
Goods and services tax recoverable	4,126	2,884
Prepaid expenses	6,584	2,094
	516,123	1,383,722
Investments (Note 3)	364,063	-
Equipment (Note 4)	12,428	11,071
	\$ 892,614	\$ 1,394,793
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 26,072	\$ 13,193
Wages payable	23,273	23,733
Deferred contributions related to operations (Note 5)	336,006	851,051
	385,351	887,977
Deferred contribution related to equipment (Note 6)	924	1,238
	386,275	889,215
Net assets		
Invested in equipment	7,802	9,830
Internally restricted (Note 7)	380,000	140,000
Unrestricted	118,537	355,748
	506,339	505,578
	\$ 892,614	\$ 1,394,793

Statement of Operations

For the Year Ended March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
Revenue		
Foundation and other grants	\$ 433,070	\$ 505,372
Government grants	391,064	264,081
Services	127,594	392,351
Donations	39,909	63,907
Interest and other income	6,199	6,375
Gain (loss) on investment	(14,007)	-
	983,829	1,232,086
Expenditures		
Wages and benefits	575,398	566,031
Subcontract	269,179	361,054
Endowment (Note 9)	27,840	-
Travel	26,696	37,463
Professional fees	23,376	18,161
Workshop	17,501	25,828
Supplies	16,928	43,278
Insurance	6,712	6,907
Internet and web domain	5,965	4,256
Amortization	3,920	3,363
Training	3,641	1,178
Telephone and utilities	2,983	4,035
Software	2,744	2,382
Interest and bank charges	128	50
Advertising and promotion	57	511
	983,068	1,074,497
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ 761	\$ 157,589

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the Year Ended March 31, 2020

	Invested in equipment	Internally restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2020	Total 2019
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 9,830	\$ 140,000	\$ 355,748	\$ 505,578	\$ 347,989
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	(7,305)	-	8,066	761	157,589
Purchase of equipment	5,277	-	(5,277)	-	-
Interfund transfer	-	240,000	(240,000)	-	-
Balance, end of year	\$ 7,802	\$ 380,000	\$ 118,537	\$ 506,339	\$ 505,578



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