

The Kingfisher



Issue 18 Spring 2009, The Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia

In this Issue:

Biodiversity in BC

Darkwoods - Thinking Big

Defending Conservation Covenants

Spreading the news about conserving BC's natural and cultural diversity ...

The Kingfisher - Volume 18, Spring 2009

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We are dedicated to the stewardship and conservation of BC's natural and cultural heritage. We provide education, research, communication and financial services which support land trusts, conservancies and others.

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Message from the Editor - Sheila Harrington

Reviewing the conservation projects profiled in this issue, we can all be proud of these recent successes. People are shifting their values about the importance of protecting nature. As the impacts of climate change and the economic downshift occur simultaneously, we may be heading toward an Ecosystem Millennium—in which global efforts to conserve nature and biodiversity are equal to the efforts we took to turn the tide during the Second World War. There is no question that conservation of nature will take front stage. It's only a question of how soon we will integrate our economic and social infrastructure with their true source-natural ecosystems.

In addition to ordinary and extraordinary people like Moralea Milne, a landowner described in this edition who protected her own property in Metchosin, it will take people in many other professions working together to increase these natural legacies, so we leave current and future generations the healthy communities that will sustain us all. As demonstrated by the "Valhalla Mile" campaign, the provincial government is a key partner in protecting these areas for people and nature. Municipalities also have significant opportunities to protect natural areas, through green zoning and bylaws, in addition to working with land trusts, they can introduce a conservation tax, which has been hugely successful in the US in helping raise funds to protect and manage parks and green corridors and trails. In BC the Islands Trust, Capital Regional District, and now the East Kootenay Regional District have added a conservation tax to their tool kits. Hans Peter Meyer explains in this issue that as development slows down, there are opportunities to work with local municipalities to link conservation goals with local knowledge into larger Biodiversity, Regional or Community Plans. We encourage readers to join us at the BC Land Summit in May, to meet with other land use professionals including realtors, planners, agrologists, landscape architects, and other professional advisors and government agencies, who will present innovative ideas, network together and share case studies on "Building a Better Future—Adapting to Change."

The two articles in this issue on covenant defence provide a clear context for maintaining one of our best tools—conservation covenants. We've also included a couple of articles on conservation challenges—priority areas we need to protect in BC. As a special insert within this issue, we are pleased to include a summary of Biodiversity BC's *Taking Nature's Pulse*—detailing the scientific status of BC's globally significant special places listing the species and ecosystems we need to conserve. Our member update section contains news about our on-line collection of Best Practices and Template documents, a compilation of hundreds of resources, to meet the Canadian Land Trust Standards & Practices, in addition to other upcoming workshops and important resources—to help sustain us as we work within our communities to steward, restore, manage and protect BC's tremendous diversity.

The LTABC invites you to join our membership, our council, your local land trust and our wider community in protecting places—for People, for Wildlife—for the Future.

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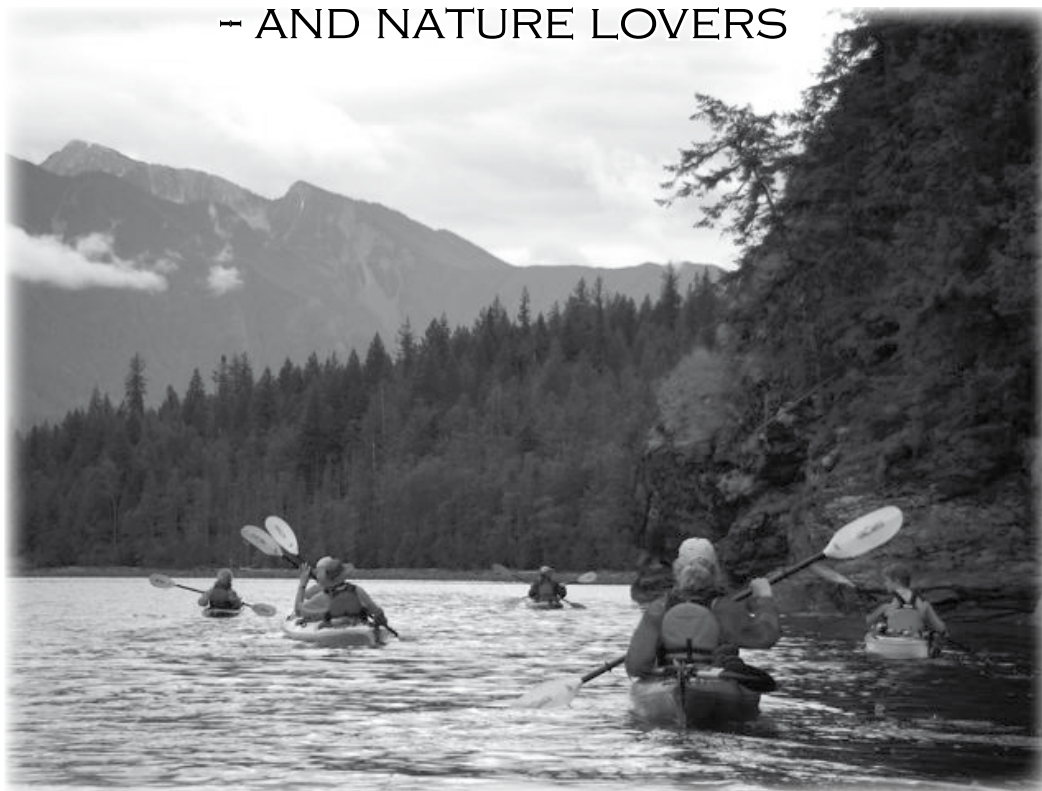
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SAVING THE WEST KOOTENAY'S "VALHALLA MILE" FOR NATURE - AND NATURE LOVERS



- by Lorna Visser

The campaign for the Valhalla Mile is being spearheaded by Lorna Visser and her husband, biologist Wayne McCrory, internationally respected expert on bear conservation. He was instrumental in the creation of Valhalla Provincial Park, along with his sister, Colleen McCrory, who passed away in the summer of 2007. With help from TLC and BC Parks, The Valhalla Foundation is working to honour her memory by securing this piece of property for perpetuity.

Colleen was one of a team of people instrumental in having Valhalla Provincial Park created more than 25 years ago, and one of her dreams was to see this piece of private land, an in-holding within the park boundaries, added to it.

Slocan Lake and Valhalla Provincial Park are jewels of the West Kootenays. But this key part of the Slocan Lake shoreline, a section we dubbed the "Valhalla Mile," comprised of a 155-acre parcel of private land within Valhalla Park, is under threat. Visitors and locals alike are being asked to help purchase the area, and secure it for conservation.

Slocan Lake is a popular canoeing and kayaking destination because of its untouched, pristine shoreline along one side, one of the last lakes in southern BC that has 36 kilometres of uninterrupted, undeveloped water's edge. It is perfect for a

multi-day canoeing, camping and hiking trip, and every summer locals and visitors alike come to this very special place for that purpose.

The New Denver-based Valhalla Foundation, working in partnership with The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC), is spearheading a campaign to raise \$1.5 million to purchase this very ecologically significant piece of land, key to the wild Slocan Lake shoreline. Once secured, it will be turned over to BC Parks and managed as part of Valhalla Provincial Park. Our goal is to keep the Valhalla Mile wild, and make it publicly owned, so that everyone can enjoy it, forever.

"The Valhalla Mile," is a private in-holding within the provincial park. Locals fear that the current owner will sell it to a developer (for example, for a luxury hotel or to be subdivided into private lots bordered with "keep out" signs).

The property was nicknamed “The Valhalla Mile” because the 155-acre parcel includes slightly more than a mile of undeveloped shoreline along Slokan Lake. In addition to its recreational value for people, the Valhalla Mile is a key movement corridor for wildlife with important habitat for grizzly bear, black bear, cougar and other cats (bobcat, lynx etc.) river otter, wolverine, deer, elk, coyote, mink, marten, ermine, shore birds, migratory birds, and eagles.

As a biologist, Wayne explains that this site is the heart, important to the ecosystem continuity of all of the 50,000-hectare (122,600 acre) park. “Grizzly bears come down to the rocky bluffs to feed on glacier lily corms in the spring, wolverine and cougar hunt on the property, and other at-risk species such as the Great Blue Heron and Townsend’s Big-Eared Bat are likely present, given the types of habitat there.”

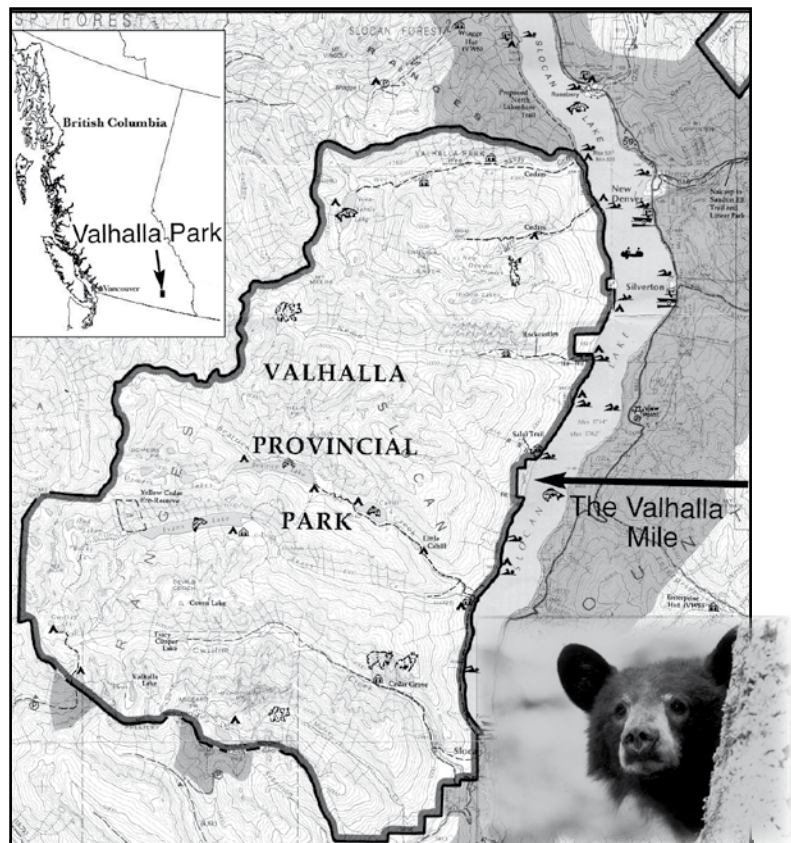
The Valhalla Mile is located on the west shore of Slokan Lake, directly across from Enterprise Creek, in the middle of Valhalla Park. It is a key stop-over point for kayakers and canoeists, and its sandy beaches and rocky outcrops provide secluded spots for picnickers, campers and swimmers. Many who currently enjoy it don’t realize they are on private land, as the current owner has not put up any signs or developed the property. With the property for sale, it is vital that it fall into the right hands.

With that in mind, The Land Conservancy negotiated a purchase agreement with the owner in the spring of 2008, with the acquisition to take place in early 2009 – all of it conditional on raising the \$1.5 million needed.

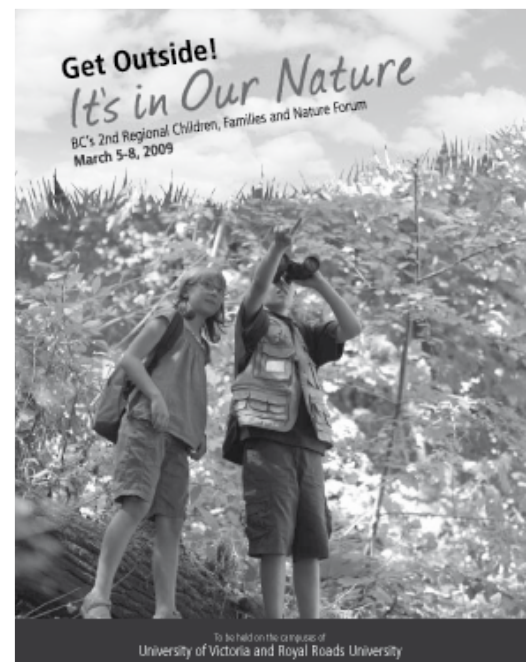
The Provincial Government, through BC Parks, has committed itself to this purchase and will be the largest contributor. TLC and the Valhalla Foundation are working to raise funds from institutions such as the Columbia Basin Trust and other funding programs. Nonetheless, the campaign needs matching support from public donations – from people who care about wilderness, parks and about Slokan Lake. Thus far we have raised \$180,000 toward our goal of raising \$250,000 from individuals. The remainder of the cost of the acquisition is expected to be funded by institutional funders and the BC government, who have confirmed support of \$700,000 from the BC Parks Land Acquisition budget. The deadline for donations has been extended to the end of February.

Please, if you can give, do so right away, as the deadline for finalizing the deal is fast approaching and we cannot let this vital piece of Slokan Lake shoreline slip through our fingers. I know Colleen would be very pleased to see her long-time dream of protecting the Valhalla Mile come to fruition.

Lorna Visser is an organizational effectiveness consultant, Slokan Valley resident, jazz clarinetist, chicken farmer, and volunteer land acquisition fundraiser for the Valhalla Mile PollyBear photo by Wayne McCrory



If you can support the Valhalla Mile acquisition, please send a donation payable to the Valhalla Foundation, Box 63, Silverton, B.C. V0G 2B0 or call 250-358-2722, or the Valhalla Foundation office at 250-358-2796. Complete information is posted at www.vws.org, or on The Land Conservancy’s web-site at www.conservancy.bc.ca (online donations can be made here, as well). All donations are tax deductible.



See Details on Page 49

THINKING BIG -THE STORY OF DARKWOODS

How the largest, single private conservation project in Canada came to be

Many years ago, as the cold war stalked Europe, a German duke looked westward for a haven for his family. He found it in British Columbia – in an immense tract of land he called Darkwoods. The Duke fell in love with Darkwoods and its towering mountains, cool water, trees of all shapes and sizes and animals that roamed freely through the abundant land...

The years passed, and as the Duke grew older, the time came to entrust the land to new owners. He searched for someone who would keep Darkwoods in one piece, and protect its ecological treasures. They must cherish the land as he had. The Duke chose the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) as the next in line to steward Darkwoods into the future.

Our conservation tale may make a good bedtime story – but it is fact rather than fiction. This summer the Nature Conservancy of Canada completed the biggest private land conservation project in Canadian history. After three years of negotiations it acquired Darkwoods: the once private refuge of His Royal Highness Duke Carl Herzog von Wurttemberg of Germany is now a haven for dozens of species at risk. Rarely does private property of this size and ecological richness become available for conservation.

Darkwoods is situated between the towns of Nelson, Salmo and Creston in the West Kootenay region of British Columbia. It spans an area equivalent to the size of the island of Montreal – 550 square kilometres of majestic icy mountain peaks, alpine tundra, rare old-growth forests, biologically rich valley bottoms and lovely lakefront lands. Here wildlife, including one of the last herds of Mountain Caribou in the world, finds refuge in an area that has been heavily impacted by industrial forestry and human settlement.

When the Duke bought the property in 1967, he recognized both the economic potential and the ecological importance of the land. Originally a crown grant in 1897, the property that would become Darkwoods had seen several enterprising owners try to make a profit from its bounty. First came the hunters and trappers, then the mineral prospectors, then the foresters. The Duke chose to establish a small-scale sustainable forestry company modeled after progressive forestry practices in Europe, naming it Pluto Darkwoods in honour of the Black Forest back in his home country.

“Despite the timber harvest, this ecosystem still maintains a lot of important natural values – and there aren’t a lot of places like that in these parts,” says Dave Hillary, NCC program manager for the Rocky Mountains Area. “It encompasses everything that comes to mind when you think about the Rocky

Mountains and Canada – fresh air, snow caps, sparkling water, Grizzly Bears, old-growth trees ... the works.”

NCC’s founders had big dreams for protecting nature, but one wonders if they ever imagined anything like Darkwoods. “The securing of Darkwoods wouldn’t have been possible five years ago,” says Hillary without hesitation. “NCC just didn’t have the capacity and the relationships in place to do it. But now, we’ve reached the point where we can work simultaneously at all levels – nationally, provincially and locally – and that enables us to be proactive with spectacular opportunities like these. Who knows what we could do in another 10, 15 or 20 years?”

Because of its sheer scale, “the vastness of Darkwoods means that it hosts a diverse cross-section of ecosystems and supports habitat for an estimated 29 provincially rare species,” explains Hillary. “It supports an abundance and diversity of wildlife that smaller, fragmented pieces of land simply could not.” These habitats shelter a wide range of wildlife, including bears, wolves, cougar, lynx and moose.

Darkwoods contains some of the most diverse forests in British Columbia, including priceless old-growth stands of vanishing interior temperate rainforest. Because they receive most of their moisture from snow, these “snow forests” are biologically unique, yet we know very little about them. Conserving Darkwoods provides an unprecedented opportunity to expand our knowledge about one of the world’s rarest ecosystems. The area also plays a critical role in preserving freshwater systems throughout the South Selkirk Mountains, influencing 17 separate watersheds, numerous streams and over 50 lakes. The forests of Darkwoods act as natural water filters and purifiers, ensuring fresh water for countless species of plants and animals, including humans.



above: The majestic peaks of Darkwoods are reflected in the still waters of Kootenay Lake. Photo by M.A. Beaucher.

overleaf: moss covered trees important for Mountain Caribou
Photo: Tim Ennis

Darkwoods will directly connect an existing network of parks and wildlife management areas. This creates a contiguous protected area of more than 250,000 acres (101,171 hectares) – enough for wide-ranging animals like Mountain Caribou and Grizzly Bear to roam freely. “Even if you were to walk over this land all day, every day for a year, there will still be parts of Darkwoods that you would not have reached,” muses Pat Field, NCC’s Darkwoods program manager.

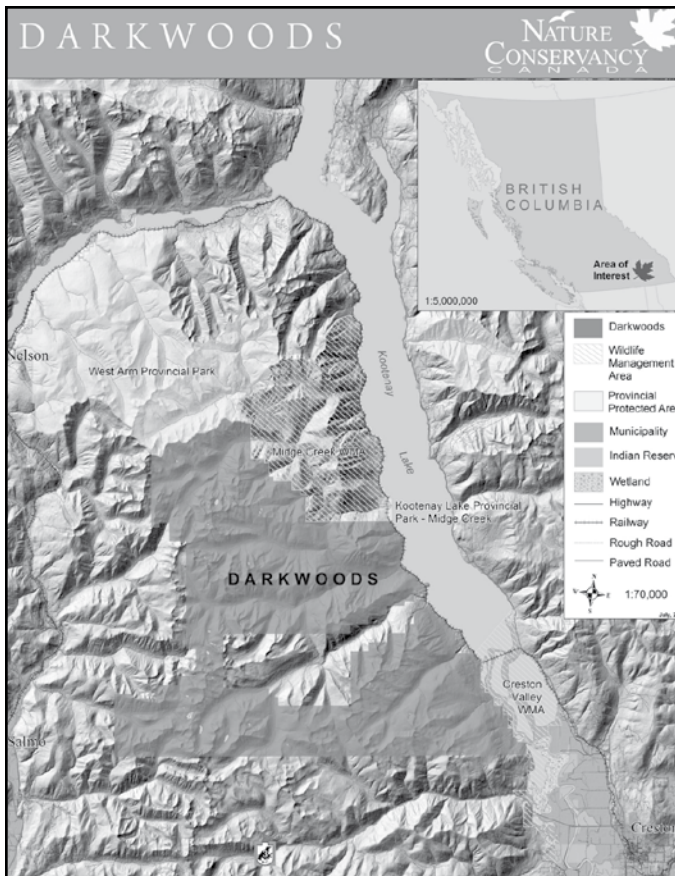
Protected landscapes of great scale and topographical diversity also allow plants and animals to adapt to global climate change, and the immensity of Darkwoods serves this purpose well. If temperatures change, wildlife will have the chance to migrate to different latitudes or elevations and continue to thrive. Also, the Darkwoods forests have been managed in a sustainable way for decades, and maintain an immense carbon store in their soil and trees. Conservative estimates suggest that over two million tonnes of carbon are stored in Darkwoods. If released, this would be equal to the CO₂ emissions of almost 500,000 Canadians.

Already, the conservation of Darkwoods has many researchers excited about the opportunities it offers. NCC has been approached by teams of scientists who are interested in

projects such as conducting silviculture trials at low and high elevations, understanding the impact of protecting under-represented ecosystems or examining old-growth habitat and the role it plays in carbon sequestration.

Quick facts about Darkwoods:

- * The project cost is more than \$125-million, which includes not only the purchase of the land but the endowment funds needed to ensure Darkwoods will be cared for in generations to come.
- * The property spans 55,000 hectares (136,000 acres) in the South Selkirk Region (situated between the towns of Nelson, Salmo and Creston in the West Kootenay).
- * The area supports habitat for an estimated 29 provincially at-risk species including nine nationally threatened species.
- * The area provides crucial winter habitat for the only remaining Mountain Caribou herd (46 caribou) in the South Selkirks.
- * It supports 17 watersheds and contains more than 50 lakes and numerous streams.
- * Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) provided \$500,000 support for the purchase and long term stewardship



Darkwoods: Calculation of Carbon Stored in Standing Timber

Forests are extremely complex ecosystems – their characteristics vary enormously over both space and time, making it difficult to estimate the amounts of biomass stored in any given area, and so also to determine the “carbon credits” that are associated with forest productivity. In this sense, calculating the amount of carbon stored in forests of Darkwoods is both a science and an art. To assist in this demanding task, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) asked Bill Freedman, a Professor at Dalhousie University (and also a NCC Director) to help estimate carbon storage in the Darkwoods’ forests, and how much is additionally pulled out of the atmosphere each year.

Working with forestry data for stand volume and productivity, and using conversion factors that allow those data to be expressed as biomass and organic-carbon, he calculated that, as a rough estimate, the Darkwoods landscape sequesters about 30,000 tonnes of carbon each year. For context, this is sufficient to offset the annual CO₂ emissions of 6,700 Canadians. If the existing carbon stored is considered, it is about 2 million tonnes of carbon, equivalent to the annual CO₂ emissions of 1.5% of the Canadian population.

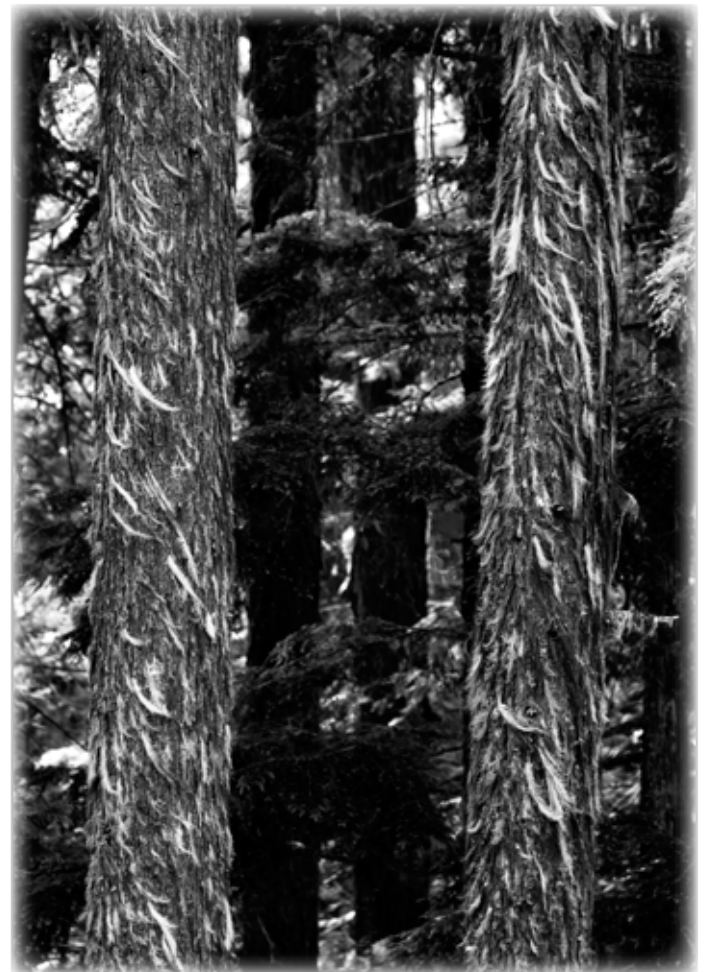
As NCC and its partners assemble additional information about the ecosystems of Darkwoods—such as carbon storage in soil, wetlands and alpine tundra—they will be able to improve on these estimates. They will account for effects of insect damage, fire suppression, climate change and other factors that contribute to the dynamics and complexity of any forested landscape.

As with all NCC properties, securing the land is only the first part of the challenge. The next step is to develop a comprehensive management plan to care for the land on an ongoing basis, with the help of local partners. These stewardship plans are varied and dynamic, evolving with the changing needs of the property.

The Ending...

Every good story needs a “happily ever after,” but the ending for the Darkwoods story is still being written. NCC has acquired the property with support of its partnership with the Government of Canada under the Natural Areas Conservation Program. It has also received a generous Ecogift donation from the Pluto Darkwoods Corporation. However, NCC is still working to ensure this magnificent land has the support needed to secure it for the future.

Become a Part of the Story - *Darkwoods needs the support of everyone who cares about conserving our natural spaces. If you are interested in supporting NCC and Darkwoods, please call the BC Region of NCC to find out how you can help: 1-800-404-8428. Or visit www.natureconservancy.ca/darkwoods.*



One hundred years ago, a young couple arrived in Canada from Czechoslovakia with little more than a deep work ethic and the dream of a comfortable future. They settled in the Thompson-Nicola Valley, near what is today the sprawling city of Kamloops. Like many other new world immigrants, George and Teresa Frolek acquired a Crown grant for a quarter section (160 acres) of grassland and the obligation to turn the property into productive farmland.

At first the Froleks grew grain crops, but eventually switched to raising cattle on the arid rolling hills. One of George and Teresa's sons, Alex, dedicated his life to the dream of securing vast tracts of land in the Kamloops area for ranching. After Alex passed away in 1965, his brothers kept the dream alive, and today this Canadian-owned ranch is one of the largest in the province, alongside the Douglas Lake and Gang ranches.

The Frolek Ranch is unique not just for its size, but also for the health of the native grassland ecosystems that define the natural landscape of the Thompson-Nicola Valley. Cattle ranching and ecological conservation do not always—or even often—go hand in hand. But on the Frolek lands, a new breed of rancher has emerged in the past few decades, and with them an industry that can sustain both economics and biodiversity.

Thanks to developing ranching practices that minimize disturbances on the grasslands, the Frolek lands are teeming with native biodiversity: Burrowing Owl, Sharp-tailed Grouse, American Badger and the Giant Spadefoot Toad – all species at risk that need grassland habitat to survive.

The latest step the Frolek family has taken towards deepening their conservation ethic is a newly-minted partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). This partnership aims to conserve the natural ecological values on the land while also maintaining the fourth-generation working ranch.



FROLEK RANCH

RANCHERS AND CONSERVATIONISTS JOIN FORCES TO PROTECT BC'S MOST THREATENED ECOSYSTEM

NATIVE GRASSLANDS

Photo: Tim Ennis

On the Frolek lands, a new breed of rancher has emerged in the past few decades, and with them an industry that can sustain both economics and biodiversity.

NCC embraced the partnership because the Frolek Ranch has some of the most intact native grassland in the Thompson-Nicola Valley, purchasing 2,342 acres of the Froleks' private lands in the Lac du Bois Protected Area, northwest of Kamloops. In addition, NCC now holds conservation covenants on another 5,486 acres south of the city. Both areas will remain active cattle ranching areas, with the protection of habitat and natural systems as the primary management principle.

This conservation partnership comes at a time when grasslands are under escalating threats from development. Suburban sprawl, ranchettes and the removal of farmland from the Agricultural Land Reserve threaten the demise of both native biodiversity and our cultural heritage. The pressure on ranches to sell off land to developers is intense. That the Froleks chose to find another way to keep their ranch thriving—through a conservation partnership—is a testament to the depth of their land ethic.

Like all conservation efforts, the Frolek Ranch project was realized with the support of key funding partners: the Government of Canada through the Natural Areas Conservation Program provided acquisition and project management costs. The Tula Foundation displayed their commitment to grassland conservation by providing the funding for the long-term stewardship and management of the lands.

GABRIOLA COMMUNITY CELEBRATES ELDER CEDAR NATURE RESERVE

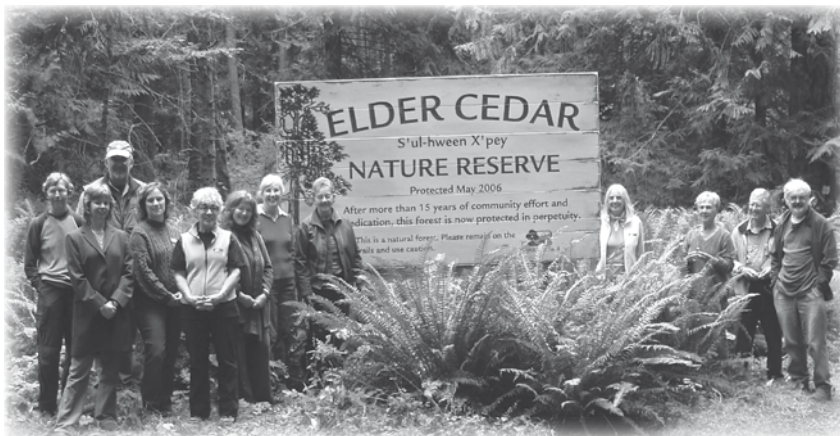
Gabriola Island residents gathered recently to celebrate the official naming of the Islands Trust Fund's Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve, formally known as the UREP lands.

Snuneymuxw linguist and elder Dr. Ellen White honoured the nature reserve with a Hul'qumi'num name – S'ul-hween X'pey or Elder Cedar. Dr. White translates the word 'elder' to mean more than old; it has connotations of unseen ancestors and guardians. A stroll along the nature reserve's trails can reveal the true meaning of the name – visitors may feel the presence of ancient spirits in the veteran cedar giants that watch over this quiet place.

"This is a very special day, because this is a very special place" said Gabriola Land & Trails Trust President Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley at the event. "I am delighted that we have the chance to gather to celebrate a place that individuals and groups from across the island worked so hard to preserve and protect."

The Islands Trust Fund Board received the Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve from the Province of British Columbia in 2006 as its first Free Crown Grant. Members of the Gabriola Land Conservancy and the Gabriola Land & Trails Trust led the campaign to protect this land. The 65-hectare (162 acre) forest contains the last remaining stand of old-growth trees on Gabriola Island. Stoney Creek and several other streams cross the property, bringing vital nutrients and biodiversity values to the forest. Wetlands scattered throughout the property provide habitat for amphibians and food sources for many bird species. The property protects several at-risk plant communities and animal species including the Band-tailed Pigeon and the Red-legged Frog.

"When we protect natural areas like forests and marshes, we not only get to enjoy the natural beauty but we also receive real and measurable benefits such as clean air and clean water" said Leigh Ann Milman, President of the Gabriola Land Conservancy.



The naming event was a celebration of the community's dedication and effort in protecting the forest. Island residents worked for more than 15 years to have the Elder Cedar property protected for its ecological values and popular walking trails. "The transfer of this property from

the Province to the Islands Trust Fund was a big win for our community," said Sheila Malcolmson, Gabriola Island Trustee and Islands Trust Fund Board Chair.

The Snuneymuxw First Nation was also instrumental in the efforts to protect the Elder Cedar property. By graciously excluding the land from their Treaty Settlement claim, the Snuneymuxw allowed the Islands Trust Fund to apply to the Crown for its transfer for conservation purposes.

The Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve offers a magical hiking experience. The trails are open to walkers, bird watchers, photographers, botanists, or anyone looking for a peaceful retreat in a beautiful place. The reserve is closed to bicycles, horses, and all-terrain vehicles. The Islands Trust Fund requests that visitors to the Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve tread lightly on the protected land.

To protect the fragile plant communities and preserve the unique character of the diverse forest, the Islands Trust Fund is working with the Gabriola Land & Trails Trust (GaLTT) to maintain the trail system in a way that protects the sensitive ecosystems in the nature reserve, while providing recreational opportunities. Those interested in learning more about the management or history of the Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve can view the management plan online at www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/pdf/itfmgmtplancedar.pdf.

GaLTT continues to work to remove invasive species such as Scotch broom, holly and ivy from the reserve. The exclusion of horses and bikes will prevent the further spread of invasive species. If you are interested in participating please contact GaLTT at info@galtt.ca.

SALT SPRING ISLAND CONSERVANCY RECEIVES A NEW ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

In the summer of 2008, the Salt Spring Island Conservancy signed papers accepting an anonymous gift of 18 acres of forest land in northern Salt Spring Island. Our fourth area owned in fee simple, this brings our holdings to 380 acres. At the moment we are calling it our North View Reserve; when we get better acquainted it will be named more suitably. North View Reserve is almost entirely covered with trees, and forest is its stable vegetation type. The forest is vigorously regrowing after perhaps three partial logging episodes since the late 19th century. All that activity mixed a lot of maples, cherries, alders and arbutus with the conifers that naturally would claim the site: Douglas-fir, Grand fir, Western Red cedar, Western Hemlock. It is a familiar forest to Gulf Islanders.

Several conservancy members have strolled on half-overgrown logging trails into the area's interior. Biologists are working on getting the ecological assessment done. Our Land Restoration and Management Committee will draft a management plan, and several committees will get together to draft a conservation covenant which, once completed, will be held and monitored by two other conservancies or land trusts.

Personally, I'm eager to learn what birds and lesser animals (everything else that's brownish) live there. This winter we will start a resident bird list and next spring we'll enjoy the sounds and sights of sex among feathered migrants. Join us, will you?

We can't say yet what human uses will best suit this land. We do know for sure that the Reserve will be fixing carbon, yielding oxygen, absorbing, filtering and slowing water on its way to sea and sky, quieting days and nights for neighbours, and offering wild things a place to live, for a long time to come.

Bob Weeden, President



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COVENANTED CAMAS HILL A VERY SPECIAL PLACE and Very Special People

It was early morning and pockets of mist shrouded the landscape the first time I saw Camas Hill. Rocky outcrops and Douglas-fir framed grassy meadows that held the promise of carpets of spring flowers.



Morelea (centre) with other volunteers

When I visit the properties of people who want to covenant their land I am humbled by their care for the life that exists around them. Similarly, I am in awe of the work that they willingly undertake to protect their land. My visits with Moralea Milne and John Webb, the owners of a large portion of Camas Hill in Metchosin, have had this effect on me. John and Moralea both felt strongly about protecting their land. They wanted to leave a legacy to their community and future generations while still being able to protect their children's inheritance. Sadly, John passed away in March of 2007. His legacy will live on in the diversity of life that thrives on Camas Hill.

"My husband, John Webb, and I worked together towards placing a covenant on a significant portion of our property, and I regret that he was not here to see it through. He really loved Camas Hill, and one of his enduring legacies will be its protection."

The Camas Hill covenant is 6.78 hectares (approximately 16.75 acres) and ranges in elevation from approximately 100 m to 260 m above sea level. The entire area is classified as "sensitive" under the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory and it contains the uncommon arbutus-shore pine-manzanita plant association interspersed with Douglas-fir/rock outcrop ecosystems. Most notable about the area is its list of rare species including the provincially blue-listed Branded Skipper (*Hesperia colorado oregonia*) and the red-listed Sharp-tailed snake (*Contia tenuis*).

She is now implementing a restoration plan for the property in the covenant, with an HSP grant through the Garry Oak Ecosystem Restoration Team (GOERT). While juggling numerous volunteer projects in her home community of Metchosin, Moralea takes the time to lend her considerable

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THE CREATION OF TOFINO'S "MONKS POINT PARK"

HOW ONE MAN'S DREAM WILL BECOME A LASTING LEGACY

Story and Photo by Carla Funk, TLC The Land Conservancy of BC

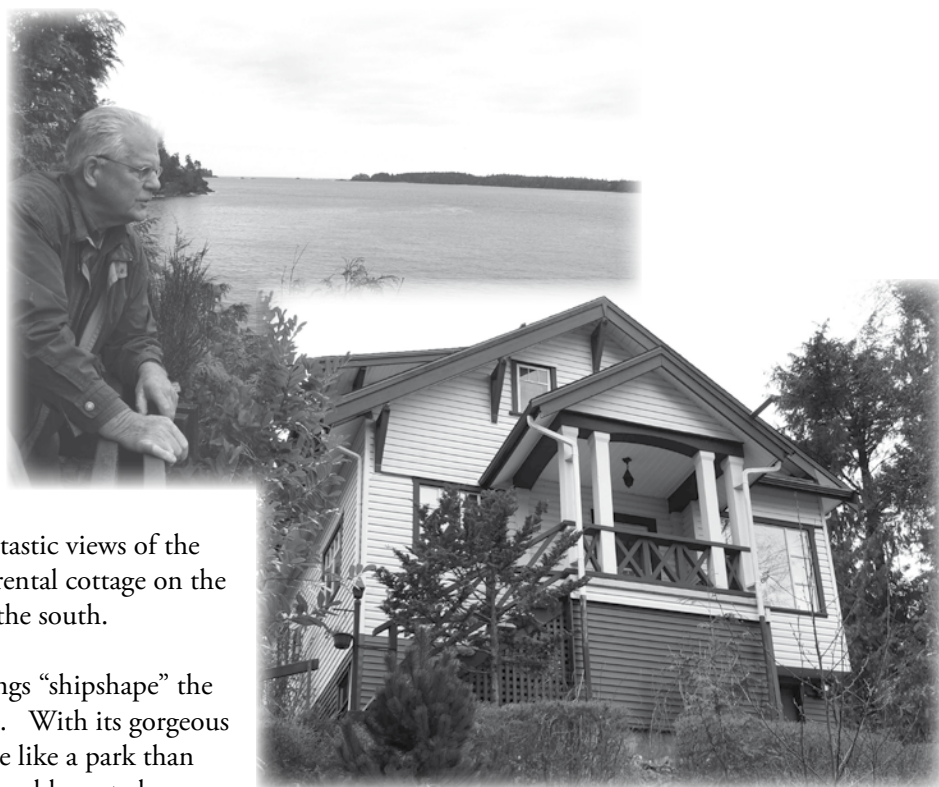
Harold Monks loved the ocean. Born in Tofino, Harold grew up around the water and gained a real affinity for sailing and all things nautical.

But no matter how much time Harold spent on the sea, his greatest passion was for the place he called home throughout his entire life – a beautiful 2.5 acre waterfront property near Tofino harbour.

Set high on a bluff, the property is often described as having waterfront on three sides. Harold's house offers fantastic views of the harbour and Clayoquot Sound, while a rental cottage on the property looks out over Duffin Cove to the south.

And thanks to Harold's fondness for things "shipshape" the property has been exquisitely manicured. With its gorgeous rhododendrons the site looks much more like a park than residential lot – which is exactly what Harold wanted.

To Harold, the property wasn't merely the place where he lived. It was a living connection to the memory of his mother, to his friends, his community, and to people everywhere. He loved the idea that he was maintaining a place for friends to gather, share a meal, tell stories, and have a laugh or two. That's why Harold chose to leave the property to The Land Conservancy in his Will with the dream that "Monks Point Park" would be created for future generations to enjoy.



Sadly, Harold passed away last summer. And while we are saddened to have lost a dear friend, we are honoured that Harold chose TLC to make his dream a reality. Transfer of the property is expected to happen early in 2009, and we look forward to the official creation of Monks Point Park shortly thereafter.

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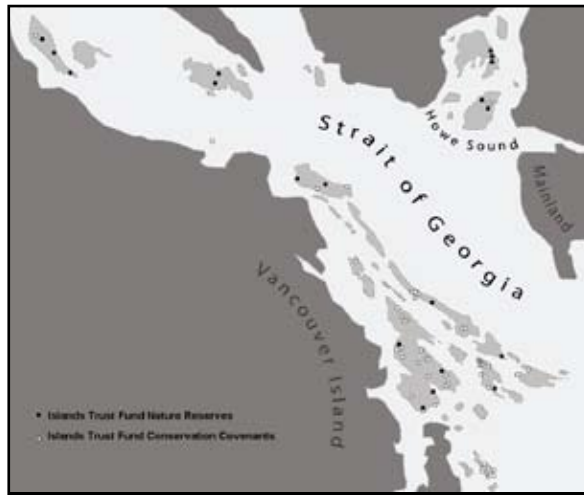
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In the next 24 hours, deforestation will release as much CO₂ into the atmosphere as 8 million people flying from London to New York. Stopping deforestation is the fastest and cheapest solution to climate change. Daniel Howden

15% OF ISLANDS TRUST AREA NOW PROTECTED

Public and non-profit conservation organizations now protect more than 15% - 12,000 hectares of the Islands Trust Area land base. The Islands Trust Area covers the islands between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island, including Howe Sound and as far north as Comox. This is a unique and special place comprised of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering approximately 5200 square kilometres of land and water.

“Reaching this milestone in the Islands Trust Area speaks to the time and effort island communities, conservancy groups and government partners have dedicated to the protection of natural spaces on the islands” said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Trust Fund Board. Over 25 conservation organizations work in the Islands Trust Area. Since its inception in 1990, the Islands Trust Fund alone has acquired 19 nature reserves and 56 conservation covenants adding an area of more than 975 hectares—more than double the size of Stanley Park—to the protected area network in the Islands Trust Area.



Why Protect the Islands Trust Area?

The Province of British Columbia has identified the ecosystems in the Islands Trust Area among the most biodiverse of all in B.C. in a new report released in June, 2008.

Taking Nature's Pulse: The Status of Biodiversity in BC, a collaborative effort of more than 50 science experts, reports on the state of B.C.'s natural environment and provides the basis for the Conservation Framework, a new plan for proactive solutions regarding species and ecosystems at risk and in decline in B.C.

Taking Nature's Pulse identifies the Coastal Douglas-fir (CDF) biogeoclimatic zone—the zone which encompasses most of the Islands Trust Area—as being the stronghold for many species at risk of extinction or extirpation. The Coastal Douglas-fir zone has the highest density of species of both global and provincial concern in all sixteen zones in B.C—more than one hundred species at risk are found in the region. *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of*

Nature in BC, released last January by the Land Trust Alliance of BC, identified the CDF zone as the highest conservation priority for climate change.

The Islands Trust Area supports some of Canada's last remaining Garry Oak ecosystems and the associated rare plants, mosses, butterflies, and reptiles. Its location along the Pacific Flyway makes the Gulf Islands an important wintering and migratory stopover area for many migratory birds. BirdLife International identifies ten Important Bird Areas within the Islands Trust Area, including Baynes Sound, Active Pass, and Sidney Channel.

The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone comprises less than one percent of B.C.'s land base and is limited to a part of south-eastern Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands south of Cortes Island and a narrow strip of the adjacent mainland. The Province of British Columbia has identified the ecosystems in the Islands Trust Area among those of greatest conservation concern in the entire province. Ninety-seven percent of the diverse and rich ecosystems that make up the Coastal

Douglas-fir zone are of provincial conservation concern, suffering high rates of conversion due to urban and rural development. Those of us who live, work, and play in the Gulf Islands have an obligation to ourselves, our future, and our global community to protect the remaining natural places this diversity of life depends on to survive.

Partnerships Key to Protecting Islands Trust Area

Conservation and stewardship of the Islands Trust Area is vital to the survival of the Coastal Douglas-fir zone. However, establishing new protected areas is difficult and expensive: while ninety-three percent of B.C.'s land base is publicly-owned Crown land, only seven percent of the Coastal Douglas-fir zone is provincial Crown land. This means that the protection of this important ecosystem relies significantly on the stewardship of private land.

The Islands Trust Fund works with communities and private landowners to protect natural areas in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound islands. We offer tax incentive programs
- continued on page 13

WORLD FAMOUS BC BINNING HOUSE

A CULTURAL ICON

story and photo by Tamsin Baker, The Land Conservancy of BC

Everyone who is passionate about art, architecture and B.C.'s modernist heritage will be pleased to know that the long-term protection of the world-renowned Bertram Charles (B.C.) Binning Residence in West Vancouver is being secured.

This historic residence was designed by B. C. Binning, with the help of his friend and architect Ned Pratt in 1941. While this pioneering bungalow is considered to be one of the first modern homes on the West Coast, categorizing its unique style is a challenge. Over the years, many artists and architects made the pilgrimage to see and experience the house and visit with the Binnings. The house and its designer directly influenced other (now) famous Canadian architects, like Arthur Erickson and Ron Thom. B.C. Binning passed away in 1976; his widow Jessie continued to live in the house until 2007 at the age of 101.

After a year of discussions, an arrangement has now been reached between the executors of the B.C. Binning Estate and TLC The Land Conservancy so that TLC is now the owner of the site. However, to successfully manage the continuing maintenance of the 1,540 sq. ft. bungalow, TLC has determined that an endowment fund of \$300,000 will be required.

Though a National Historic Site and Municipal Heritage Site, concerns about the long-term conservation of the house arose in 2007 when Jessie Binning, the widow of B.C. Binning, passed away with no direct heirs. Her Will, however, outlined her desire for the house and furnishings to be preserved for historical purposes through a foundation. As a result of TLC's experience in protecting heritage properties like the Historic



Joy Kogawa House in Vancouver and Arthur Erickson's Baldwin House in Burnaby, TLC was approached to help.

TLC has placed a permanent caretaker in the house. The long-term vision is to allow the home to be viewed and enjoyed by members of the public, with a focus on artists and architects. This would be accomplished by private and public tours, workshops and small events at the house. TLC looks forward to working in concert with the District of West Vancouver, the North Shore Heritage Preservation Society, interested members of the community and local neighbours to make this vision a reality.

TLC hosted several public events at the house in 2008 and will be planning more in 2009. In addition, private viewings can also be made by calling TLC's Lower Mainland Office at: (604) 733-2313. Donations to the B.C. Binning Residence endowment fund can be made by calling 1-877-485-2422 or visiting www.conservancy.bc.ca/binning.

Born in Medicine Hat, Alberta in 1909, B.C. Binning came from a family of architects, but during years of adolescent illness he became interested in drawing. In 1927 he began studying at the Vancouver School of Art. In the 1930s he studied and traveled to New York and London before being appointed to the Vancouver School of Art in 1934. In 1949 he went to work for UBC at the School of Architecture before founding UBC's Department of Fine Arts. Besides his whimsical drawings and modernist paintings, Binning also collaborated extensively with architects and engineers on major buildings in Vancouver. His murals can still be seen at the old BC Hydro building on Burrard Street and at the CIBC building at Granville and Dunsmuir (Shoppers Drug Mart).



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Islands Trust Fund, Continued from page 11

for conservation covenants and land donations. We also continue to work with local island conservancies to improve the awareness of Gulf Island residents and visitors about sensitive ecosystems and the effects of everyday activities on this fragile environment.

Despite the progress made by the Islands Trust Fund and its local partners to conserve island ecosystems, much work remains. Several islands in the Islands Trust Area fall significantly short of the goal of 15% protection. **Furthermore, almost every island in the Islands Trust Area continues to fall short of the protection objectives for the following natural ecosystems: streams, wetlands, mature forest, freshwater, shoreline, cliffs, herbaceous and woodland.** The Islands Trust Fund and its local partners need community support to continue to protect the unique ecology and character of the islands.

Whether the gift is cash, land or a conservation covenant, donors to the Islands Trust Fund and other conservation organizations give because they care about the future of these beautiful and fragile islands and the rich variety of plants and animals living here.

The Islands Trust Fund issues tax-deductable receipts for all donations.
www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca
250-405-5186



photo: Todd Carnahan

Camas Hill - Continued from Page 7

expertise and enthusiasm to many stewardship and conservation groups. Moralea is a member of the Native Plant Study Group, the Native Plant Society of BC, Victoria Natural History Society, Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee, the Metchosin Foundation, Green and Blue Spaces Strategy Committee in Metchosin, the Association for the Protection of a Rural Metchosin, and an 'Orphan Garden Rescue' group for municipal gardens that have succumbed to neglect. She also finds the energy to produce a newsletter, arrange two speaker series, and write for a local paper. This fall Moralea and some others have started a "citizen scientist" volunteer effort to sample Metchosin beaches for Pacific sand lance and surf smelt spawning sites. Just recently, she has been elected to Metchosin Council.

A graduate of the Restoration of Natural Systems Program at UVic, Moralea leads a group that removes invasive Scotch broom from Devonian Regional Park in Metchosin (all of the persistent broom has been removed at least twice and in some cases three times, taking 2297 volunteer hours to date), and plants and maintains gardens on Metchosin municipal grounds and at Metchosin Community House to demonstrate the value of using native plants in horticulture.



Western Branded Skipper, photo Moralea Milne

"I believe passionately in leaving a legacy of caring for our environment. I think you have to show people that you can do the actual physical work to gain their respect. Besides, it's fun. People who care about native plants and conservation of our ecosystems all seem to be pretty easy to get along with. I have made many friends through these 'good works' and there is never a moment to get bored!"

Moralea, a proud mother of four grown children and a grandmother of two, received an Acorn Award last year from GOERT adding to her Friend of the Earth Award (2002) and her Volunteer of the Year Award (2006) (both from District of Metchosin Council).

Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) would like to sincerely thank the Kaatza Foundation, the Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team (GOERT), Michael McIlvaney (BC Land Surveyor), and the generous

donors who have contributed to the protection of this beautiful property. Kate Emmings, formerly with HAT, is now an Ecosystem Protection Specialist with Islands Trust Fund.

If you would like to support the protection of ecologically significant properties in the Greater Victoria area, please call HAT at 250-995-2428. If you would like to learn more about GOERT, please call 250-383-3427 or visit their website at www.goert.ca

THE HEART OF THE FRASER

A new initiative aims to better protect the Hope-to-Mission section of the Fraser River, perhaps the most productive stretch of river anywhere in the world

By Mark Angelo

The Fraser River is BC's largest and most ecologically diverse waterway. At its very heart, lies a meandering stretch between Mission and Hope that is one of the most productive stretches of river anywhere in the world.

Commonly called the 'Gravel Reach' because of the gravel and cobbles deposited there by the Fraser's strong current, it wanders across a complex, ever-changing landscape of floodplains, islands, side channels, wetlands and backwaters, screened by native black cottonwoods and cedars and hidden far from the constant din of Highway 1.

But the Gravel Reach is also increasingly at risk. Situated at the edge of BC's busiest metropolis, the growing pressures of urbanization, agricultural expansion, resource extraction and land development are rapidly claiming the remains of this once extensive ecosystem.



Fraser River near Chilliwack, Photo: Chris Armstrong

Exceptional abundance

The Fraser is a river of exceptional abundance. It remains the world's greatest salmon river and the Hope-to-Mission stretch sustains BC's (and perhaps North America's) largest single salmon run. More than 10 million Pink salmon reproduce in the main channel of the Gravel Reach while large runs of Sockeye salmon migrate annually through this corridor to spawn upriver. Chum salmon also spawn in the side channels while juvenile Chum and Chinook salmon feed along its gravel bars.

The Gravel Reach supports more than 30 species of fish (including several species at risk) and the largest population of white sturgeon in North America. Wildlife species also include seals, sea-lions, beaver, martin, bears, deer, cougar and coyote. Extensive bird populations include Red-tailed hawks, Green and Great Blue herons, Bald eagles, and Turkey vultures. It's also home to amphibians such as the Oregon Spotted frog, Western Red-backed salamander, and the Pacific Fi-ant salamander.

However, the vitality of the Gravel Reach is threatened by increasing development pressures. Particularly worrisome is the lack of any collaborative plan or vision to safeguard its many values and, despite past studies and recommendations to preserve remaining habitat, governments of all levels have not yet been able to effectively protect this world-class ecosystem.

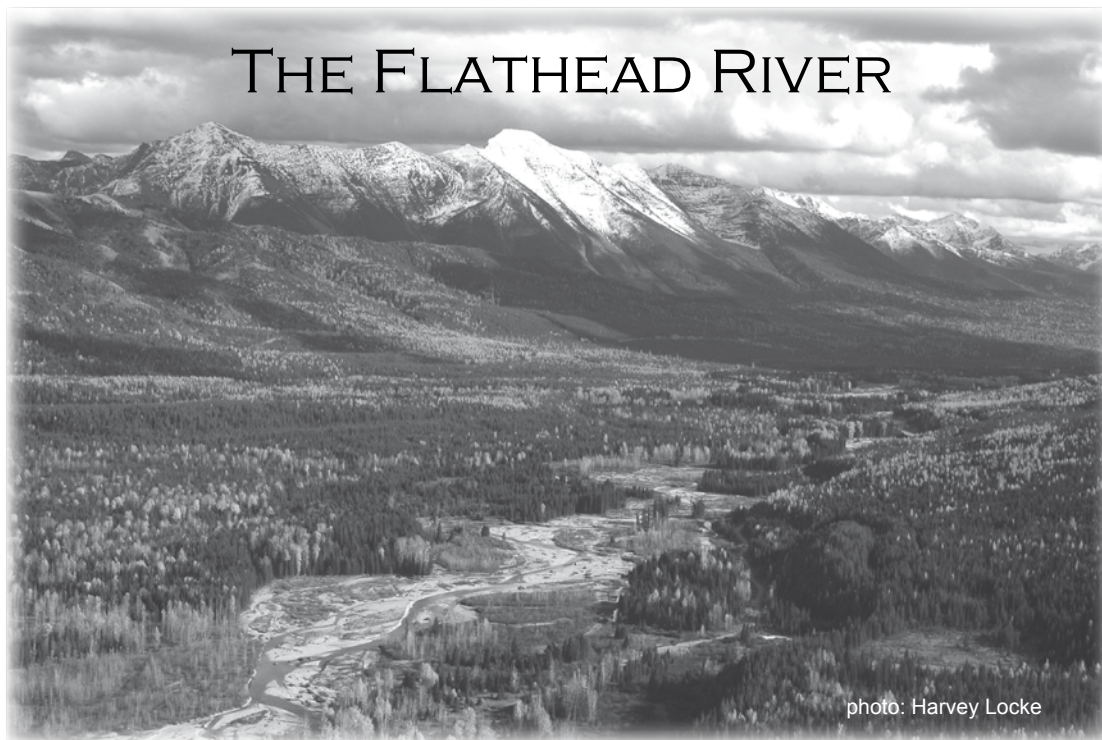
Decisive and quick action is now needed to protect the Gravel Reach before its unique values are lost forever.

The Nature Trust of British Columbia, the North Growth Foundation, the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council, the BCIT Fish & Wildlife Program, and the Fraser Salmon & Watershed Program are leading an initiative to bring together political, corporate and public interests to restore and protect these aquatic habitats and landscapes for future generations.

The "Heart of the Fraser" initiative seeks to protect the Gravel Reach with a multi-pronged approach.

This includes boosting public awareness while promoting collaboration between government and First Nations to protect key crown lands. Private lands are also being identified for conservation. The Heart of the Fraser initiative signals hope that we can avoid the mistakes that have damaged so many great rivers around the world. Few places on Earth still have such a rich and intact stretch of river so close to a major urban centre. There is an urgent need for action if we are to protect the heart of one of the world's greatest rivers. To find out more about the Heart of the Fraser campaign, visit www.heartofthefraser.bc.ca or www.fish.bc.ca/.

Mark Angelo is an internationally-renowned river advocate. He is the Deputy Chair of the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council and heads BCIT's Fish, Wildlife and Recreation program. A recipient of the Order of Canada and the Order of BC for his river conservation efforts, he also founded BC Rivers Day and chairs World Rivers Day.



The Flathead is one of North America's most beautiful rivers, flowing through the Rocky Mountains of southeastern BC and into the state of Montana. The river faces many threats — foremost among these is the proposed Cline open-pit coal mine, which would be located in the headwaters of the Flathead about 50 km south of Fernie. If approved, the mine would produce about two million tons of bituminous coal per year.

The Flathead River runs through the largest, unsettled, low-elevation valley in southern Canada. No other region along the Canada-US border sustains such a diversity of wildlife and ecosystems. The river and its surrounding terrain, which forms the western boundary of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, supports many important wildlife populations ranging from Grizzly bears to tailed frogs (both blue-listed species). The river also has some of the best water quality of any river in Canada and supports important trans-boundary fish populations that include the blue-listed Bull trout as well as Westslope Cutthroat trout. The river's floodplain is a critical travel corridor for wolves, grizzlies and elk. It's also important to note that the Flathead supports perhaps the highest density of inland Grizzly bears in North America. Yet, the BC portion of the Flathead River and its surrounding environs remain vulnerable and unprotected.

The proposed mine that would be developed by Cline Mine Corporation (often referred to as the Lodgepole Mine) would have a lifespan of approximately 20 years and would be located on Foisey Creek, a tributary of the Flathead. To service the mine, up to 40 km of road would have to be developed.

While most British Columbians fully acknowledge that mining is an important industry in our province, there is also a belief that some places are not appropriate to mine, and the Flathead River is one of them. There are widespread concerns that the impacts associated with the proposed mine will be difficult, if not impossible, to mitigate.

Looking at nearby coal mines in other watersheds, high rates of selenium, nitrates and sulphates have often been found in wastewater run-off and many of the standard toxicity tests that have been conducted in streams capturing coal mine run-off have resulted in some significant fish kills. The Flathead should be spared from such a fate.

To make matters worse, coalbed methane exploration is also being pursued in the Flathead, along with the associated infrastructure of roads and pipelines. In addition, a new forestry road; a new mineral mine; unchecked land development; and uncontrolled motorized access remain issues of concern.

To date, public sentiment supports conservation. A recent poll of East Kootenay residents (November, 2008) showed 73% in favour of protecting the Flathead. It's not too late to save this wild place, and continued public pressure will hopefully force government to move toward a conservation vision for the Flathead River Valley.

This article is excerpted with permission from the Outdoor Recreation Council's 2008 "Endangered Rivers List". For the second consecutive year, the Flathead was voted BC's most endangered river (tied at #1 with the Pitt River in 2008).

A REPORT FROM THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN LAND TRUST

This past year has been a transitional and demanding year for the Central Okanagan Land Trust ("COLT"). By adopting a new name in 2007, a host of other necessary actions were triggered. Foremost among these were the adoption of amended Bylaws, which required removing the obligation of the Central Okanagan Foundation to appoint Board members, and addition of a provision to permit COLT to have members in addition to the Board of Directors. This work was smoothly accomplished with a great deal of help from our solicitor, Stan Rule. For this and his many other significant contributions to COLT in the past decade, the Trust recognized him by presenting him with a suitably inscribed painting by artist Terry Lewis.

Climate change, as it relates to the role of the Land Trust has also been recognized. The retention of land in its natural state can absorb and retain significant amounts of carbon from the atmosphere. As strategies are adopted by many companies and organizations to offset their carbon footprint, one strategy is to invest in land. Choices Market on Harvey Avenue in Kelowna hosted a barbeque at their store on Earth Day, the proceeds of which were donated to COLT.

A Land Trust, being outside government, is ideally suited to hold land in perpetuity at the same time as protecting it for recreational purposes or as sensitive wildlife habitat. This past July when the BC government distributed \$100 to each adult in the province to offset a Carbon Tax on gasoline, many COLT board members and friends donated it to the Trust.

COLT undertook to plant approximately 28,000 trees this spring on land controlled by the Trust in the south slopes area of Kelowna. This land had been totally destroyed by the 2003 forest fire with little hope of natural regeneration for many decades. With the cooperation and help of the Central Okanagan Regional District Parks Branch, and with funds donated by Trees Canada, these seedlings were planted using only minimal funding from COLT.

It gives me great pleasure in reporting our long-time serving board member Frank Williams, was awarded the "Conserva-

tion Volunteer Award for 2007" from the Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia. Frank was recognized for his many years of conservation efforts as a member of both the Rotary Club of Kelowna, and the Central Okanagan Land Trust.

The Central Okanagan Land Trust has partnered with the Biology Department of Okanagan College when there is a need to biologically assess land, and/or inspect property in which COLT has an interest. The numbers of inspections needed by COLT each year is growing. As part of its courses at the College level, students receive instruction on the local flora and

fauna in the valley and also on practical applications as to how that knowledge can be employed. These inspections under the guidance and supervision of a Professor provide students with valuable practical experience. If COLT requires a report, it can be signed off by the Professor who takes responsibility for the assessment or inspection. These scenarios have been tested this year and some le-

gal concerns have been addressed. I expect this arrangement will be used in future years. The instructors are provided with a teaching platform; the students are provided with practical experience; and there is no inspection costs to COLT. It benefits all.

COLT has a number of ongoing discussions with several property owners in the valley regarding conservation options. Three properties were donated to COLT, including a publically accessible birder site. COLT has one covenant, and the Thomson sanctuary includes a kiosk but it has no direct access. Cedar Mountain is the access to Regional Park; Lot 502 enabled the acquisition by BC Parks of a very important lot within the boundary of the existing major park; Rotary Marshes at Brandt Creek are visited by at least 1000 people a day on average as is the Greenway.

- article & photo by Hugh Westheuser

COLT needs donations to steward, manage and care for property in the Central Okanagan Area. For information contact Frank Williams frankwill@telus.net phone: 250 769-4541

THE FRASER VALLEY CONSERVANCY'S WILDLIFE REPORTS Land Trusts Working with Local Governments

by Lisa Fox



When I went to work for the Fraser Valley Conservancy (nee Abbotsford Land Trust) in 2002, I never dreamed of how closely I would be working with the local municipality. There have been about three major projects that benefited us and the municipality over the past six years, but the last was the most fruitful and interesting venture. In 2006, the City of Abbotsford's biologist Darren Brown and I sat down to discuss the very large gap in the development process. This gap allowed proponents of development to have free reign over how they dealt with the existing wildlife on a land parcel. Nearly every time, wildlife were completely lost or were given one sentence treatment such as "we think there may be some wildlife on site, but whatever we do we will make it better for them" The results of which, you can imagine, ranged from complete removal of all wildlife supporting features or token garden plantings.

In response to this, Darren Brown created the City of Abbotsford's Wildlife Assessment Guidelines. These outline the items a development proponent - handled usually by their environmental consultant - must complete to assess and support existing wildlife. What we were hoping for was the delineation of 'no-go' areas that could be joined together to form larger corridors and core habitat areas within the whole of Abbotsford. The data from the assessment feeds into the beginnings of an Abbotsford wildlife plan supported eventually by a wildlife bylaw.

Within the City's Assessment Guidelines, one of the requirements was the proponent must receive a Wildlife Report from the Fraser Valley Conservancy. This report contains a list of potential and confirmed species at risk, raptors, and other significant wildlife; two maps showing air photo and potential wildlife areas; and a list of recommendations for further studies to confirm absence or presence of the potential or confirmed list. We use a variety of sources but mostly it is data we collected during the completion of projects in prior years and current CDC record searches. The data includes naturalist sightings, mapping results, and data from other groups such as the Wildlife Tree Stewardship program (WHiTs) available on the Community Mapping Network. After we've completed the report, we send it to the consultant and the consultants must address the species list and recommendations in their report back to the City of Abbotsford along with appending the Wildlife Report.

Environmental Consultants like the Wildlife Report because it backs them up, biologically speaking, and identifies additional survey requirements that they should complete (all paid for by the development proponent). The reports please the Municipality as they receive more complete reports and they fulfill the several objectives of the Ministry of Environment Region Two's "Draft Guidelines for dealing with development effects on Species and Ecosystems at Risk." Development proponents like the clarity and reduction in time to review development proposals.

In a final section of the report The Fraser Valley conservay describes our interest in the land and outlines some potential tools that the development proponent might consider-such as conservation covenants, donations, and other specific suggestions. Have we made a difference? Well its too soon to say, except we know some developers have backed off sites (sold the parcel) after receiving the report, and several 'irons' are in the fire for future donations of land to us that we identified as significant in a Wildlife Report. Certainly it has helped elevate our presence and ability to help municipal staff (development approval officers and planners). In the very least we have provided breathing room so there is time to make better decisions, and we have eliminated some really detrimental proposals.

We could not have seen this through without the help of the Real Estate Foundation, who provided the funding to produce and 'test' the first pilot reports, create the Wildlife Report and map template, and purchase a GIS software license. The City of Abbotsford's Community Sustainability department provided ongoing support and encouragement to both us and the environmental consultants.

We set out to give wildlife a chance and inform potential land professionals and land regulators of areas needing protection early on in the development process avoid impact to significant wildlife and their habitat needs. I think we've achieved that along with making a little bit of money! Our next steps are creating a business plan and moving this out beyond the City of Abbotsford.

If you'd like to know more about these reports, the LTA-BC's Best Practices On-line Collection has a sample, or contact The Fraser Valley Conservancy: 604-864-5530

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM GROWS TO THREE REGIONAL DISTRICTS

The Islands Trust Fund's Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) had an energizing year in 2008. Two existing conservation covenants entering the program, five new conservation covenants were donated, and the program expanding to the Gabriola and Thetis Island Local Trust Areas, NAPTEP demonstrated its success as an original conservation program in the Islands Trust Area.

NAPTEP rewards conservation-minded landowners with a 65% property tax reduction on portions of their land protected by a conservation covenant. Officially launched in the Sunshine Coast and Capital Regional Districts in 2005, NAPTEP offers landowners with the unique opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations while also saving money on their property taxes.

Starting in 2009, landowners in the Gabriola Island and Thetis Island Local Trust Areas can apply to reduce property taxes by protecting the natural features of their land.

With the recent consent of the boards of the Cowichan Valley and Nanaimo Regional Districts, the innovative Islands Trust property tax exemption program is now moving northwards.

NAPTEP participants report saving \$1,300 to \$3,700 annually on their property taxes, while protecting areas ranging in size from 0.31 hectares (0.8 acres) to 23.7 hectares (58.5 acres). To date, the Islands Trust has issued 15 tax exemption certificates in 3 Local Trust Areas (Galiano, North Pender and Salt Spring).

The Islands Trust Fund is now accepting NAPTEP applications from landowners wishing to start reducing their property taxes in 2010. The deadline for applications is April 1st, 2009. Applicants must own property in the Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Mayne, North Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, South Pender or Thetis Local Trust Areas to apply. Staff will be seeking legislative change to include Bowen Island in the program and will also seek the consent of the Powell River and Comox Valley Regional Districts to include the rest of the Islands Trust Area in the program. If your conservancy works in a Local Trust Area not yet served by NAPTEP, please send us a letter letting us know of your interest so that we can demonstrate the need to decision-makers.

To find out more contact: Islands Trust Fund www.islands-trustfund.bc.ca

TREES IN TRUST: A UNIQUE APPROACH TO FOREST CONSERVATION

Two years ago, a small land trust in Prince Edward Island teamed up with an e-business software developer resulting in a fund-raising partnership that is now finding new sources of revenue for land trusts across Canada. Trees In Trust, through a high-tech website, raises funds for land trusts from many non-traditional sources. Featured in the January edition of Canadian Living, and building up an increasing presence in many different areas of the media, Trees In Trust raised \$10,000 from 300 donors during the 2008 Christmas season. This money has been passed to four land trusts in PEI, New Brunswick, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

A number of features make Trees In Trust different from normal fund-raising initiatives. In exchange for a donation of \$30 or more, a donor is able to dedicate a mapped square of mature forest to someone as a gift or memorial, or to themselves or their company. Being able to see a map of their individual piece of land, along with an aerial photo of the trees they have helped save, makes this an appealing gift for the person that has everything.

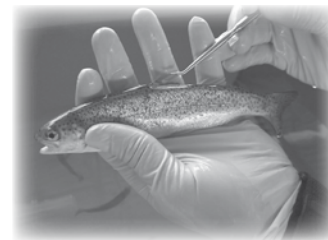
And it is all handled on the web, including being able to design and print your own dedication certificate. A donor doesn't have to wait to receive anything in the mail. We make a policy of not producing printed literature, which helps save even more trees. This Christmas we received five donations on Christmas morning – a testament to the fact that it is a great last-minute gift! In December we had some exciting news - a corporation is making a \$16,000 donation through Trees In Trust and the funds will be used to permanently secure the future of an entire woodland.

Three forests in Ontario, two in New Brunswick and one each in Saskatchewan and PEI are available for donors to choose from. The land trusts use the money raised to purchase additional mature forest and to steward their existing lands. We would like to partner with a land trust in B.C. with the eventual aim of having forests available for dedication in every province.

And leaving the last word to a child who spent \$30 on a father's day gift: "280 square feet of woodland has been dedicated to my Dad. There are a lot of people cutting down our trees, so I think that if we preserve as much as we can, it's a good idea"

For more information contact Andrew Lush at (902) 388-1919 or via the e-mail address on our website, www.treesin-trust.com

FRASER SALMON & SUSTAINABILITY



In the Fraser River basin, salmon are an inextricable part of the economy, the culture and the ecosystem. If one tries to define sustainability for the Fraser Basin, the interdependence of healthy salmon populations, functioning watersheds and thriving communities are central to the story.

Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council have worked with the Living Rivers Trust Fund and DFO's Fraser Basin Initiative to create a program devoted to sustainability of salmon and watersheds in the Fraser Basin. As objective third parties, Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council are able to work with a variety of perspectives, both on-the-ground groups and top-down larger institutions, to address complex challenges.

The mission of the Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program (FSWP) is to "inspire changes in human behaviour for the benefit of salmonids and the watersheds on which we all depend." FSWP works to create and coordinate an adaptive strategy for pursuing this mission in the face of such challenges as climate change, development pressures and fisheries access and allocation. FSWP functions through ongoing collaboration to identify, scope, implement, and fund priority activities in four program areas: Habitat, Governance, Fisheries, and Engagement. The program seeks to engage First Nations and their world views in all four areas.

FSWP has an ongoing network of proponents (those receiving FSWP funding) and other partners, the Fraser Assembly, which meets annually and gives advice on priority activities for the program areas. Participants are welcome from all stakeholder and First Nations groups addressing salmon and watershed issues in the Fraser Basin.

Relationships are a key concern for FSWP. Where current relationships have been an impediment to progress on the larger good, FSWP seeks to build better collaboration and to support interactions that will help to clarify the big picture. Recently, for example, FSWP brought all four orders of government, including First Nations, around the table along with the private sector to explore watershed governance principles and to initiate a process for implementing them.

In addition to funding, FSWP supports its proponents and other partners in a variety of ways: by fostering networks and communities of practice, by facilitating information sharing and by offering opportunities to build capacity. Another

recent project helped three groups initiate efforts to identify priority behaviour changes for their region and provided training in social marketing approaches to promote those changes.

FSWP funding is awarded annually. In the current funding period, from April 2008 through March 2009, 68 projects are receiving a total of nearly \$3 million. For example, the Nature Trust of British Columbia received funding for their project to develop a protocol for prioritizing acquisition of private lands according to its value as fish and wildlife habitat. As another example, Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) received funding to collect data about aquatic ecosystems in British Columbia's Interior Region and to develop a decision support tool that uses the data and assists resource managers in making sustainable management decisions.

For more information about these or other FSWP funded projects, visit the project section of ThinkSalmon.com. More information about the program, including notices about funding and the Fraser Assembly, can be found at fswp.ca.

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Union Club 805 Gordon Street, Victoria, BC
Wednesday March 11, 2009 Noon - 3:30 pm
Reply to Natasha Benn at nbenn@uvic.ca

SOUTH OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN PARTNERS LAUNCH BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY

South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) partners gathered at this past December's Annual General Meeting and kicked-off a new conservation initiative with local politicians, provincial government and conservation representatives.

A Biodiversity Conservation Strategy is an environmental policy framework that assists local governments and conservation partners with establishing priorities for identifying, preserving and restoring important natural areas. The Okanagan strategy will become a "road map" for working together to conserve natural area values and provide a template at a landscape level for land use decision-making for public agencies, local governments and conservation groups to work together.

"These strategies are an important tool for local governments to be able to incorporate habitat information and sustainability considerations into community and neighbourhood plans, park and recreation master plans, and development bylaws," says Bryn White, SOSCP Program Manager. "The benefits to the entire Okanagan Basin are significant, given the ecological importance of the region to the entire country, and the very real risk of losing these values forever."

The notion of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy was raised in the South Okanagan Similkameen Sub-Regional Growth Strategy under the environmental goal to "Ensure the health of ecosystems in the South Okanagan to provide water, land, air and biodiversity." The local government-led Growth Strategy recognizes the unique and endangered status of our ecosystems and has committed to working with partners to coordinate the development of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.

Robert Hobson, President of the Union of BC Municipalities, could not be at the event, but endorsed the undertaking with a letter to the organizers: "I wanted to express how important it is that we all work together to achieve the collaborative development and implementation of a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. I support this concept and see this initiative as a positive undertaking for the region. A basin-wide approach and commitment is needed to ensure the protection of our natural assets such as clean air and water; our healthy ecosystems and the unique diversity of wildlife that is integral to the Okanagan region's quality of life" said Hobson, "Your commitment today will have profound impact on the progression and development of this strategy and your efforts and collaboration are greatly appreciated."

Why is a Strategy needed here?

The Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys are a unique region of Canada, recognized provincially and nationally as a biodiversity hotspot and for the richness and rarity of species and habitats. The region is also an important ecological corridor between Great Basin to the south and the grasslands of the Central Interior of BC. The South Okanagan-Similkameen is renowned for having one of the highest proportions of the country's species and ecosystems that are considered at risk. It is also one of the fastest growing areas in the country.

- More than 93% of natural areas of the Okanagan River have been lost
- More than 84% of wetlands have been lost
- 70% of Big Sagebrush and Antelope-brush habitats have been lost
- Less than 40% of gentle slope grasslands and shrub-steppe remain

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For further information contact:

Bryn White bryn.white@gov.bc.ca

South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program
Coordinator phone: 250.490.8225 cell: 250.462-7322

A Starting Point for Conserving Biodiversity

Taking Nature's Pulse: The Status of Biodiversity in British Columbia provides a comprehensive, science-based assessment of the current condition of biodiversity in British Columbia. The 268-page report was prepared by Biodiversity BC, a partnership of governments and non-government conservation organizations created to improve biodiversity conservation in B.C. The report is available on Biodiversity B.C.'s website (www.biodiversitybc.org) together with two companion documents: *The Biodiversity Atlas of British Columbia* and *Ecological Concepts, Principles and Applications to Conservation*.



Photo: Frank Leung

Taking Nature's Pulse considers threats to biodiversity due to human impacts following European contact. The report describes the status of terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity in the province as well as the overlap between the marine realm and both the freshwater and terrestrial realms. It does not, however, assess purely marine biodiversity, such as whales and marine phytoplankton, as this falls within the mandate of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The report concludes with 23 major findings grouped under six themes:

- Ecosystem Diversity
- Key and Special Elements of Biodiversity
- Genetic Diversity
- Species Diversity
- Threats to Biodiversity
- Capacity and Knowledge

These findings support the report's conclusion that British Columbia's biodiversity is globally significant because of its variety and integrity, but without immediate action is vulnerable to rapid deterioration, especially in light of climate change.

Biodiversity: Why is it important?

Biodiversity (short for "biological diversity") refers to the variety of life in all its forms. It includes the diversity of ecosystems, species and genes and the natural processes that link them – an ensemble that many people think of as Nature.

Biodiversity is essential for sustaining both environmental and human well-being. It supports vital ecological processes such as regulating the climate, maintaining adequate oxygen in the atmosphere, filtering and purifying water, pollinating plants, decomposing waste and regulating population abundance.



Photo: Jennifer Heron

Biodiversity also provides natural resources that support industries such as forestry, fishing and agriculture, and landscapes that attract residents and tourists to the outdoors for recreational enjoyment and spiritual renewal.

Ecosystem Diversity



Photo: Laure Neish

Ecosystems are complex, dynamic and adaptive systems that are continually evolving. When they become simplified through the loss of component parts or processes, they lose their ecological resilience – the ability to withstand and adapt to natural or human-caused disturbances, including climate change. Simplification can be the result of numerous factors, including human activity (such as settlements, natural resource use, and transportation corridors) and the impact of alien invasive species.

For the purposes of this report, terrestrial ecosystems were assessed at a broad provincial scale using the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification (BEC) system, which was developed specifically for B.C. Biogeoclimatic zones are broad geographic areas sharing similar climate and vegetation. Twelve of B.C.'s 16 biogeoclimatic zones are forested, three are alpine and one is dominated by grasses. To date, 611 separate ecological communities have been described in B.C. The assessment of aquatic biodiversity in *Taking Nature's Pulse* is based on the nine Major Drainage Areas into which all surface freshwater in the province flows, feeding large rivers like the Skeena, Taku, Peace and Fraser (which drains roughly one-quarter of the province). Freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems overlap with the marine realm in intertidal zones and estuaries – areas that are both highly productive and important for biodiversity in all three realms.

Species Diversity



Photo: Robert Koopmans

A species is a genetically distinct group of organisms that are capable of successfully interbreeding. Each species plays a unique role in nature. Of all the Canadian provinces and territories, B.C. is home to the richest diversity of vascular plants, mosses, mammals, butterflies and breeding birds, and the largest number of species of reptiles, tiger beetles and amphibians found in only one province or territory.

More than 50,000 different species (not including single-celled organisms) exist in B.C., but only about 3,800 of these have been assessed for their conservation status. Some parts of the province (primarily unroaded and unsettled areas) have not been surveyed for species occurrence and some taxonomic groups remain largely unstudied.

Some species that have disappeared from other jurisdictions still flourish here. For example, B.C. has the largest population of grizzly bears (estimated at about 17,000) of any province or state apart from Alaska. By contrast, California once had an estimated 10,000 grizzlies and now has none.

Genetic Diversity

Genetic diversity is the foundation of biodiversity. Genes are the functional units of heredity and genetic variation, which enable species to adapt to changing environments. B.C. has a disproportionately high level of genetic diversity relative to its species diversity. The province's glacial history, complex topography and varied climate have contributed to the evolution of a wide variety of adaptations to different environments. As a result, many species occur in the province as geographically distinct subspecies, which differ from each other in appearance, environmental tolerances and behaviour. These differences reflect differences in genetic make-up.

Key and Special Elements

Key elements are species and ecosystem components and the processes performed by them that have a fundamental or disproportionate influence on how ecosystems function. Examples include pollination (vital to plant reproduction); connectivity within ecosystems (allowing movement of species); the ability of wetlands to filter, cleanse and replenish water supplies; and the important role of broadleaf trees in ensuring forest health.



Photo: Virginia Skilton

Special elements are uncommon components that in some cases are found only in B.C. Examples include seasonal concentrations of species, such as stopover points for migrating birds and rookeries where Steller sea lions gather to breed; special communities, such as temperate rainforests and intact large mammal predator-prey systems; and noteworthy features, including karst cave systems, hot springs, saline lakes and fishless lakes, all of which are inhabited by rare and specialized species.

Threats to Biodiversity

B.C.'s biodiversity is in better shape than in many other places on the globe mainly because of the province's relatively short history of largescale development and its mountainous terrain, but the threats to its species and ecosystems are clearly increasing.

Expanding human settlement and development are the most obvious but not the only threats to biodiversity in B.C. today. Settlements are typically located in the valleys where species are most diverse; the agriculture industry focuses on soils that are naturally fertile and grow an abundance of native grasses; the timber industry seeks out forests where trees are largest and, coincidentally, harbour the widest array of species; and transportation corridors crisscross and fragment wildlife habitat and migration routes.



Map 20 from Taking Nature's Pulse

Of the six major stresses that threaten biodiversity in B.C., the three most significant ones are ecosystem conversion, ecosystem degradation and alien species. Ecosystem conversion (the direct and complete conversion of natural ecosystems to landscapes for human uses), has mainly occurred in valley bottoms and coastal regions. Ecosystem degradation (changes to the structure of a natural system from activities such as forest harvesting or water diversion) has occurred throughout B.C. around human settlements, reservoirs and in forested areas. Alien species pervade ecosystems virtually everywhere humans have settled and then move far beyond human settlements to threaten even remote ecosystems. And in addition to all these threats is climate change, the magnitude of which can still not be accurately calculated, but in the end is likely to exceed all the rest.

Though ranked lower, the remaining three stresses can have significant impacts on biodiversity, especially in localized areas. These stresses include environmental contamination (the release of contaminants into natural systems), species disturbance (the alteration of the behaviour of species due to human activities), and species mortality (the direct killing of individual organisms). Climate change is likely to have a bigger and earlier impact on the Pacific Northwest than on many other places on the planet, with the mean average temperature across B.C. expected to rise between 3 and 4.8 degrees Celsius by 2080.

Capacity and Knowledge



Photo: Jason Doucette

Thousands, if not tens of thousands, of species in B.C. have not been scientifically described or are not documented as being present in the province. Species groups for which such information is particularly lacking include most of the invertebrates and non-vascular plants. This taxonomic knowledge gap is currently being made worse by an 'extinction of experience' as the scientists with the knowledge, skills and inclination to do the work required to fill the gaps are retiring and often are not being replaced.

The majority of species in B.C. have not been assessed for their conservation status and the global ranks for many species that have been assessed are out of date. The ecology of most species and the distributions of all but a very few are poorly understood. Coarse-scale ecosystem classifications are complete in B.C., but information at a finer ecosystem scale is incomplete, as is ecosystem information from neighbouring jurisdictions. Trend monitoring is extremely limited and data on distribution and population size are lacking for many species. Information about impacts on biodiversity is generally incomplete or out of date.

Major Findings

1. At the broad scale, four biogeoclimatic zones, representing approximately 5% of British Columbia's land base, are of provincial conservation concern.

B.C.'s three dry-forest biogeoclimatic zones (Coastal Douglas-fir, Interior Douglas-fir and Ponderosa Pine) and one grassland zone (Bunchgrass) are of conservation concern. The three alpine zones, while not currently of conservation concern, are expected to change dramatically in response to climate change and, in many places, will disappear entirely, along with the species that presently inhabit them.

2. At the fine scale, more than half of the ecological communities described in British Columbia are of provincial conservation concern.

Ecological communities of conservation concern are found in every one of the province's biogeoclimatic zones with the highest proportion occurring in the four zones of conservation concern (Major Finding 1) and in the Coastal Western Hemlock zone.

3. British Columbia has a majority of the global range for six of the 16 biogeoclimatic zones that occur in the province.

The Coastal Douglas-fir, Interior Cedar–Hemlock, Montane Spruce and Mountain Hemlock zones have more than half of their global range in B.C and the Sub-boreal Pine–Spruce and Sub-boreal Spruce zones occur nowhere else in the world. All of these zones are relatively intact with the exception of the Coastal Douglas-fir zone.

4. The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone is the rarest biogeoclimatic zone in British Columbia and is of great conservation concern.

The Coastal Douglas-fir zone has the highest density of species that are of both provincial and global conservation concern. It also has the highest proportion of areas covered by roads or other linear development and has experienced the highest level of ecosystem conversion.

Major Findings (continued)

5. Low-elevation grassland communities are the rarest land cover type in British Columbia and are concentrated in the biogeoclimatic zones of conservation concern.

Grasslands occupy less than 1% of the provincial land base, but are home to a disproportionate number of species of conservation concern. They are located primarily in the Bunchgrass, Ponderosa Pine and Interior Douglas-fir zones. A large percentage of grasslands have been lost due to ecosystem conversion and fire suppression. They are also being impacted by motorized recreation, livestock grazing, and alien species.



Photo: Bruno Delesalle

6. Significant areas of wetlands in British Columbia have been converted or degraded, particularly in the two Major Drainage Areas of greatest conservation concern.

Wetlands are among the most biologically diverse and productive of all ecosystems. They provide habitat for many species and fulfill a broad range of ecological functions. Wetlands are particularly impacted in the two of B.C.'s nine Major Drainage Areas that are of greatest conservation concern – those of the Columbia and Fraser rivers. In the Lower Fraser Valley more than half of the original wetland area has disappeared and in the south Okanagan, which is part of the Columbia River drainage, about 85% of the original wetland area has disappeared.

7. Estuaries are of concern in British Columbia because of their rarity and the level of human impacts to them.

Estuaries occur where freshwater systems meet the sea. Even though they account for less than 3% of the province's coastline, an estimated 80% of all coastal wildlife relies on estuary habitat. Estuaries have experienced significant degradation as a result of human activities and are highly vulnerable to projected sea-level rise due to climate change.

8. Of the species assessed to date in British Columbia, 43% are of provincial conservation concern and these are concentrated in the four biogeoclimatic zones of conservation concern.

The number of species of provincial conservation concern is increasing as more species are assessed and as populations of previously secure species decline. Taxonomic groups with the highest proportion of species of provincial conservation concern include mosses, reptiles and turtles, and ferns and fern allies. A disproportionate number of B.C.'s species of conservation concern are concentrated in southern, low-elevation areas. Six percent of the species assessed to date in B.C. are also of global conservation concern.

9. British Columbia is known to have a majority of the global range for 99 species.

Of the species assessed to date, 3% have a majority of their global range in B.C. Of the 99 species that have a majority of their global range in B.C., 15 are found nowhere else and 30 are of global conservation concern. Most of B.C.'s species of conservation concern are shared with other jurisdictions.

10. British Columbia has a high level of genetic diversity within species, which is critical for adaptation and resilience.

Genetic diversity within species is critical for their persistence in changing environments. For example, there are more than 400 genetically distinct populations among five species of Pacific salmon. This variability has allowed these species to use all available stream systems in B.C. and provides resilience to salmon and the functions they perform.

Major Findings (continued)

11. The flow of water in lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater systems is being seriously impacted in British Columbia by dams, water diversions, logging, stream crossings and climate change.

Dams and water diversions directly affect lakeshore, streamside and aquatic ecosystems and the organisms that live in them. The disruption of connectivity in stream systems can prevent fish passage and the flow of nutrients and sediments. Climate change is already having noticeable effects on streamflow patterns in some areas of B.C., and projected changes associated with warmer temperatures will likely affect all fresh-water systems within the province.



Photo: Bruce Harrison

12. The natural disturbance processes that shape British Columbia's forests are being disrupted by human activities.

The province's forested ecosystems have been shaped by topography and climate, as well as by disturbance regimes such as fire, insect infestations, wind storms, landslides and flooding. Human activities can affect all of these disturbance processes. In B.C.'s temperate rainforests, logging of old-growth stands is the greatest concern. In the province's other forests, the major concerns are fire suppression, logging and monoculture replanting. In addition to disrupting natural disturbance processes, these human activities also have other impacts on biodiversity, such as effects on soils, hydrology and individual species. Climate change has already begun to exacerbate these impacts (e.g., the current mountain pine beetle outbreak owing in large part to the warming of winter minimum temperatures) and will continue to do so.

13. British Columbia's mainland coast features a number of interconnected key and special elements of biodiversity: intact temperate rainforest, an intact large mammal predator-prey system, glacially influenced streams and salmon-driven nutrient cycling.

British Columbia has approximately one-fifth of the world's remaining temperate rainforest, the majority of which is located along the middle and northern sections of the mainland coast. The mainland coast is also the largest contiguous area in the province with intact large mammal predator-prey systems (i.e., all native large mammals are present). Anadromous salmon play a critical role in nutrient cycling on the mainland coast (and throughout the rest of their B.C. range) by serving as a key food source for many predators and scavengers and providing important nutrients to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. As in other places, these key and special elements of biodiversity are susceptible to cumulative impacts from human activity, particularly climate change. One way that climate change is expected to affect salmon is through impacts on glacier-fed streams. In the short term, melting glaciers will likely discharge more water into some B.C. streams and rivers, which may damage salmon habitat. In the longer term, salmon may be affected by reduced water volume, and possibly temperature change, in glacier-fed streams and rivers, especially during the summer months.

14. The majority of British Columbia has intact or relatively intact predator-prey systems, but a major threat to them is motorized access and associated human activities.

B.C. is globally significant for its richness of large carnivore and ungulate species and the fact that most of the province has intact, or mostly intact, large mammal predator-prey systems, which provide critical ecosystem services. Large mammal predator-prey systems are directly impacted by the disturbance and fragmentation associated with motorized access, including access for off-road vehicles. Roads fragment populations, reduce gene flow and provide access that can result in increased direct mortality due to hunting, poaching, motor vehicle collisions and wildlife-human conflicts. Motorized access also causes disturbance, which displaces species from their habitats.

Major Findings (continued)

15. British Columbia has many significant seasonal concentrations of species that are vulnerable to human impacts.

Seasonal concentrations of species are vulnerable to human and non-human impacts. In B.C., seasonal concentrations often involve migratory species, including birds travelling along the Pacific Flyway and salmon migrating through coastal marine waters. Migratory species are affected by conditions throughout their range and B.C. has a responsibility for species that migrate through the province. Many estuaries along the B.C. coast and wetlands in the interior provide critical habitat for seasonal concentrations of migrating shorebirds, waterfowl and other birds. Other seasonal concentrations of species include seabird nesting colonies on coastal islands and prenesting or wintering aggregations. Island seabird populations are particularly threatened by alien species.

16. Ecosystem conversion from urban/rural development and agriculture has seriously impacted British Columbia's biodiversity, especially in the three rarest biogeoclimatic zones.

Although only about 2% of the province's land base has been converted to human uses, the magnitude of conversion is dramatically higher in the three rarest biogeoclimatic zones: Coastal Douglas-fir, Bunchgrass and Ponderosa Pine. Ecosystem conversion related to agriculture is most intensive in areas with rich soil, such as floodplains and valley bottoms. Urban and rural development is concentrated in these same areas, particularly in the lower Fraser River Valley, on southeastern Vancouver Island and in the Okanagan. The most immediate impact of urban and rural development is the conversion of natural landscapes to buildings, parking lots and playing fields, resulting in loss of species and ecosystems, along with impairment of ecosystem functions.

17. Ecosystem degradation from forestry, oil and gas development, and transportation and utility corridors has seriously impacted British Columbia's biodiversity.

Forestry-related activities affect species and ecosystems in various ways, including habitat fragmentation and alteration of natural forest condition. Ecosystem degradation associated with oil and gas exploration and extraction is mainly concentrated in the Boreal White and Black Spruce biogeoclimatic zone in the northeastern B.C. Ecosystem degradation associated with transportation corridors, seismic lines and other linear features includes fragmentation, alteration of the hydrology of water courses and increased sedimentation in water bodies. High densities of transportation and utility corridors occur in the Coastal Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, Bunchgrass and Interior Douglas-fir zones.

18. Alien species are seriously impacting British Columbia's biodiversity, especially on islands and in lakes.

Alien species can have many impacts, including alteration of forest fire cycles, nutrient cycling and hydrology, displacement of populations of native plants and animals, competition for resources, predation, disease introduction, and facilitation of the spread of other non-native species. Climate change and ecosystem conversion and degradation facilitate the invasion of alien species.

19. Climate change is already seriously impacting British Columbia and is the foremost threat to biodiversity.

The impacts of climate change on biodiversity in B.C. are predicted to be both extensive and intensive, and will be exacerbated by non-climate factors such as land-use changes, pollution and resource use. Climate change is already underway, however the full extent of its impact has yet to be felt. As the effects of climate change become more pronounced, some species will be lost and the ranges of others will change. B.C.'s proportion of the global range of many species is likely to increase due to northward shifts in distributions; this is already occurring for some species. In addition, all of B.C.'s biogeoclimatic zones will be either changed or eliminated as a result of climate change.

Major Findings (continued)

20. The cumulative impacts of human activities in British Columbia are increasing and are resulting in the loss of ecosystem resilience.

The cumulative impacts of human activities are greater than the sum of their individual effects. Compromised ecosystems and populations are more vulnerable to impacts than those that are pristine. The density of roads and other linear development features in an area is the single best index of the cumulative impact of human activities on biodiversity. In B.C., the highest densities of roads are found in the four biogeoclimatic zones of highest conservation concern: Coastal Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, Bunchgrass and Interior Douglas-fir.

21. Connectivity of ecosystems in British Columbia is being lost and, among other impacts, this will limit the ability of species to shift their distributions in response to climate change.

The degree of connectivity and the characteristics of linkages in natural landscapes vary, depending on topography, hydrology and natural disturbance regime. Linear features such as roads, hydro transmission corridors, seismic lines, pipelines and railways affect connectivity when they are built along valley bottoms, and when they cross streams, preventing the movement of terrestrial and aquatic organisms. Besides limiting the ability of species to shift their distributions in response to climate change or habitat change, loss of connectivity also makes populations more vulnerable to extirpation as a result of chance events or the damaging effects of genetic drift and inbreeding.



Photo: Karen Wipond

22. Gaps in our knowledge of biodiversity in British Columbia create major challenges for effective conservation action.

Knowledge about species and ecosystems and the processes of which they are a part is lacking in several key areas including conservation status of species (approximately 8% completed), species population and distribution, genetic analyses, fine-scale ecosystem classification, comparisons with neighbouring jurisdictions and the effects of individual and cumulative human impacts. Addressing these gaps will provide valuable information to help improve biodiversity conservation.

23. The capacity to address some of the gaps in our knowledge of biodiversity in British Columbia is being impacted by the loss of already limited taxonomic expertise.

Thousands, if not tens of thousands, of species in B.C. have not been scientifically described. This taxonomic knowledge gap is currently being exacerbated by an 'extinction of experience' as the scientists with the knowledge, skills and inclination to do the work required to fill the gaps are retiring and often are not being replaced.

Contact us at info@biodiversitybc.org





May 20–22, 2009

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A Better Future:
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The BC Land Summit is a rich, diverse interdisciplinary conference organized and hosted by six professional organizations, all of which share ties to land issues and land use in British Columbia. Following on the great success of the 2004 BC Land Summit in Vancouver, each of the partner organizations is once again holding its annual conference in 2009 at this exciting joint conference. The host partner organizations include:

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- The British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects • The Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia
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Lunch on Thursday May, 21 and Friday, May 22
Welcome Reception on Wednesday, May 20
Gala Reception on Thursday, May 21
Closing Reception on Friday, May 22

Shawwna Nixon
Registration Coordinator for the 2009 BC Land Summit
Phone: 778-338-4142
Fax: 604-984-6434
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Note that partner hotel rates accommodate multiple parties - check on-line and ask for the BC Land Summit rates - Contact our office for further travel and accommodation information

If you wish to have a display booth, there are "trade show booths" available which you may wish to share. Please contact our office for further information.
info@landtrustalliance.bc.ca

WHEN THINGS SLOW DOWN: CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURES OF OUR COMMUNITIES

by *hans peter meyer*

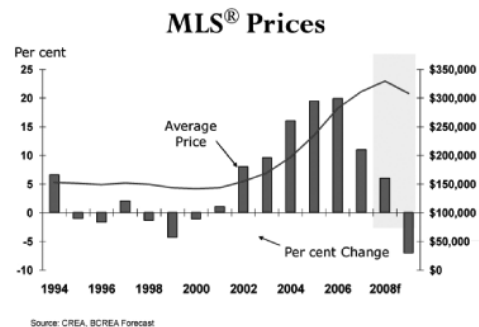
Sixty percent of previously unmodified sensitive ecosystem lands in the Comox Valley were either lost, fragmented or reduced between 1991 and 2002. Ninety-seven percent of highly valuable human-modified ecosystems (second growth forests and seasonally flooded agricultural fields) have been fragmented and reduced in this same time period. Only 13% of Comox Valley land is protected; and over ninety percent of that land is within Strathcona Provincial Park. Without a regional consensus to address these issues, the continued loss of biodiversity will eventually undermine nature's ability to provide essential environmental services. Clean air and water, healthy soils, local food production and food security, and natural resource industries are at stake.

*Nature Without Borders, The Comox Valley Land Trust Regional Conservation Strategy
Prepared by Lynda Fyfe, Comox Valley Land Trust*

In recent years many BC communities have experienced a housing-led economic boom. As the above excerpt from the Comox Valley's *Nature Without Borders* report shows, the high growth period of the 1990s caused significant disruption of natural ecosystems. Without any significant changes to practices and policies regarding ecosystem protection after the 90's surge, it is safe to assume that the last few years of rapid growth will also have had a deleterious effect on ecosystems around BC communities. As conversations with a number of land use practitioners suggest, this current market slowdown, while significant, should be a busy time for anyone with an interest in protecting and enhancing existing ecosystems.

A brief survey of how the BC Real Estate Association (BCREA) has moved from Spring '08 optimism to Fall '08 caution gives a picture of how real the market shift has been. Housing starts in Nanaimo and Cranbrook are forecasted to fall 20% and 17%, respectively, in 2009. In Penticton the drop in 2008 went to approximately 45% of the high of 2006. Small communities with significant natural and aesthetic amenities are no strangers to this kind of reversal of fortune. It is, however, the very precipitous quality of the reversal that should put all would-be stewards of community sustainability on the alert. As with the last downturn, it is all too easy for very real, pressing economic and social concerns to overshadow the recent gains made in public and government awareness about the value of protecting and rehabilitating natural systems. This is especially the case in communities economically driven by construction related to tourism and amenity-migration.

Looking back at the downturn in the late 1990s it is clear that any respite from the pressures of growth that natural systems experienced was short-lived. Within a few short years housing starts and sales figures reached highs beyond the peak years of the '90s. Indeed, while the forecasted drop in unit sales for the Vancouver Island Real Estate Board is steep for 2008, it is only a drop to 2001 levels, (roughly equivalent to level of the strong markets of the mid-90s). Average house prices are forecast to drop to 2004 levels, still 100% higher than average



(c) BC Real Estate Association, Fall 2008
"Vancouver Island Real Estate Board housing market information, 1993-2009f"

prices in the 1990s. “The research we’ve done,” says Carole Stark of the Chinook Institute, “tells us that rural communities located in beautiful, natural places, close to open space, with a small town character, will have a long term demand.”

The Chinook Institute, an environmental non-governmental organization (ENGO) based in Canmore, Alberta focuses on sustainable use and management of natural landscapes in BC and Alberta communities. Their findings reflect what the BC Real Estate Association understands from a market perspective: community quality of life is a driver of healthy housing and development activity. Ironically, the better community stewards get at protecting and enhancing key environmental and social qualities, the greater the demand on the land base that sustains these “key qualities.” The current market slowdown provides a critical window of opportunity. Now is the time to lay the foundations for longer-term community sustainability, balancing the need for economic and social stability (jobs, housing) with healthier natural systems.

The challenge, says Harry Harker, is “to get people to understand that this [slowing of growth] is a transient phenomenon.” Currently working as the administrator for the Town of High River in Calgary’s shadow, Harker was General Manager of Planning with the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona during the boom and bust years of the 1990s. “Sooner or later we’re going to come out of this,” he says. “We got caught the last time..and [weren’t] prepared for the growth that hit.” In the face of shrinking revenues from development, local government needs to act now, Harker emphasizes, “to actually get some of that forward planning in place so that when the market turns we’re prepared to move ahead positively.”

Quarterly statistics tell a story of rapid growth followed by steep decline. For the development industry, however, the timeline is longer and less precipitous. Victoria-based development consultant Gene Miller says, within the industry itself “there is a ton of talking, and a ton of time that passes.” Indeed, Miller notes that, “Taking time is part of the normal development process.”

However, John O’Donnell, Senior Vice President of Development with Ledingham McAllister, one of the province’s largest development companies, has suggested that long processing



Langford Lake, site of Westhills development, City of Langford

“Despite a drop in market demand, large scale developments, like the proposed Westhills project in the City of Langford, will continue to move through the approvals and permitting process. Westhills is considered one of the ‘greenest’ of current Vancouver Island development projects, featuring significant retention of forest lands and wetlands, a proposed rail commuter link to downtown Victoria, and LEED Neighbourhood planning and building standards.” photo by hans peter meyer

times with local government can be a “blessing in disguise, as they are a contributing factor in what we believe will be a recovery in the sales of new homes next year [2009].” Vancouver developer Michael Geller recalls how the recession of the early 1980s was his opportunity to step into the industry. For him, a market slowdown is a good time to be putting proposals together; it’s also a good time to be learning about sustainable approaches to building and development. “The one area that everyone [in the industry] knows they need to get up on the learning curve is related to sustainable building, green building. We’re not as busy as we were; why not take advantage of the time?” For Joe Van Bellegham, one of the principals behind Victoria’s Dockside Green, a poster project for ‘sustainable development,’ a slowdown means better attention from local government staff. “When it’s really busy, everything takes a lot longer to do. Local government staff is limited in terms of how much attention they can give to every file.” And, as Sandy Gray, administrator with the City of Courtenay, notes, it was during the last slowdown that a major commercial development was proposed. Lower construction costs, land costs, and the attention of staff are all signs that Wal-Mart played its cards right. “With a slowdown, investors look for opportunities.” Like Gray, Stark sees no long-term let up on small, attractive communities, “especially given the interests of the baby boom generation.”

In short, while builders and developers may feel a pinch in their cash flow, the business of preparing and pitching proposals never stops. Local governments also feel the pinch, but Harker and Gray both recommend a strategy of investment at a time when costs and interest rates are lower. This is “a good time for local government to be spending money on our own

infrastructure, upgrading our own buildings,” says Gray. He also notes that the current slowdown allows staff to be more “focused on the Sustainability Strategy and the Regional Growth Strategy” as is currently taking shape in the Comox Valley. Along with these two processes, the region also accepting the leadership of an ENGO (the Comox Valley Land Trust) who is effectively championing a “regional conservation strategy.” The success of these various processes may depend on the time and focus afforded by the current slowdown.

A number of individuals see the downturn as an opportunity for these kinds of community and regional conversations. It is essential, however, says George Penfold, Regional Innovation Chair in Community Economic Development at Selkirk College, that communities do some “serious analysis” as a prelude to the dialogue. “One of the really useful steps is to look seriously at the impact of proposed developments...to go beyond public opinion and do a critical analysis about what the vulnerabilities are in the region.” Looked at through the lens of what Penfold calls “significant structural changes - climate change, and energy pricing in particular,” such a dialogue goes far beyond short-term costs and begins to appreciate the long-term investment opportunities of “forward planning,” as Harker calls it.

A slowdown may give the Conservation & Stewardship (C&S) sector the time and energy to develop baseline data and analysis, or to propose these to local governments and other funders as worthy projects. For local government, a lighter front-desk load allows staff to invest time for the strategic processes needed to meet future challenges - and to support good data collection and analysis. The value of scientifically-grounded data is critical to what Penfold and Stark envision as successful and worthwhile community process. Penfold believes that the kind of “baseline” information data compiled by the Columbia Basin Trust in its “State of the Basin” project gives Kootenay area communities a key planning tool and decision-making tool that other regions could emulate. Good data and analysis will

benefit community process, and can lead to strong and clear policy and practices. For Stark they help a community answer the question: “What would you need as a community to have robust strategies for the future?” Plans and scenarios built on solid scientific data are more likely to succeed than those built simply on public opinion about what they want the future to look like.



Photo: Lora Tryon / 2009
“Millard Creek stream stewards are involved in establishing baseline data as part of work with local government.”

Answering that question helps clarify community values, the policies that lead to them, and the practices that achieve them. Governments provide the regulatory framework within which businesses are either successful or frustrated partners in the pursuit of sustainability goals. Indeed, as John O'Donnell argues, “One of the things municipalities could do in this downturn is to come up with a provincial standard for their sustainability initiatives.” This would help alleviate the confusion facing businesses in

today's fragmented sustainability policy environment. Clarity also helps the C&S sector be more effective as a partner in community stewardship and as a potential resource to sustainable development and business.

This kind of clarity comes through building relationships and dialogue. “Relationship-building is a big part of planning,” says Harry Harker. He typically assigns staff to geographic areas, and when desk work slows down he tells them to “put your hands in your back pockets, get out of the office, and put your feet on the dirt and talk to landowners... Find those very small places where you can start to talk with people about the future of the community. What do we want it to look like? What are we going to do? What are your interests? Where do we go from here? Get people discussing the future in a positive context and build the relationships so that when you get to taking the next steps in planning you can do it.” The bottom line is to determine a shared and supported vision of what the future looks like, whether it's achieved through a ‘sustainability strategy’, ‘scenario planning,’ a regional growth or conservation strategy, or a series of conversations is to determine a shared and supported vision of the future. “There

is another side to this downturn, and we need to be thinking: What do we want the town to look like and feel like the next time that surge of growth hits us? We need to be prepared.”

Dialogue is increasingly a strategy on the part of the Conservation and Stewardship sector to build the kinds of relationships at a local level that lead to positive long-term results. In the Comox Valley, the Regional Conservation Strategy is building rapport amongst local government staff, elected officials, and a broad ENGO sector. On a regional level, Convening for Action Vancouver Island (CAVI) is also building relationships through its educational activities. In the Okanagan, the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Partnership (SOSCP) has a facilitating role and is now planning for a Biodiversity Strategy. Sustainability requires a complex balancing of economic, ecological, and social practices. While developers and business leaders need to educate themselves in new ways of doing business, so too do local government and community leaders. The current downturn may be the only time that many of these individuals have the time for dialogue. As Gene Miller suggests, these “community conversations” can’t happen during the urgency of the up-cycle, when everyone, particularly developers, is scrambling just to stay in the game.

Many of the communities Stark works with have experienced a precipitous rise and fall in growth and prosperity over recent years. “Engaging people in communities about what they want to protect and maintain for the future, what smart growth and sustainability really look like in their town [is a] grounding process,” says Carole Stark. Expectations and fears are brought to earth, bound up in the conversations and relationships which reflect evolving and shared strengths and new understandings. The polarities of developer/conservationist are unreal, says Gene Miller. Current land use practices are, like the current market crisis, the result of generalized faulty thinking and acting. Both George Penfold and Gene Miller emphasize the place to start the community conversation is with a study of the costs and benefits of growth. Miller adds, “Whatever conclusion a community gets to... this is where things get very ecological.”

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Conversations about Land Use Practices; Conversations with Land Use Practitioners



Announcing the Updated Communities in Transition (CIT) Information Service

by hans peter meyer

“Conversations about land use practices; conversations with land use practitioners. This is how we imagine the CIT Information Resource functioning,” says Tim Pringle, recently appointed Director of Special Programs at the Real Estate Foundation of BC.

In the fall of 2008 the CIT website was reorganized to help facilitate these ‘conversations.’ The revamping isn’t finished, and more interactive functionality will be introduced through 2009. “Essentially, we’ve turned the site into a bi-monthly online publication,” explains Tim. “We’re posting columns and articles that draw on recent CIT projects and research. Over time we’ll be highlighting some of the very interesting and innovative work being done with our partner organizations.”

As Executive Director with the Foundation prior to his current appointment, Tim has been part of many such conversations over the past 20 years. “People are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of new information about land use, community, and real estate related topics,” he says. “One of the things they’ve asked of us is to find a way to receive this information in a digestible form. The changes to the CIT site are about extending the conversation about sustainable land use practices with the people who work with BC’s land base.”

The next issue of the CIT Info Resource (to be posted in early February 2009) will feature several topics that communities across BC are currently wrestling with, including: performance-based approaches to land use, with a focus on how stewardship and conservation organizations are working with local governments; as well as a review on what market cycles mean for local governments, NGOs, and businesses when dealing with the land.

**To view the CIT Information Resource, go to
www.communitytransition.org. To subscribe, send a note to
editor@communitytransition.org.**

LAND CONSERVATION LAW - U.S. EASEMENT DEFENSE

by Jessica E. Jay

In the rapidly evolving world of land conservation law, we recently have witnessed three legal cases, the resolution or continuation of which have shed light on and provided guidance to those of us practicing in this field of law, as well as those drafting and holding conservation easements, and for everyone attempting to defend and enforce conservation easements for perpetuity.

The case worthy of mention here involves enforcement of a conservation-easement protected property by the landowner (a conservation organization), against the violator of that easement, an adjacent landowner, and raises issues relating to who is qualified to enforce conservation easements, how to reach third-party violators of conservation easements (or those other than the landowner or holder), and what damages might be available when successfully litigating such a violation.

The history of the land giving rise to the *Cullen v. Western New York Land Conservancy* case is important to understanding the case's outcome. The Western New York Land Conservancy (WNYLC), an up-state New York land protection organization, purchased in 2000 a 130-acre parcel of

land at a bargain sale price from a family using the land as a retreat, educational area, and nature preserve, in order to continue the land's use as a public education resource and nature preserve. At the same time WNYLC purchased the conservation property, the family sold to a private buyer owning a gentlemen's farm adjacent to the conserved property, the property's original mansion along with a 12-acre parcel completely encircled by the conservation property and served by a driveway and utility right of way through the conserved property. WNYLC granted a conservation easement on the 130 acres to the New York State Department of Parks two years after its purchase of the 130 acres.

The first buyer of the mansion and 12 acres sold it after a massive fire destroyed much of the mansion, to its current owner, a wealthy and powerful businessman. WNYLC attempted to contact the new owner to introduce themselves, to no avail. The new owner began trespassing on the conserved property while rebuilding the mansion and redesigning the landscaping on the 12 acres. The first trespass was by substantially resurfacing with over a foot of gravel a farm lane running off the driveway through the conserved property to the 12 acres in order to allow heavy equipment and construction vehicles to reach the mansion without using the permitted driveway. Upon discovering the same, WNYLC attempted to resolve the issue as a friendly neighbor might, rather than pursuing outright any claims of trespass or easement violation.

Next, it was discovered that the new owner had extended a new pond onto the conserved property by 120 feet (testimony at trial by the contractors working on the 12 acres would confirm that the owner not only knew he had crossed the property boundary, but that he had instructed the workers to cross the line, pull up boundary stakes and clear-cut an 80-year old successional hardwood swamp). WNYLC immediately called and wrote to the neighbor to attempt to resolve the issue and restake the property boundary, but again, received no response and the new owner continued to ignore WNYLC's repeated attempts to discuss, negotiate, and resolve the pond encroachment.

Contemporaneous with the pond construction, the new owner's employees removed trees, vegetation, and topsoil to cut a 20-foot wide road, complete with culverts and topped with

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gravel, across the conserved property to allow access between the new owner's adjacent-farm staging area and the mansion, in lieu of using a designated right of way and public road to his driveway and entrance to his adjacent property. WNYLC attempted more calls and letters to the new owner, with no response, and provided notice to the property manager working at the site that all of these issues were a problem. WNYLC placed chains across the new road and demanded that the new owner cease all trespass against the conserved property. In response, the new owner cut another 20-foot road across the conserved property to reach the staging area.

After providing written notice to the new owner that WNYLC may need to take legal action to protect the conserved property, the new owner beat WNYLC to the punch and sued them first, alleging WNYLC's interference with the quiet enjoyment of his property and, improbably, invoking a claim of WNYLC's own violation of the conservation easement on the conserved land. WNYLC responded with counterclaims and its own claim in straight trespass against its land. As a result of defending itself against the new owner's legal attacks, WNYLC's liability insurance coverage was triggered to offer protection, and WNYLC's attorney convinced its insurance carrier to allow him to handle both the defense and enforcement actions against the new owner, which through this consolidated approach, reduced the overall legal fees for WNYLC.

WNYLC convinced the court to dismiss the new owner's original claims that it violated the state-held conservation easement based on arguments of lack of standing, using New York's established statutory and common law on point. Despite WNYLC's pleas for it to intervene and defend its conservation easement, the state refused to participate in the case or even write a letter saying that that WNYLC was in compliance with the conservation easement. Just before trial, the new owner dropped the remainder of his claims against WNYLC.

On February 29, 2008, in a unanimous decision, a jury awarded \$98,181 in compensatory damages and \$500,000 in punitive damages to WNYLC.

This is the first case of its kind, in terms of damages. WNYLC attributes its success to a combination of respect for the new owner (despite his bad acts) and strong efforts to communicate and stop the damage without retaliating, along with the intentional and repeated bad acts of the new owner. Another critical component cited was that WNYLC retained independent engineers to visit the land and give a dispassionate assessment of the damage to the conserved land. The baseline documentation report also was cited as critical to proving the case by producing the photos and narrative to show the property's con-



Spotted Towhee, Photo Todd Carnahan

dition prior to the damage. WNYLC also produced all its communications with the new owner, showing good faith attempts to resolve the matter.

On February 29, 2008, in a unanimous decision, a jury awarded \$98,181 in compensatory damages and \$500,000 in punitive damages to WNYLC.

The new owner has of course, appealed the jury verdict. It may be a long time before WNYLC receives any of the \$600,000 award, even with continued wins on appeal, and appeal costs will continue to diminish the award unless WNYLC is able

to add those costs to the award and is to actually collect the award.

The lessons we can take away from this verdict and the history behind it include: be aware of permitted and prohibited uses of protected properties, nearby landowners, and potential trespassers; attempt to create and maintain relationships with landowners of and neighbors to conserved lands; pursue all violations in a timely manner with vigilance and respect for the process as well as the potential violator; keep good records of the property's conservation, including the conservation transaction and supporting documents, as well as all correspondence with the potential violator.

This one case was excerpted from Jessica's review of three recent court cases in the U.S. Contact our office if you wish a copy of the full article. Jessica Jay is a Founding partner, Conservation Law, P.C., a law firm devoted to ensuring the permanence of land conservation using conservation easements through strong holders, sound transactions, and easement enforcement and defense. The subject of this article, along with other topics relating to land conservation law, case-law and discussions, will be available in the forthcoming legal textbook by the same author.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME: COVENANT ENFORCEMENT IN B.C.

By Kathleen Sheppard, *The Land Conservancy of BC*

Conservation covenants are roughly fifteen years old in British Columbia. As yet no land trust in the province has gone to court in order to enforce a breach of a covenant. This is likely due to several factors; many covenants are still with first-generation landowners who signed the original document and are presumed to be more familiar with their provisions. This is not the entire story, however, as there are many second and third generation covenants now held by BC's land trusts. Part of the reason that we have not yet seen court action to enforce conservation covenants in BC may be due to the differences between conservation covenants and conservation easements. Where breaches have occurred, they have been remedied out of court.

Differences Between BC and the US

Conservation covenants in BC contain provisions that are not used in conservation easements in the US or the rest of Canada. These include the Statutory Right of Way, the Rent Charge and Dispute Resolution clauses. As we shall see, these clauses are essential to how we manage and enforce violations against covenants in BC.

In the US, a standard remedy/enforcement clause reads as follows:

If [the landowners] fail to cure the violation within thirty(30) days after receipt of notice thereof from [the land trust], or under circumstances where the violation cannot reasonably be cured within a thirty(30) day period, fail to begin curing such violation within the thirty(30) day period, or fail to continue diligently to cure such violation until finally cured, [the land trust] may bring an action at law or in equity in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the terms of this Easement, to enjoin the violation, ex parte as necessary, by temporary or permanent injunction, to recover any damages to which it may be entitled for violation of the terms of this Easement of injury to any conservation values protected by this Easement, including damages for the loss of scenic, aesthetic, or environmental values, and to require the restoration of the Property to the condition that existed prior to any such injury.

In essence, the land trust may act to remedy the breach of the easement, but their method for doing so is limited to court action.

In BC, a standard enforcement section of a covenant is somewhat different:

If the Owner does not remedy a breach described in section 11.1 within the time acceptable to the Covenant Holder under section 11.2, the Covenant Holder may enter upon the Land and remedy the breach or carry out the arrangements referred to in section 11.2, and the Owner shall reimburse the Covenant Holder for any expenses incurred in doing so, up to the estimated maximum costs of remedying the breach as set out in the notice given under section 11.1.

The Enforcement Remedy is then backed up by the Rent Charge, which specifies the penalties that the landowner may be subject to in the event of a breach. Although land trusts in BC should be prepared for court action in the event that a breach occurs, nothing in a typical conservation covenant document dictates the need for court action. In fact, the presence of a Dispute Resolution section in many covenants allows land trusts to negotiate the terms of a breach and Rent Charge, using mediation or in some cases, arbitration. Only in the event that these mechanisms are unsuccessful, should a land trust then take legal action.

There are implications to these differences between conservation covenants in BC and conservation easements in the US. The inclusion of both the Rent Charge and Dispute Resolution sections allows for flexibility in enforcement and provides opportunities for both the landowner and land trust to avoid court action unless absolutely necessary.

Enforcing Covenants in BC

Because of the flexibility that is built into our conservation covenants, one of the first questions that land trusts may want to ask upon finding a violation is what level of remedy and enforcement is appropriate. TLC's experience is that minor violations are quite common while major violations are less so. For our purposes, minor violations are usually infractions that cause a technical breach of the covenant restrictions without necessarily violating the intent of the covenant. Minor violations often include encroachments between residential areas and protected areas such as intrusions from lawns, grass clippings, firewood, etc.

Covenant Section	Violation	Remediation
Sch B 1.1(e)	small pile of firewood in the Protected Area (PA) between IP1652 and IP1654 (SW edge of Residential Use Zone)	Once pile is used up please ensure future woodpiles are within the Residential Use Zone
Sch B 1.1 (e) & (f)	Lawn and mulch encroaching into PA along RUZ boundary between IP1654 and IP2136	Please be aware of the boundaries of the PA – no further encroachment
Sch B 1.1(f)	Invisible dog fence (buried)	No further disturbance in the PA
Sch B 1.1(f)	In-ground light system with buried wires	No further disturbance in the PA

Regardless of the size and scale of the violation, documentation (as a result of monitoring) and subsequent notification to the landowners are important. As a follow-up to our monitoring for each covenant, TLC notifies each landowner about the restrictions of the covenant, what violations were found on their property and what remedies are required. See the chart above for an example.

This notification of violations does not preclude the future enforcement of the Rent Charge or other enforcement provisions in the covenant. Our monitoring report to the landowner also includes the following: “While we are not taking enforcement action at this time, this does not preclude us from enforcing upon this or any other violation of the covenant agreement in the future.”

Major violations are of a more serious nature and include breaches that are of such an extensive or egregious nature that the land trust requires stronger enforcement mechanisms. Land trusts cannot proceed directly to court action or to invoking the Rent Charge, however. The enforcement section of the covenant usually states that the land trust must notify the landowner of the breach, giving the landowner a set number of days to rectify the problem to the Covenant Holder’s satisfaction. If the violation cannot be rectified or the landowner is unwilling to rectify it, the land trust may invoke the Rent Charge. Again, the land trust must notify the landowner that the Rent Charge has been invoked. Land trusts should also consider making every effort to meet with the landowners throughout this process.

In the event that the land trust chooses to enforce the Rent Charge, there are usually several options available to the land trust to cause this to happen:

“The Covenant Holder may enforce the Rent Charge by any combination, or all, of:

(a) an action against the Owner for the Rent Charge Amount;

(b) distraint against the Land to the extent of the Rent Charge Amount;

(c) an action for appointment of a receiver in respect of the Land; or

(d) an order for sale of the Land.”

Enforcing the Rent Charge once negotiation has failed will require court action on the part of the land trust.

Major Violation – TLC The Land Conservancy Case Study

In early 2008, TLC received information from the co-holder of our covenant (in this case, the local municipality) that a significant violation had occurred on one of our covenanted properties. Simultaneously, the landowner called to notify us that he had “accidentally” removed some trees from the property. We followed up this call with an unscheduled site visit the following day. As a result of the site visit, we determined that significant tree-cutting had occurred in the protected area of the property; a clear violation of the terms of the covenant.

During our follow-up discussions with the municipality, it became clear that the landowner had been recently notified of the boundaries of the protected area as part of the permitting process for the home that was under construction on the site. Because of the active construction on the site, the municipality moved very quickly to place a stop-work order on the property. [Note: a stop-work order is generally not an enforcement provision available through a covenant, but because of the circumstances and the involvement of the municipality, it was available in this instance.]

We then proceeded to issue a Notice of Breach of Conservation Covenant to the landowner. Written in the form of a letter, this notice outlined what the breach was, what the remedy provisions of the covenant were and that we required action within 60 days. The combination of this Notice and of the

stop-work order caused the landowner to request a meeting with us and the municipality to negotiate a resolution to the violation.

Because of the nature of the violation, we knew that although site restoration was important, it would be impossible to return the site to its previous state as a mature forest. We were also concerned that the site restoration be both completed and maintained so that the reforestation had a chance to succeed on the site. Failing the agreement by the landowner to both full restoration of the site and a financial penalty, we were prepared to issue a Notice of Enforcement of Rent Charge to the landowner.

Fortunately in this instance, the landowner was prepared to negotiate and we signed a binding agreement in lieu of enforcing the Rent Charge. The landowner agreed to complete the full restoration of the site. The success of the restoration would be secured using a \$10,000, 30 month refundable bond (held by the municipality) and the landowner agreed to pay a financial penalty to TLC (the amount of which is confidential between the parties).

Conclusion

Enforcing violations is never easy, however, we are fortunate in BC that we have the flexibility to negotiate and mediate violations before undertaking court action. For the majority of violations, this flexibility will prevent expensive court action, saving land trusts valuable time and money.

Otherwise - Review continued

I grew up with Mowat's books, and I'm pleased to have read this recent one after having seen a film about his involvement with the Nature Trust of Nova Scotia, profiling this donor who shares his fame, generosity and focus on conservation in his own home territory. If you are looking for a naturalist's tale, or a biological treatise, this isn't the book for you. If you are looking to understand our own humanness, and our basic animal ancestry, this is a book well worth reading.

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Steps to Covenant Enforcement

1. **Drafting a strong covenant** – ensuring that covenants have well written Enforcement Remedies, Rent Charges, Statutory Rights of Way, Restrictions on Land Use and Dispute Resolution clauses will make future enforcement more straightforward.
2. **Regularly scheduled monitoring** – monitoring on a regular schedule will bring violations to light and put land trusts on a stronger legal footing.
3. **Maintaining good relationships** – maintaining good, professional relationships will both prevent future violations but may also bring violations to light.
4. **Good recordkeeping** – tracking the results of monitoring visits, communications with the landowner and other parties will help in defending the covenant to outside parties or the courts.
5. **Annual notification to landowner** – being clear about violations to the covenant and the expected remedy is important. It may also be advantageous to restate the terms of the covenant as part of this reporting as many landowners may not have it at hand.
6. **Dispute Resolution** – in the event of a significant violation or if a dispute arises, the land trust should follow the Dispute Resolution section of the covenant. This section may specify that mediation (or in some cases, arbitration) be used to resolve disputes.
7. **Notice of Breach** – in the event of a violation, be prepared to use a Notice of Breach as a means of stating the details of the violation and outlining the land trust's expectations of the landowner.
8. **Notice of Enforcement of Rent Charge** – if negotiations break down, or are not possible, use a Notice of Enforcement of Rent Charge to notify the landowner that the Rent Charge is being invoked.
9. **Enforcement of the Rent Charge** – using the provisions of the Rent Charge, the land trust may proceed to recover the value of the Rent Charge from the landowner. This will result in court action by the land trust.

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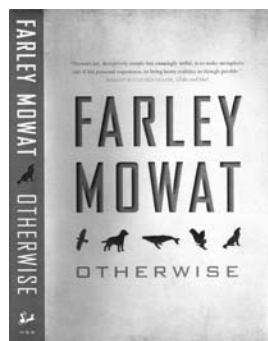
by Farley Mowat

McLelland and Stewart,
Toronto 2008

reviewed by Sheila Harrington

"Mowat's art, deceptively simple but cunningly artful, is to make metaphors of his personal experience, to bring home realities as though parable."

Marion Botsford Fraser, *Globe and Mail*



Mowat's latest book, *Otherwise*, is a memoir of his formative years—as an adolescent exploring Saskatchewan's wilderness and wildlife, through his years offshore in the military during World War II, to his return to Canada where he struggled with the destructive sampling of science and his growing recognition that the "others" as he calls all other living beings, reveal more by observation than dissection.

"Reluctance became revulsion. I killed few and fewer of the Others and spent more of my time just hanging out with them. This led to some remarkable experiences. It enabled me to closely observe a majestic pair of sandhill cranes incubating two enormous, tan-coloured eggs in a nest the size of a truck tire that floated on a muskeg pond. Although initially (and wisely) the big birds were wary, they eventually came to accept my presence with almost as much equanimity as if I had been one of their own kind, and to herald my visits to the next site with the same sonorous cries they gave one another."

The last chapter is a riveting end to this tale of Mowat's early life. With help from a military buddy, after receiving less than satisfactory help from the Territorial government of the day, he makes his own personal delivery to the Ihalmiut (inland Eskimo in the Barren Lands) of ammunition and other stores to keep them from starving over the oncoming winter. Contrasted with this heroism, the final scene relates a more than human tendency (which he admits to wishing he acted otherwise) to fight the wilderness, rather than trust, have courage, or compassion when thrust into a frightful situation facing the unknown "others" from whom we know so little.

Perhaps it is this—an awareness of our fearful and destructive actions—a recognition that we are consuming the planet, which will lead to our salvation. Mowat uses his own life experiences to provide a metaphor for our human tendencies. With it, he provides a glimpse yet again into an unknown world—the wilderness of the Barrens, a wolf den, the beaches of Sicily.

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Lights, Camera, Films for Communities!

by Craig Henderson, *Naramata Conservation*

When I became active in forming a local land trust two years ago, I never expected it to lead into being a movie mogul. Well, that is a stretch of the imagination. But film and video production and presentation has proven to be a great public outreach for Naramata Conservation, a society active in community environmental projects, including land stewardship.

Two years ago, I wrote a local history play for our community Centennial celebrations. During the research, I found there to be a dearth of material on our First Nations history. With start up funding from Naramata Conservation in the name of heritage preservation, we have been a partner in the production of a video describing the use and activities of the Naramata Bench by the Syilx (Okanagan) people prior to the 1907 white settlement.

Naramata: Citxws Peqlqin is a short educational film featuring Okanagan Traditional Knowledge Specialist Richard Armstrong. The recently-completed film includes traditional music and dramatizations of Syilx culture, and was partially filmed on the Nature Trust of BC's Trust Creek property, a Naramata site important to Syilx culture and tradition. The documentary is the work of Armstrong's daughter Victoria Baptiste and her firm Dust Dancer Productions. Other financial partners include the Okanagan Indian Educational Resources Society (En'owkin Centre), the Penticton Museum & Archives, the Naramata Heritage Museum and the Naramata Citizens Association. Financially, Naramata Conservation's initial input of \$900 was leveraged to a total budget of \$3600. I expect to recoup most of that \$900 by donations during the public showing of the video.

Our premiere showing of *Naramata: Citxws Peqlqin* at a January event will include a presentation of Syilx dance and song and a snack of traditional food, such as venison stew, bannock and wild berry preserve. One copy of the DVD will go to Naramata's library, museum and elementary school, and to Naramata Conservation resource centre. Archival video from the project will be held in the collection of the En'owkin Centre and the Penticton Museum & Archives.

Further visual outreach by Naramata Conservation has included the videotaping of a thought-provoking presentation about the fragile Okanagan watershed by Hans Schreier of UBC's Institute for Resources & Environment, and the production of a video documentary profiling the 2007 community Centennial events and Naramata's history.

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NEW: Revised On-line Collection of Land Trust Best Practices & Template Documents

The BC Land Trust Best Practices Collection, originally developed in 2004, has now been revised and ordered according to the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices. This enables land trusts and others to review the Standards and Practices and easily refer to sample template policies and documents to fit the required practices. The newly revised collection is now on-line and thus more readily available for all staff and board members. We will use this new on-line collection in 2009 in conjunction with a pilot Assessment Review process to be undertaken by three land trusts. The new version does not include many of the additional resources that are still available on the CD collection, along with a search function. The on-line compilation will have an operable search function soon. We are offering the land trust who provides the most documents to fill the current gaps one free registration to the 2010 Seminar Series.

Conservation Assistance Fund: subsidies for legal, appraisal, survey, & baseline fees

Thanks to the Notary Foundation of BC, The Real Estate Foundation and the Bullitt Foundation, a total of \$14,000 is available to grant to member land trusts. So far, we have granted \$6000 of that to: Cowichan Community Land Trust Society for the Quamichan Lake Riparian Covenants, The Galiano Conservation Association for a boundary adjustment of the Great Beaver Swamp lands, Denman Conservancy Association for Covenants on the two Lindsay Dickson Nature Reserve blocks and TLC The Land Conservancy for costs associated with appraisals and legal fees on the Kinghorn property, which they will covenant and gift to the Capital Regional District to increase the neighbouring park. The program grants 50% - up to \$3000 per application toward professional services. The guidelines and form are on our website. Please call Sheila Harrington regarding baseline subsidies. The grant program is open until March 31, 2009.

Professional Outreach

In June we presented at the provincial Planning Institute of BC, and we then invited Deborah Curran to join us within our presentation on the Green Bylaws Toolkit. Our section focused on key elements from our report: *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through Conservation*, including some discussion of the valuation methodology we are researching on carbon values (including sinks and sequestra-

tion), biodiversity and other ecosystem service values provided by a protecting existing ecosystems, either through new parks, on covenanted lands or in private conservancy areas. We highlighted several examples from our members of partnerships with local governments which involved long term protection of water, wildlife habitats, farms, parks and their ecosystem services.

We have now arranged for two articles to be printed – one in the Society of BC's Notaries *Scrivener* and another in the BC Law Society's *BarTalk* in the summer of 2009. These will be co-authored by Susan Mehinigic and Sheila Harrington, and they will feature explanations of the urgent needs for conservation, how land trusts protect land, and updates on the tax changes made in 2006 and 2007 which provide further incentives for donors.

We contracted Nora Layard to provide links and contacts with professional advisors (primarily gift planners, lawyers, foundations and other charities) "Building Support for Conservation" in the fall of 2008. We have moved forward with many of her recommendations this spring, including some advertising, workshops, and meetings with associations to ensure that our outreach to professional advisors is successful in increasing support for conservation. We now have several upcoming workshops and presentations planned for 2009 with lawyers, gift planners and financial planners on conservation covenants and other tools for protecting lands in BC.

One of Nora's recommendations is that all our members who have the capacity join their regional chapter of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners - open to individuals from any organization. This will enable you to meet with other foundations, charities and professional advisors who can assist your organization grow your financial support, including donor and planned giving programs.

Government Outreach

Due to the need to raise awareness of the many land trusts and associated organizations and the LTABC's function and services we contracted Michael Dunn as our Government Outreach Liaison during 2008. His goal was to increase awareness of our members work and the role of LTABC with provincial government agencies, in addition to increasing our involvement in the BC Conservation Land Forum. To date, he arranged many successful meetings with both high level staff and ministers in the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Community Services (local government), and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, plus the Integrated

Land Management Bureau. Further, he successfully brought Minister Barry Penner to our April Seminar Series, and presented the LTABC's report *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of Nature*, at the SFU workshop in May on Climate Change Adaptation, coordinated by Jon O'Reardon.

Michael developed a proposal for funding: Capacity Building Grant Program, to support our member land trusts and some of our own programs, based on similar successful agreements in Alberta and Ontario. From some of this initial work, the Integrated Land Management Bureau requested a small contract to bring their Terrestrial Ecosystem Maps onto our website specific to the Coastal Douglas Fir Zone (CDC) – the most important zone for conservation, according to our own report and now the Biodiversity BC report, *Taking Nature's Pulse*.

Unfortunately, a spending freeze and ministry and staff changes have postponed this work. We will continue in 2009 to present this funding program for support to other staff and the new ministers responsible for these land management and environmental government agencies and hope that this multi-year proposal will be successfully funded in 2009.

We continue to disseminate our report, *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of Nature* extensively to government representatives including the Climate Action Team, the Premier, the Ministers, Deputy Ministers and others in key Environmental, Forestry, Community Services ministries. We have had tremendous support and congratulations on the report, were nominated for a Stewardship Award with the Islands Trust Fund as a result, and our report has been cited numerous times. It serves as a great resource for promoting conservation of nature in presentations and other outreach. Contact our office if you wish further hard copies - now reprinted and available.




BC Trust for Public Lands/ Conservation Land Forum

LTABC's integration into the BC Trust for Public Lands and the Conservation Land Forum on behalf of our local member land trusts has developed. Our representative in 2008 was Kate Emmings, staff with the Islands Trust Fund, and a member of our board. We met with Stuart Gale the Executive Director of Biodiversity BC (the Technical Subcommittee) and alerted him to our education and research programs. He is now working with us on disseminating *Taking Nature's Pulse*, and wishes to be involved in our offset

research and potential program. We also were invited to put forward an LTABC representative to the Management Committee. We selected Keith Erikson of Galiano Conservancy, for this position, as they have been working on reforestation and land management for many years. Note that the Request for Proposals for management projects forwarded to you closes February 15th, 2009. If you have questions about the acquisition funds available through the BC Trust for Public Lands, please contact Les Bogdan, at Ducks Unlimited Canada, 604-592-0987 ext 222.

We are near completion of the revised Protected Lands Catalogue database and the BC Lands in Trust Registry to integrate with the BC Trust for Public Lands NGO Conservation database program. This second program was initiated by CWS and DUC and we were invited in 2007 to revise our system to match this new provincial/federal/province-wide consortium's system which will include passcode protected polygon mapping of the sites to be featured on the Community Mapping Network website. This has been a lengthy and extensive integration, due to the complex levels of reporting required for other regional, national and international programs. We hope through this combined system, we will receive more up to date information from all land trusts. We have completed our own system revision and await full integration with the Conservation Land Forum partners before making final changes to the website where we will continue to host the publically viewable collection of protected private lands in BC, without displaying locations.



Member Services & Communications

The LTABC initiated a new bi-monthly ENEWS service in 2008. This monthly electronic notification about related news, conferences and other conservation events, new resources, and funding deadlines is sent to all our members in addition to the BC Land trust listserve. We've had several member groups contact us and thank us for this new service, providing readily available information in one place.

We welcome submissions to *The Kingfisher* and ask that all of your own communications products and media releases be sent to us. If they are of interest beyond your own region, we may seek permission to include them in the ENEWS or *The Kingfisher* or through other outreach opportunities.

People Protecting Places: don't forget that we have both the two minute and 30 second public service announcements containing excerpts from the interviews we did in 2007 with

donors and landowners who protected their land with BC's land trusts. We also have a series of related b/w advertisements that we are happy to share with you to promote land conservation and stewardship.

LTABC will be asking our members to fill in and return an important survey early this year. We are seeking to identify the services and resources needed most for the next few years, and to identify and compile statistics on funding sources, membership, your local natural area threats and your successes in order to work with our council, staff and contractors to meet our number one Strategic Goal – to build strong land trusts. We will use the compiled funding data to take to foundations and government agencies to advocate for increased funding for the stewardship, conservation and management activities needed to steward, restore and protect lands for the long term. We are also asking for three land trusts to volunteer to undertake a BC Assessment of Standards & Practices pilot project in 2009. There is no cost for working with us to develop a Guide to BC Assessment of the Standards & Practices, and we will ensure that your assessment results in a notice of successful completion on our website, and to funding agencies.



Valuing Conservation Lands: Offset Research

There is some momentum building at last for assistance with biodiversity conservation as a result of the changing international mood for carbon stewardship. Carbon stewardship mitigates carbon emissions and provides adaptation options through land conservation. LTABC is working hard on a variety of fronts to promote carbon stewardship as an integral part of what land trusts can offer—and make sure that government and the public know that this is a valuable service.

This global shift and interest in valuing nature is a key focus that the Land Trust Alliance of BC has taken since 2000, with our first report on the topic: *Valuing Natural Capital in Canada*, following by our 2nd report, specific to BC, *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of Nature*. Now we are working on a 3rd report—to help provide a standard methodology for valuing conservation lands.

Dr. Richard Hebda and Dirk Brinkman are currently working on a report with Briony Penn called *Protecting Communities and Climates: Credible Conservation Offsets for Conserving Lands in BC*. The report will provide an over-

view of methods currently under various stages of development (internationally and nationally) and suggest protocols for evaluating the reduction and potential sequestration in carbon emissions that will occur with the conservation of new natural areas, adding value for protection of biodiversity and other ecological services. Our goal is to provide a credible methodology so that land trusts, local governments and other conservation-related organizations and agencies might soon be able to utilise carbon offset programs that will provide much needed funding for properties otherwise at risk from urbanization or land use change.

Up until recently, the majority of the debates within the Kyoto Protocol have been aimed at reducing emissions of carbon from fossil fuels. Only since the climate talks in Bali and recently in Poznan, Poland, have the debates focused on the critical role of natural forests to store carbon (sinks), and the urgent need to reduce emissions of “green” carbon due to deforestation and degradation of natural ecosystems. Deforestation and other resource/land use changes are the second leading cause of global emissions. To reduce this impact, the upcoming 2009 Copenhagen Declaration will include a protocol for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). The implications of this protocol are that not only is the climate changing for ecosystems but the climate is changing for conservation work.

The new protocol in Copenhagen might set the world stage for including degradation of land and deforestation as a high priority, regulated type of emission. Up until now, carbon accounting for degradation has not been part of the regulated sector. Carbon credits for avoiding degradation or deforestation, i.e., nature conservation, have only really shown up in the voluntary sector in tropical rainforests at a low level of involvement. This all might change in December 2009. Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said at the opening of the political session at the 2007 UNFCCC in Bali, “What the world needs is ‘Less emissions, more sinks.’”

Much of the shift has been due to scientific advances in our understanding of the biosphere's role as a carbon sink, and how carbon cycles operate in different forests and under different management practices. Federal scientists have researched carbon accounting for forests based on calculations of: 1) the carbon carrying capacity; 2) current carbon stocks; and 3) the carbon sequestration potential.

The BC government under the Climate Action Plan has started to recognize that land managers will have three roles in impacting climate change: 1) reducing emissions through adopting low carbon management practices; 2) protecting

natural ecosystems as long term sinks; and 3) the restoration of degraded lands for carbon sequestration.

In California, one of BC's partners in the Western Climate Initiative, low carbon forest management practices and forest conservation are being used in carbon offset programs, and the first set of draft protocols have been developed for how forest projects will be evaluated for carbon sinks. BC's new Emission Offset Regulation was passed in an Order in Council December 2008.

Meanwhile, LTABC has been sitting at the table with other ENGOs, the Biodiversity, Forests and Climate Working Group, which includes David Suzuki Foundation, Forest Ethics, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, West Coast Environmental Law and BC Spaces for Nature, to develop an action plan for conservation in BC. The backbone of the action plan is a report *The Credible Case for Nature Conservation in British Columbia: Biodiversity, Carbon, and Climate Change*, authored by Dr. Jim Pojar. The report will include an extensive review and analysis of both the state of biodiversity and our changing climate with scientific recommendations on why and how we need to protect nature.

It is a busy and exciting time for LTABC. There is a growing recognition of our distinctive role to engage land trusts and the conservation community to identify and protect key private lands where many of our endangered ecosystems and species are found. Carbon offsets are a potential means by which we can get the much-needed financial support for the task of protecting them through acquisition or covenants. As stated in LTABC's media release December 5th, we need to Protect Nature Today: Plant Trees Tomorrow. "Considering the climate crisis, these are times when a tree left standing can have a greater value, in public opinion and on a free market, than one cut. Storing carbon in forests and protecting biodiversity must be included in the suite of climate change programs available to government, industry and individuals."

We are very grateful to the Real Estate Foundation, The Vancouver Foundation, The Bullitt Foundation, The Notary Foundation, Mountain Equipment Coop and VanCity for their support of our many programs in 2009!

**** 2010 Seminar Series will be at Naramata once again!

Film Reviews continued from page 39

Our environmental film series is now in its third season, and it's proven to be a wonderful way to increase environmental consciousness in Naramata. Over the past three seasons, I've handled the licensing issue for public performance in different ways. Perhaps I should go film-by-film so you have a sense of how we were able to screen the individual films.

The first two films we screened were *An Inconvenient Truth* in November, 2006 and *Who Killed the Electric Car* in January, 2007. We partnered with the Naramata Community Church and used the regional United Church film screening license through ACF, one of the major non-theatrical film distributors in Canada www.acf-film.com. The admission-by-donation raised \$800 and it was given to the church for energy efficiency renovations.

In the 2007-2008 film season, I made contact with Jane Gutteridge at the National Film Board in Toronto, and she provided three films: *Manufactured Landscapes*, *Radiant City* and *Being Caribou*. There is no cost to non-profits for showing the NFB films, and the three screenings raised \$330. That revenue is going toward a community Christmas tree chipping program in January, 2009.

In February, 2008, we showed *Tableland*, a production partially shot in Naramata, celebrating the culture of local food. I paid \$100 to the producer and the screening event raised \$230, which was given to local Salvation Army Foodbank.

During the current 2008-2009 film series, an NFB production, *The World According to Monsanto*, raised \$146. The second event featured two non-NFB films, *Garbage! The Revolution Begins at Home* and *The Story of Stuff*. I paid \$135 for the films, and the donations raised \$140. In January, 2009, we'll screen the NFB's *Up the Yangtze*. February, 2009 I have committed to a fee of \$237 to show the highly acclaimed *Addicted to Plastic*. I do not expect to break even on the latter, but sometimes a film's message calls it to be shown no matter what the cost!

I always strive to have the film selections be topical and current. For the most part, the film series breaks even financially. More importantly though, it is our best outreach to engage our citizens, show them displays about our activities, and increase their consciousness about issues like: recycling, global warming, unchecked suburban sprawl, the plight of species at risk, among other topics. As for the future of local video production, I wonder if the Oscars will ever have a 'Best Picture in Supporting Land Stewardship' category? Craig Henderson

ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION NEWS

Sacred Headwaters Safe for the Next Two Years: The BC Government has announced a two-year moratorium on coalbed methane drilling in Skeena's Sacred Headwaters. View the press release at <http://www.skeenawatershed.com/>

Endangered Rivers List, 2009: The nomination process for the new 2009 Endangered Rivers List is now commencing and will run through March 7. The new list will be released in late March or early April, 2009. Nominations can be sent directly to Mark Angelo mark_angelo@bcit.ca. Last year's endangered rivers background is available at www.orcbc.ca/ www.orcbc.ca/

Brave New Agreement for our Shared Marine Heritage: A bold new ocean agreement to develop a comprehensive marine plan for an enormous area of British Columbia's coast known as the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) has been announced. Read more at <http://www.livingoceans.org/media/news12110801.aspx>

Burns Bog threatened by South Fraser Perimeter Road project in Surrey: This road has the ability to destroy the Conservation Area of Burns Bog which was purchased with taxpayers money to the tune of \$73 million. Scientists from 19 countries at the Peatland Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, supported resolutions calling for the purchase or expropriation of Burns Bog and declaring it a Ramsar Site (areas of international importance). This road goes through unprotected bogland, agriculturally important farmland and habitat, the Sandhill cranes and Southern Red-backed vole to name a few species threatened by the South Fraser Perimeter Road. Please voice your support for the Sandhill cranes and the wee Southern Red-backed vole by contacting your local MP, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Premier Gordon Campbell, MLA Guy Gentner, MP Sukh Dhaliwal Dhaliwal.S@parl.gc.ca and your local MLA and MP. Go to our website, print off our petition, fill it out and send it to the Burns Bog Conservation Society. www.burnsbog.org

Merve Wilkinson was presented an Honourary Membership to the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) on Jan. 13th. Previously he was awarded the Order of Canada, Order of British Columbia and an honorary doctorate from the University of Victoria, in addition to a Stewardship Award from Wildlife Habitat Canada. This will be another well-deserved accolade in his greatly decorated life. Merve's Wildwood Farm is a protected Ecoforestry site (owned by TLC The Land Conservancy) with a life estate held by Merve. Wilkinson notes that despite producing 2.1 million feet of wood from the 70 acre Wildwood forest, the standing tree volume has increased by over 10 per cent. He regularly provides tours to students and any one else interested in his methods. Contact Jay Rastogi, at Wildwood (250) 816-1816 or email jrastogi@conservancy.bc.ca

Profits to the Planet: The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced that it is launching a new conservation fund called the Earth Profits Fund. This new Fund would channel

corporate money to causes like forest protection. The fund will ask the world's 500 wealthiest corporations to dedicate one percent of their profits to protect threatened forests, fisheries and other at-risk ecosystems around the world. <http://www.emagazine.com/view/?4441>

Trails Strategy for B.C.: Anyone who is interested in reviewing the "Draft Trails Strategy for British Columbia: on the Provincial website. There is a "Trails Strategy Feedback Information Form" on this website. Visit http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/sites_trails/initiatives/Prov_Trails_Strategy/Open_Houses.htm Changes are being urged for the management of thousands of km. of trails across B.C. with the goal of resolving issues of funding, public access, environmental protection and enforcement, and conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users. The plan will eventually create a database of trails the public can access. So far, the committee has categorized close to 30,000 km of trails -- provincial parks and Crown land, Parks Canada, municipal and regional -- but recognizes that this is only a small fraction of the total. The draft report also emphasized the importance of protecting the environment and public safety on trails, with the potential to enlist the support of conservation officers, RCMP, and forest officers. For further information or to comment on the draft report, visit www.tca.gov.bc.ca/sites%5FTrails

GOVERNMENT & TAX INCENTIVES

Federal Budget 2009 Environmental Highlights To read the details of the 2009 Budget, visit: www.budget.gc.ca/2009/home-accueil-eng.asp

Important Changes for Registered Charities

For charities with fiscal periods ending on or after January 1, 2009: There is a new Form T3010B(09), Registered Charity Information Return to be used along with T1235(09), Directors/Trustees and Like Officials Worksheet and T1236(09), Qualified Donees Worksheet/Amounts Provided to Other Organizations. It is anticipated that the new form will reduce the filing burden for smaller charities, and will also provide the public with more meaningful information about registered charities, to allow them to make more informed donor decisions.

Changes to disbursement quota: One of the disbursement quota rules requires charities to spend 3.5% of the value of all of their property not used directly in charitable activities or administration. Previously this rule only applied to foundations but as of 2009 it will apply to all charitable organizations. (Note: if the amount reported on line 5900 is \$25,000 or less, the 3.5% disbursement obligation is deemed to be nil.)

New fundraising policy guidelines: Check the CRA website in the next few months at for their new approach to assessing whether a charity's fundraising is in compliance with the requirements of the Income Tax Act. Although this policy will not represent new regulations or requirements it will include helpful suggestions for best practices in managing your fundraising. This can help ensure

your organization is in compliance with the Income Tax Act. www.cra.gc.ca/charities

The Charities Partnership and Outreach Program: Designed to provide time-limited funding to registered charities and non-profit organizations in Canada to develop and deliver innovative education and training on compliance to registered charities. The 08/09 funding cycle is nearing the end, so frequently check their website under “Call for proposals” for application deadline updates for the 09/10 funding cycle. <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/chrts/fndng/menu-eng.html>

Federal tax incentives for the rehabilitation of heritage properties: The Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ (FCM) National Board of Directors adopted an important resolution calling for federal financial incentives in support of the rehabilitation of heritage buildings. The resolution, SOC08.3.07 Federal Tax Incentives for Heritage Places, calls on the Government of Canada to establish financial tax measures for the rehabilitation of heritage properties which would encourage private sector investment. For further information Heritage Canada Federation’s Director of Communications, Carolyn Quinn, cquinn@heritagecanada.org

Government response to the combined BC ENGO comments on Climate Action: View all comments responding to the Climate Action Team’s recommendations and for additional information about climate action in British Columbia. Note that the Climate Action Secretariat has now moved to the Ministry of Environment. Please visit <http://www.livesmartbc.ca>

Western Toad / Amphibian Monitoring Program in BC

The provincial government is interested in monitoring Western Toads (*Bufo boreas*) and other amphibians in BC. We are seeking volunteers, individuals or groups that would like to monitor water bodies in their area (e.g., wetlands, lakes, and ponds) for amphibians in spring and summer. If you have information about toad breeding sites in your area, or want to volunteer for this monitoring program please contact Elke Wind (ewind@telus.net).

The Columbia Valley has become the first community in Canada to adopt a comprehensive conservation fund tax. The RDEK formally adopted Bylaw No. 2083 on Friday, December 12. For more info, see the press release at http://www.ekcp.ca/EKCP_LCF.html.

In British Columbia, the Capital Regional District on southern Vancouver Island established a Land Acquisition Fund in 2000. Since the establishment of the fund, CRD Parks has purchased 1,876 hectares of regionally significant green space. Likewise, the Greater Vancouver Regional District established the Heritage Parkland Fund in 1994. The Fund is viewed as an effective means of acquiring land for GVRD parks and greenways. The Islands Trust Fund also receives funds from the Islands Trust (therefore tax payers) for operational costs. Some of these operational costs may include those associated with land conservation (e.g. survey

costs, legal fees for covenant review, landowner contact/education programs, regional conservation planning). However, none of the funds from Islands Trust go directly to the purchase of land (land acquisition).

Islands Trust to protect sacred places of First Nations: Islands Trust approves deal in principle to protect sacred places of Hul’qumi’num. This landmark agreement could become a template for agreements all over B.C. <http://www.canada.com/vancouversun/news/westcoastnews/story.html?id=66583a13-ed2-43c3-ae83-964cc9eaa8af>

The revised Conservation Framework: British Columbia’s new approach for maintaining the rich biodiversity of the province to ensure BC is a spectacular place with healthy, natural and diverse ecosystems. Developed by Ministry of Environment in collaboration with scientists, conservationists, industry and government. Visit <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/conservationframework/>

RESOURCES

RESTORE is a weekly e-bulletin, published by the Society for Ecological Restoration International (SER), linking you to the latest, breaking news stories from around the world keeping you up-to-date on a wide variety of topics related to ecological restoration including the latest funding opportunities. RESTORE is free to SER International members and can be subscribed to for only \$20/year at http://www.ser.org/content/restoration_network.asp

Environment Canada’s Wildlife and Landscape Science News is a quarterly update for scientists, practitioners, managers, policy makers and others working to understand, conserve and manage Canada’s wildlife and habitats. Visit <http://www.ec.gc.ca/scitech/default.asp?lang=En&n=E1DDDE718-1>

The Biodiversity Heritage Library: Ten major natural history museum libraries, botanical libraries, and research institutions have joined to form the Biodiversity Heritage Library Project. The group is developing a strategy and operational plan to digitize the published literature of biodiversity held in their respective collections. This literature will be available through a global “biodiversity commons.” Visit their site at www.biodiversitylibrary.org

A Landowner’s Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences: Christine Paige (author). Landowner/ Wildlife Resource Program published through Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Download the entire guide at <http://fwp.mt.gov/content/getItem.aspx?id=34461>

Evaluating Competitive Ability of Native Grasses to exclude Scotch Broom: Source: Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council (PNW IPC). Evaluating the competitive ability of native grasses to exclude Scotch Broom. Investigator: Timothy B. Harrington, Pacific Northwest Research Station, USDA Forest Service,

Olympia, WA. View the report online at: <http://pnw-ipc.org/docs/FS%20scotch%20broom.mht>

Planning for Biodiversity: A Guide for BC Farmers and Ranchers: Resources, workshops and downloads available at http://www.bcac.bc.ca/EFP_pages/documents/index.html

State of the World's Birds by Bird Life International: Why birds and biodiversity are so important and what we can do to improve the status of birds. See the full report at <http://www.biodiversityinfo.org/sowb/default.php?r=sowbhome>

Articles on Environmental Behaviours of Canadians and Household GHG Emissions: On December 9, Statistics Canada published two articles on the environmental impacts of Canadians' lifestyles. The first, "Canadian participation in an environmentally active lifestyle", examines six environmental behaviours at the household level and the positive level of activity shown by Canadian households across this range of behaviours. The second, "Greenhouse gas emissions: a focus on Canadian households", examines households' direct and indirect GHG emissions and how they were responsible for almost half of Canada's total emissions in 2004. To read the articles visit <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/16-002-x/16-002-x2008004-eng.pdf>

The East Kootenay Integrated Lake Management Partnership: Formed in 2006 in response to concerns about the fast pace of shoreline development in the East Kootenays, the partnership has recently completed two projects for Lake Windermere: "Foreshore Inventory and Mapping Report" and a "Fish and Wildlife Habitat Assessment Report". Available at http://www.rdek.bc.ca/east_kootenay_integrated_lake_ma.htm

The Columbia Basin Trust: A new State of the Basin Report and website has now been launched. CBT is testing a model for monitoring and reporting on social, environmental, economic and cultural trends in the CBT area. CBT is strongly encouraging feedback on the model by completing the feedback survey that accompanies the report. It is available at http://www.cbt.org/Initiatives/State_of_the_Basin/

Invasive Plant Council of BC unveils new website: The site is designed to help users easily identify priority invasive plants, find resources and contacts, encourage membership, foster community involvement, and be an effective resource for invasive plant managers, individuals and organizations, as well as the news media. Visit this new site at www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca

"Reptiles at Risk": A non-profit organization touring Canada, in partnership with Laurentian University and the Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Network. Reptiles are the most "at risk" class of wildlife in Canada, with 79% classified as endangered, threatened or of special concern by COSEWIC. <http://www.reptilesatrisk.org/>

Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan: Covers all industries including one-person firms, home business and farms. The plan provides dental and health options, guaranteed renewable contract, fully pooled price stability, business overhead benefits. <http://www.bccchamber.org/members/partners/cofcgi.html>

The Environmental Law Centre recently worked with the Continuing Legal Education Society of BC to produce the one day course: Environmental Law: In the Public Interest (held September 19, 2008 in Vancouver). To continue that discussion and education, Ecojustice, the Environmental Law Centre and West Coast Environmental Law Association are launching a network for lawyers involved in public interest environmental law. At this initial stage the network will consist of a listserve to which lawyers may post recent developments in the law, ask questions, and provide updates on cases and issues. To join in this ongoing venue to further our understanding of public interest environmental law Subscribe to the network listserve, and email Deborah Curran at dcurranandco.ca

Species at Risk Primer: The Stewardship Centre for BC and Environment Canada have partnered to create a new on-line resource to learn about species at risk in your region. Called "Species at Risk & Local Government: a Primer for BC" it is available at <http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca>

Speaking for the Salmon reports published in 2008:

- Vod/pod cast of Canada Ocean Lecture: Lament for a Nation's Oceans presented by Dr. Jeff Hutchings, Canada Research Chair in Conservation and Biodiversity, Dalhousie University, presented at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU. (<http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/science-undernewsandevents>)

- Encouraging Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Salmon Aquaculture - Proceedings from a workshop at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU 2. Proceedings from a Think Tank on Transferable Shares in the Salmon Industry - report from a think tank at SFU Vancouver.

Speaking for the Salmon reports published in 2008:

- Coming soon: Report from - Salmon and Nutrients - A seminar on science and policy, SFU Proceedings from - The Haig Brown Symposium on Sustaining Wild Salmon: Moving from Words to Action, Campbell River, BC

(<http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/science/salmon.htm>)

Carters Professional Corporation: Provides information on legal issues of interest to charities and not-for-profit organizations both in Canada and internationally in the form of articles, seminar materials and newsletters. www.charitylaw.ca

TechSoup: A source of low-cost software. Get Microsoft products normally priced in the hundreds of dollars for \$10 and often at no charge. Canadian non-profits who are listed on Canada Revenue Agency's website as registered charities are eligible and a simple on-line registration process is all that's required. www.techsoup.com
Free Anti-spyware software: Ad-Aware www.adaware.com

CLIMATE CHANGE

Symposium: Fish, Wildlife and Climate Change Adaptation: two day symposium at University of Victoria on climate science among the fish and wildlife community. interested participants should contact Jenny.Feick@gov.bc.ca.

New report About Climate Change and its Impacts on British Columbia: A summary of the current scientific knowledge on projected Sea Level Changes for B.C. in the 21st Century. To view the report visit: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/climate/pdfs/sea-level-changes-08.pdf>

New Report Available on Ecosystems and Climate Change: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released a report that can help reduce the potential impacts of climate change on estuaries, forests, wetlands, coral reefs, and other sensitive ecosystems. The report, entitled 'Preliminary Review of Adaptation Options for Climate-Sensitive Ecosystems and Resources', identifies strategies to protect the environment as these changes occur. Visit http://www.gcrl.org/orders/product_info.php?products_id=210&osCsid=n3d5cgjb2v2m213ifcqr0jee7 Also check out <http://www.gcrl.org/>

ACT releases Background Report on Biodiversity Recommendations: ACT have now released their Adaptation to Climate Change and Biodiversity Background Report. This report is a compendium of research references and conclusions supporting their first policy recommendations: Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity: Transitioning to an Ecosystem-based Economy in British Columbia. An updated version of these recommendations is available on-line at <http://www.sfu.ca/act/>

Can wetland restoration cool the planet? Scientists are boosting research efforts to determine whether the cooling power of carbon storage outstrips the global warming potential of methane in wetlands. They are finding that the greatest cooling occurs from saltwater marshes. View the latest report from ACS Publications at <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es802790q>

Climate Change: The Growing Cost of the Old Business as Usual "Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) staff are concerned that unless development in areas prone to climate change is mitigated by strong adaptation measures the cost and availability of insurance could become a problem for homeowners and businesses." More at www.communitytransition.org

Welcome to the Climate Community: This is a new innovative Web platform on climate change solutions. The Climate Community provides high-quality news, interviews, solutions, climate intelligence, virtual discussions, as well as updates on the political process towards the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen, in December 2009. Visit <http://www.copenhagenclimatecouncil.com/>

UPCOMING EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

6th Annual Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team Research Colloquium February 20, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Pacific Forestry Centre, 506 West Burnside Road, Victoria, B.C. This colloquium is a series of presentations by those planning and/or conducting research and restoration pertinent to Garry Oak ecosystems to communicate their studies and state of progress, facilitate discussion, build/strengthen links among workers and agencies, and accelerate research and its application to restoration of Garry Oak and associated ecosystems. Attendance is free, although pre-registration is required. Please reply to BOTH Mike Meagher at mmeagher@pfc.forestry.ca, Tel: 250-363-6066 AND Kersti Vaino at kersti.vaino@goert.ca, Tel: 250-383-5449.

State of the Fraser Basin Conference: February 19- 20, Vancouver "The Many Faces of Sustainability: Strategies and Success Stories for Today's Leaders" conference is to be held in conjunction with the first-ever Youth Congress Uniting for Sustainability and the 2009 Sustainability Awards Gala Dinner. <http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca>

The Columbia Mountains Institute has issued a call for papers for "Conserving Wetlands in British Columbia". The conference will be held May 28-29, 2009. Submissions are due February 20, 2009 (www.cmiae.org).

Get Outside! It's in our Nature BC's 2nd regional Children's Family and Nature forum March 5-8 University of Victoria & Royal Roads University. This forum offers an opportunity for academics, government, practitioners, researchers and youth to learn, share and contribute to developing a strategy and action plan for BC and its people with the ongoing commitment to the responsibility of communicating these objectives and recommended next action steps to all stakeholders and government. Special guest speakers: Richard Louv (Saturday night free lecture at Victoria Conference Centre. Register by phone, 250-391-2600, ext. 4801; or Toll Free at 1-866-890-0220. or online at <http://www.royalroads.ca/continuing-studies>

The Art Gallery of Golden and Wildsight invite you to attend the "Columbia Wetlands – Natural Inspiration" running until March 28th at the Art Gallery of Golden (516-9th Ave North). Check out the art on-line at <http://www.kickinghorseculture.ca/agog/wetlands/index.html>

3-Day Intensive Organic Soil Management (for busy professionals) Dates vary (see below) Connecting soil health, plant health and animal health. Leading edge information for landscape professionals who don't have time for the Organic Master Gardener course. Now offered in 4 locations! Burnaby: January 30 - February 1, Register with Burnaby Continuing Education (604) 664-8888; Calgary: March 16 – 18, Register online at <http://www.gaiacollege.ca>; Toronto: March 27 – 29, Register online at <http://www.gaiacollege.ca>; Victoria: February 6 – 8, Register with Royal Roads University

Helping the Helper Workshops – 2009 Workshop Series for Non Profit Leaders. Dates vary, see below. Workshops will be held in

four B.C. locations – Victoria, Nanaimo, Burnaby and Langley. This year's topics are "Leadership" – exploring the dilemmas that threaten goal attainment: March 10 (Victoria), March 12 (Burnaby); "Evaluation" – tools to collect data about the outcome of your organization: April 21 (Victoria), April 23 (Burnaby); "Financial Management" – for fundraising success: May 12 (Victoria), May 14 (Burnaby), Sept 22 (Nanaimo), Sept 24 (Langley); "Governance" – building successful Boards.: June 2 (Nanaimo), June 4 (Langley); "Communications" – getting to "yes" in principled negotiations: June 16 (Victoria), June 18 (Burnaby); "Human Resources" – moving successfully through change: Oct 27 (Victoria), Oct 29 (Burnaby). For registration and detailed program information call The Centre for Non Profit Management 250-472-5342 or visit www.cnpm.ca

From Species to Landscapes: Extending knowledge on dry forest and grassland species at risk. Dates and locations vary (see below) Saving species at risk means saving their habitats. Workshop participants will gain a greater awareness of local issues, options for effective communication of key messages, and the provincial approach that coordinates recovery actions for grassland species at risk. Workshops are co-sponsored by FORREX, the Grassland Conservation Council of BC and the Ministry of Environment. Penticton: February 4; Kamloops: March 3-4; Williams Lake: March 5-6. For details visit <http://www.forrex.org/>

The Hollyhock Leadership Institute presents an exciting new program line-up for 2009: The Work That Reconnects: Finding purpose & renewal in a time of upheaval, March 14-March 15, Vancouver. The Art of Storytelling: Engaging the public in your cause, March 27, Vancouver. The Nuts & Bolts of Fundraising: Getting what you need in tough economic times, April 6, Vancouver. Get that Grant! Strategies for grassroots organizations, April 7, Vancouver. For full details and registration information on these and dozens of other timely programs, visit their website at www.hollyhockleadership.org

Vancouver Island Roundtable "Get and Manage Gifts of Real Estate" March 11, Noon – 3:30 pm (Registration 11:40 am) at the Union Club, 805 Gordon Street, Victoria. Presented by Doug Puffer of SFU, Blair Hammond of Environment Canada and Sheila Harrington of the Land Trust Alliance of BC. CAGP Members: \$20.00 Non-Members: \$30.00 (includes luncheon). For more information or to RSVP contact Natasha Benn at nbenn@uvic.ca

Partners in Flight Western Working Group Spring Meeting, Penticton, April 2009 April 15-17, 2009 in Penticton, BC. This spring, Partners in Flight Great Basin Program, Environment Canada are hosting the WWG meeting in beautiful Penticton, British Columbia, near Canada's only true desert, amongst sagebrush, ponderosa pines, lakes, wineries, orchards, microbreweries, the land of peaches and beaches! The meeting will be held at the Ramada Inn & Suites in Penticton, BC, Canada. <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/PIF/description.cfm#Regional>

2009 BC Land Summit May 20 – 22 Whistler, BC. LTABC along with five other partner organizations will combine our conferences and co-host the 2009 BC Land Summit in Whistler, BC. This will be the Alliance's Annual Conference for 2009. The organizing team is pleased to confirm the following exciting line up of high profile keynote speakers... Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Sherry Kafka Wagner, Thomas Berger O.C., Q.C., O.B.C., Dr. Richard Hebda Ph D. Don't miss this exciting event! For more information on the conference, sponsorship, and to keep up to date, visit: <http://www.bclandsummit.com>

The Columbia Mountains Institute is offering a two-day course on Ecological Approaches to Invasive Plant Management on May 26-27, 2009 at the Hillcrest Hotel in Revelstoke. For details and to register, visit www.cmia.org.

The 4th National Stewardship and Conservation Conference "Strengthening Stewardship – Investing at Every Step" will be held in Calgary on July 8-11, 2009. For details, go to www.stewardship2009.ca.

FUNDING DEADLINES

LTABC is pleased to offer a Conservation Assistance Program and Baseline Inventory Subsidies – granting up to \$3000 per application to land trusts for your hard costs associated with land protection. Funding for this program has been generously provided through the Notary Foundation of BC. Deadline March 30, 2009. We also have some funding from the Real Estate Foundation of BC for subsidies toward baseline inventories. Applications and Guidelines are on our website at www.landtrustalliance.bc.ca

Communities in Transition is a signature program of the Real Estate Foundation of BC. For more information regarding CIT applications and projects please contact Jen McCaffrey, CIT Coordinator with the Real Estate Foundation of BC at info@communitytransition.org or 604-688-6800 /1-866-912-6800

Partners in Organizational Development (POD): The Centre for Sustainability delivers technical assistance grant programs for not-for-profit organizations in BC's health and social services, arts and heritage, and environment fields. POD grants assist organizations that would like to enhance their organizational effectiveness. The next deadline for EnviroPOD is February 27th, 2009. Information will be announced on the EnviroPOD site at <http://centreforsustainability.ca/programs/EnviroPOD.html>

NCC - Government of Canada Natural Areas Conservation Program: Update for Land Trusts - As has been announced previously, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has the ability to sub-grant up to \$15 million of federal funding to qualifying land trusts under the NCC-Government of Canada Natural Areas Conservation Program. NCC expects the first application window to close on April 30, 2009 with funding of up to \$6.0 million available to support qualifying land securement projects submitted in this period. Should you have any questions, please contact Clare Bonnell, NCC's Manager, Conservation Partnership Programs at clare.bonnell@natureconservancy.ca

**THE LAND TRUST ALLIANCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA THANKS OUR MANY FINANCIAL AND
IN-KIND SUPPORTERS WHO GENEROUSLY HELP US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION**

The Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia
& Communities in Transition Initiative
The Bullitt Foundation
The Vancouver Foundation
VanCity
Mountain Equipment Coop
The BC Notary Foundation
Tides Canada, Endswell Foundation
The Victoria Foundation
Wildlife Habitat Canada
The EJLB Foundation
The Mountaineers Foundation
TD - Friends of the Environment Foundation
TREC - Training Resources for the
Environmental Community
The Hamber Foundation
Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
Pacific Salmon Foundation, Fraser Salmon
& Watersheds Program
Individual anonymous donors & countless volunteers!

Opus Framing
Ducks Unlimited Canada
TLC The Land Conservancy of Canada
Islands Trust and Islands Trust Fund
Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
Parks Canada
Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative & Action Plan
BC Ministry of Community Development,
Cooperatives and Volunteers
BC Ministry of Environment
Stewardship Centre for British Columbia
Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team
Robert & Brigit Bateman, Johnathan Grant
Jacques Whitford Limited,
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