



**The Recreation & Parks Association
of the Yukon**

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT



www.rpay.ca



About RPAY

As a not-for-profit, we are honoured to serve the Yukon from the traditional territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

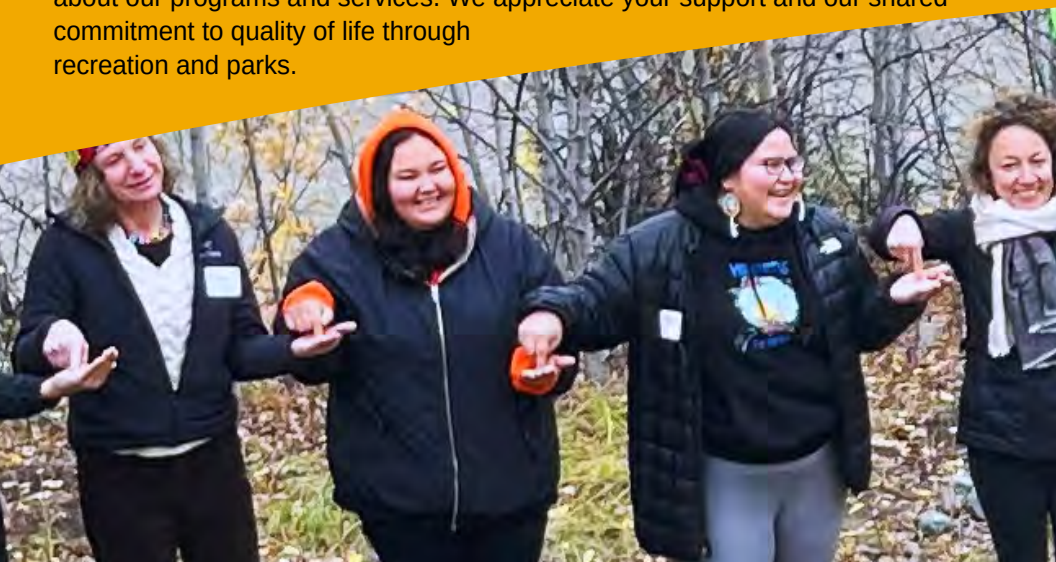
We support Yukon communities to engage their citizens in active, healthy lifestyles through recreation and parks.

Recreation and parks enhance mental, physical and social well-being, build strong families and communities, enable connections with nature, and contribute economically.

Our strategic priorities are to:

1. Promote the benefits of active living, recreation and parks.
2. Foster active, accessible, inclusive, and culturally-relevant recreation.
3. Strengthen recreation capacity and leadership, prioritizing our support of rural and First Nations communities.
4. Operate effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

Our Annual Report highlights some of the activities and projects that have kept us busy. Our website offers more information about our programs and services. We appreciate your support and our shared commitment to quality of life through recreation and parks.



Message from the Executive Director

It has been another busy year for RPAY staff, contractors and Board of Directors. We've enjoyed sharing our programs with communities across the Yukon from Beaver Creek to Old Crow, Ross River to Watson Lake, and Carmacks to Mayo. Our Active Living Coordinator, Peter Jacob, has built trusting relationships that make it easier to provide support when communities ask. Rebecca Koser, our Special Projects Coordinator and a strong advocate for the benefits of recreation, proudly represented RPAY as *Miss Active for Life* during Rendezvous 2025.

Behind the scenes, our Board of Directors has been busy. In January, they took part in a governance workshop which led to major policy revisions, proposed changes to RPAY Bylaws, and an updated Governance Manual.

In the office, we are enhancing our administrative processes and risk management practices. Our new online platform, Activity Messenger, lets us send newsletters, collect registrations and waivers, track memberships, etc. Sport Law has reviewed our key documents and helped us adapt them for digital administration.

The 4th Yukon Healthy Living Study is underway through a partnership with YSPOR (Yukon Strategy for Patient Oriented Research) at YukonU. Current knowledge of physical activity patterns and preferences helps us keep our programs relevant.

Nationally, with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, we are engaged in renewing the Framework for Recreation in Canada. This high-level document provides guidance to our sector and informs our own strategic and annual planning.

Above all, we recognize that our accomplishments are possible because of the outstanding and ongoing support from Government of Yukon Sport and Recreation Branch, Lotteries Yukon, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and many others.

Thank you!

Anne Morgan



Promoting an active lifestyle

Rebecca Koser, RPAY's Special Projects Coordinator reflects on Rendezvous



Representing RPAY as “Miss Active for Life” was a unique way to promote the importance of recreation and parks. From the moment I put on my sash, I knew *The Quest for the Crown* was bigger than me. It was a platform from which I could share RPAY's values about the importance of inclusive and accessible recreation and the importance of staying active for life, regardless of age or ability.

Being named Second Princess was an honour, but the real reward came from the connections I made with more than 1,500 people. The opportunity to promote an active lifestyle and inspire others to get involved in recreation in whatever way speaks to them was priceless. I'm grateful to RPAY and everyone who cheered me on during Rendezvous.

Highlights from the past year

17 RHEAL Leader programs
383 participant counts

25 WAFL activities
1,378 participant counts

12 APE activities
233 participant counts

18 Cycle Smart activities
628 participant counts

27 Leadership Training activities
228 participant counts

**26 Community Visits
to mentor and
support**



Supporting rural recreation

Thoughts from Peter Jacob, RPAY's Active Living Coordinator



RPAY plays a vital role strengthening recreation across the territory. As one of the few territorial organizations working outside of Whitehorse, we offer direct, in-person support that reflects the realities of rural living. Through programs, grants, training, and community outreach, we strive to strengthen local leadership, reduce burnout of leaders, and help rural programs thrive.

In-person travel is a powerful tool. It enables staff and contractors to provide hands-on support, to deliver tailored programs, and to build strong relationships that are firmly rooted in respect and trust. Our community visits lighten the load that overburdened, local leaders often experience. We offer fresh energy and ideas and we help plant seeds for future community initiatives. In communities where just one or two people manage many different recreation programs, this support is often transformational.

Every rural Yukon community is unique. On-the-ground engagement gives us the insight we need to respond to local challenges—whether they involve limited leadership, scarce resources, or both—and to build on each community's strengths. This equity-based, relationship-driven approach leads to long-term impact.

Travel can be demanding. However, the benefits far outweigh the challenges. Our presence can connect communities with resources like the RHEAL Program or Recreation North training. Through travel, we strive to empower others and encourage them to develop recreation that is resilient in their own communities.

Through our strong commitment to rural recreation, we play a small role in fostering local leadership, inspiring new possibilities, and contributing to healthier, more connected communities across the territory. We can follow through on this commitment because our funders and supporters believe in the work we do and in the transformational power of recreation.



Winter Active For Life (WAFL) Program & Equipment Library

The Winter Active for Life (WAFL) Program introduces and encourages Yukoners of all ages to be physically active outdoors during the winter.

The WAFL Library provides loans of kicksleds, snowshoes, and cross country ski gear to eligible groups. Groups can also request support to develop their own WAFL program.

WAFL

Communities:

- * Beaver Creek
- * Carcross
- * Dawson City
- * Faro
- * Haines Junction
- * Marsh Lake
- * Mayo
- * Mount Lorne
- * Ross River
- * Whitehorse

1,260 Yukoners got active outdoors last winter because **22** community groups, schools or First Nations borrowed: 298 sets of skis, 344 pairs of boots, 201 sets of poles, 48 pairs of snowshoes, and 46 kicksled loans.

rpay.ca/wafl

Thank
you

Lotteries Yukon recently helped us to update and refurbish the WAFL Library.

“With the addition of spending time outdoors, I found that my mental wellbeing, as well as the children's (in my class), really prospered.”

“The biggest impact (of WAFL) is for people to try something new. By holding events and making skis available to try with a little guidance, we can offer a barrier-free activity and spread the love of skiing.”

Rural Healthy Eating Active Living (RHEAL) Program

rpay.ca/rheal-leaders

The RHEAL Program positively impacts physical health and mental well-being through structured physical activity and recreation opportunities in rural and First Nation communities.

RHEAL Programs are accessible, inclusive, active, and offered regularly (at least once per week for two months). Programs are led by a qualified, local leader; and ideally, take place outdoors and over the fall/winter.

The continuity of this (RHEAL) program over the years has led to increased community connections and friendships with the participants. It is beautiful to see each year people getting more comfortable, friendly and supportive of each other.

383 participants
18 programs

15 RHEAL Leader contracts in Faro, Haines Junction, Mendenhall, Mount Lorne, Ross River and Whitehorse

Leaders offer programs such as:

Yoga for the Not Ready to Quit Men

Ross River Youth Program

Senior's Wellness Café

Golden Horn Ski Club

Haines Junction Youth Drop-in

Therapeutic Riding

Stretch'n'Strengthen

Tireless Training

Run Club

Archery

Cycle Smart Program

rpay.ca/cyclesmart

Cycle Smart teaches children bike safety skills and promotes cycling as a safe, active-mode of transportation that can be done for life.

Sessions include bike safety knowledge (in-class), bike skills in the playground), practicing on the road, and basic bike repair.

628 children from 15 schools

2025	Rural Schools	Rural Students	Whse Schools	Whse Students
Rural in-class & on-bike	7	179	N/A	N/A
In-class (30-mins)	N/A	N/A	4	213
Playground on-bike (80-mins)	1	24	8	449
Road Ride (60-mins)	4	58	4	175
Bike repair (60-mins)	3	39	4	209

Del Van Gorder School
J.V. Clark School
Johnson Elementary
Kluane Lake School
Nelna Bessie John School
Robert Service School
Ross River School
École Whitehorse Elementary
Elijah Smith Elementary
Golden Horn Elementary
Hidden Valley Elementary
Holy Family Elementary
Homeschool Association
Jack Hulland Elementary
Takhini Elementary



Active Play Experience (APE) Program

Yukon children spend over half their day in school.

This makes school an important place to develop lifelong habits of physical activity. Being active leads to academic, social and emotional benefits.

rpay.ca/aape

The APE program focuses on physical activity and socialization during recess.

- APE Classroom introduces recess and classroom games that build community.
- APE Leadership trains intermediate students to be APE leaders during recess.
- APE Recess gets the whole school involved!

A positive recess experience helps students refresh physically, emotionally and mentally, and contributes to successful learning.



233 students from schools in Beaver Creek, Dawson City, Haines Junction, Pelly Crossing, Teslin and Whitehorse (5), took part in 3 APE Classroom programs and 6 APE Leadership programs



I just love this.

It's so fun. When I was in kindergarten and grade 1, I would see the APE leaders and think, "I hope one day I can be one of them" and now here I am!



Swim to Survive Summer Camps

rpay.ca/aquatics

Children, in communities without a pool, learn water safety skills around rivers and lakes during a swim camp.

In 2024, camps were held in:
Old Crow for 14 children
Teslin for 25 children
Ross River for 4 children

ACTIVE & SAFE OUTDOOR

Recreation is our priority.

Outdoor recreation can be low-cost, accessible and sustainable. It is also inclusive because people can participate in ways and at times that suit their interests and schedules. Supporting people to be active and safe outdoors is good for our communities because it promotes health, social well-being, and environmental stewardship.





rpay.ca/workshops

Active Play Leadership Workshop

The Active Play Leadership workshop provides a great opportunity to play and grow as a recreation leader. Participants build their confidence while focusing on topics such as group dynamics, physical literacy, inclusion, and active games.

2024 Highlights

58 participants from Dawson City, Champagne, Haines Junction, Pelly Crossing, Takhini River Subdivision, Watson Lake and Whitehorse
5 workshops in Haines Junction, Teslin, Pelly Crossing, Whitehorse and at YukonU.



The amount of games played with the same simple ball bag was amazing!



The workshop was awesome! Super engaging and informative. I liked that the games were short and fun.



Spring Aquatics Workshop (SAW)

This workshop supports new and returning staff and managers of rural Yukon pools. The training builds skills and confidence for the upcoming swim season through classroom instruction, in-pool practice and connections with other aquatic leaders.

The Yukon Swimming Pool Manual (1st ed) incorporates Yukon Environmental Health Public Health Act requirements. It offers guidance to ensure safe pool experiences and environments for staff and patrons.



SAW showed me what tools I need to manage a pool and the confidence to use them.



2024 Highlights

15 pool staff from Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Mayo, Pelly Crossing and Whitehorse participated and were awarded BCRPA Pool Operator Level 1 certification.

rpay.ca/aquatics



Recreation North Training Program

The Recreation North Training Program strengthens capacity for recreation in Northern, rural, and remote communities. Meaningful learning is facilitated online and through video calls.

Participation fosters essential knowledge and skills for working and volunteering in community recreation and can lead to Certificates in Northern Recreation Leadership and Northern Recreation Management. The Program is delivered in collaboration with the NWT and Nunavut recreation and parks associations.



To date, 36 Yukon leaders have earned certificates:

- * 33 - Certificate in Northern Recreation Leadership
- * 12 - Certificate in Northern Recreation Management

This year, 17 leaders from Dawson City, Mendenhall, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Teslin, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse participated.

The training was an incredible experience. Connecting and sharing ideas with others across the North has been truly inspiring.

Congratulations!

Certificate in Northern Recreation Leadership: Melanie, Meesha, Robyn, Chanel and Myla.

Certificate in Northern Recreation Management: Melanie, Meesha and Raquel.

Annual Recreation Gathering

The Recreation Gathering brings together leaders from across the territory to network, develop professionally, and celebrate achievements. Every year, leaders tell us that this event helps them feel motivated, inspired, and supported.

ROAR: Reimagining Outdoor Active Recreation was held around Whitehorse in September. 38 individuals representing 13 Yukon communities made connections, shared knowledge, and found ways to revitalize recreation.

The **2024 RPAY Recognition Award** was presented to Grant Dunham (Whitehorse) and to Cain Miller and Will Quarton (Watson Lake) while the **2024 CPRA Partnership Award** was presented to the Recreation North Training Program.

rpay.ca/conferences

What did leaders appreciate about this year's Gathering?

- Time to network
- Moving & being outdoors
- Variety of locations and presenters
- Diverse and new content
- Food & swag



Promoting an Active Lifestyle

We promote active, healthy lifestyles through activities like social media, attending special events, supporting like-minded organizations, a website, and swag (aka promotional items).

Swag - frisbees, bike bells, bouncy balls, and toques - encourages people to get up and play. RPAY donates swag for events such as:

- KFN Muskrat Camp
- AYC Conference
- BYTE Leaders in Training Camp
- Moosehide Gathering
- Shāna Nātsāt Spring Ski Celebration
- 12 Days of Christmas Fireweed Market
- Family Literacy Day
- Whitehorse Nordic Spring Festival

Equipment Grants

Our larger pieces of equipment promote outdoor, unstructured recreation. These are available through a granting process to rural communities.

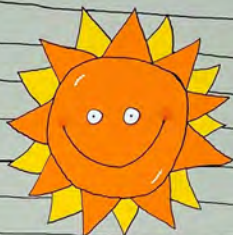
Toy Sheds, built locally, are durable and stocked with balls, hoops, etc. Find RPAY Toy Sheds in Mount Lorne and Faro.

Bike Repair Stations, in locations such as Carcross, Carmacks, Faro and Kwanlin Dun, support active transportation where there are no repair shops.

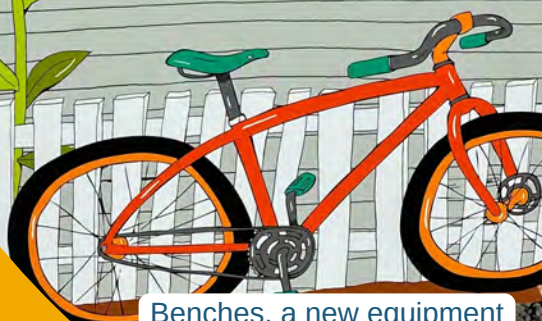
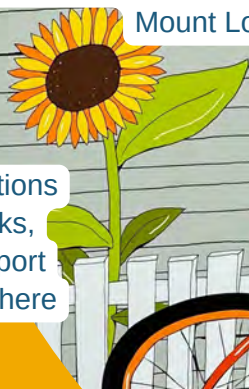
rpay.ca/walk

Getting active outdoors promotes physical and mental well-being. Take time to walk to work, bike to school, or use your local trails. Or, check out our Nordic Walking Leaders training and Nordic Walking Participant Guide.

Benches, a new equipment addition, can be found in Carmacks and outside the RPAY office.



GO OUTSIDE + PLAY!



Thank you Mähsi' cho Shǎw níthän
Gunałchîsh Sógá sénlá' Merci

To our Board of Directors, funders, and partners; and to the recreation leaders, volunteers, communities, schools, non-profit organizations, First Nations, and governments, thank you for sharing our passion and helping us make the Yukon a better place to live through recreation and parks.



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada



Government of Yukon Sport and Recreation Branch
Public Health Agency of Canada
Lotteries Yukon

Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club

YSPOR Unit, Yukon Research Centre at YukonU

City of Whitehorse - Canada Games Centre

Local Authorities for Recreation

ElderActive Recreation Association

Association of Yukon Communities

Cycling Association Yukon

Sean Healy

Lifesaving Society

BC Coastal Health

Rural Yukon communities

Yukon First Nations Education Directorate

Yukon Schools and the Physical Literacy Education Coordinator

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association

NWT Recreation and Parks Association

Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut

ParticipACTION

Canadian Trails Federation

Canadian Playground Safety Institute

Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability

Coast Mountain Sports
Kicksled Revolution
Cadence Cycle
Icycle Sport
Grant Dunham
Sport Yukon