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Poachers, dumpers targeted

David Wylie - Nov 28, 2016 / 10:31 am



Photo: Contributed

Those wanting to help stamp out poachers and polluters have a new weapon.

The BC Wildlife Federation released an [iPhone app](#) that lets users take geo-referenced, time-stamped pictures or videos to report illegal activity in the backcountry.

"By using the app to text your observations, you are helping – in a big way– our thinly stretched enforcement people to avoid wasting valuable follow-up response time, by pinpointing the specific geo-location, time, date, and capturing an image of your observed infractions," said Rick Simpson, from the BCWF's Okanagan region.

"This is an exciting time for conservation."

Reports can be submitted in confidentiality and are forwarded automatically to the appropriate enforcement agency. The app works both within cell service and out of service, as it uses the phone's GPS.

A second component of the project is a BCWF "[mapping website](#)" that will show illegal environmental activity submitted by users, which the organization hopes will increase awareness of illegal activity.

The app was created at UBCO.

"We look forward to seeing how an app developed in our lab is able to help the efforts of the 50,000 BCWF members, interested members of the public, and the enforcement agencies they

assist,” said Jon Corbett, director of the university's Spatial Information for Community Engagement lab.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board’s [grant program](#) helped fund the app.

“We have seen an increasing number of issues in our backcountry, but also in the valley bottom, from ATVs and dirt-bikes being driven on dams and through wetlands, to dumping of household garbage in and near creeks, damage to riparian and fish habitat, and more” said Corinne Jackson, OBWB’s communications director.

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