



# The Kingfisher

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The Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia

*Spreading the news about conserving  
B.C.'s natural and cultural diversity.*



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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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BC Grasslands: Moon over Lower Grasslands of Lac du Bois Provincial Park; Aspen Copse; and Rabbitbrush (all by Richard Doucette).

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# TIME TO RESURRECT RIO: THE CASE FOR CARBON STEWARDSHIP

*Guest Editorial by Briony Penn*

**B**ack in 1992 at the Rio UN World Summit on Environment and Development there were three conventions passed: one on Biological Diversity, one on Climate Change, and one to Combat Desertification. These three separate points were singled out for specific reasons. Biodiversity, or the living component of the environment, was singled out to focus attention on the unique set of factors required for the protection of species and habitat. Desertification, a process leading to environmental degradation, was singled out to organise the particular geopolitical factors of desertification. Climate change, a major cause of desertification and loss of biodiversity, was also singled out because of the particular relationship of climate change to energy use and fossil fuels. Those three interrelated principles (a subject, a process and a cause) were collectively meant to bring together the countries of the world to tackle the overarching issue of environmental degradation.

Sixteen years later, all that has persisted from the Rio Summit is a politically-driven concern for one cause (climate change) that in itself has been boiled down to one element—carbon—and only carbon in its ancient form. Biodiversity, nature or living systems (whatever we want to call it) has become the Rio reject. There has been declining policy on biodiversity in almost all countries since the hiatus around the Biodiversity Convention in the 90s.

In the first round of the Kyoto Protocol, living carbon was excluded as an eligible form of credit in the carbon markets. The protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allowed voluntary and temporary carbon markets for forest sinks (whereby industrial polluters could offset emissions through protecting tropical rainforests) but these represented less than one percent of all the other transactions in the CDM. Relative to the formal carbon markets, this measure to curb emissions has been negligible, despite the fact that deforestation and changes in land use are in the top five leading causes of global warming. An integrated concept of environment has been replaced by a singular focus on energy and carbon.

There are lots of complex reasons why this has emerged and why the Biological Diversity convention wasn't implemented, but there is also one simple explanation for why mitigation has centred around carbon: there is lots of business at stake when it comes to carbon. Carbon in the atmosphere can also be quantified, added, removed and/or traded. A price can be assigned and it becomes a mechanism for developing technologies and for shifting trade and power. Living organisms aren't quite so conveniently packaged; there are no technologies that can replicate them, they are hard to quantify, they don't propel vehicles or generate electricity and you can't trade chunks of nature on a world market. Enter the logical conclusion that in order to demonstrate that the protection of nature is a mechanism for reducing carbon emissions, we have to characterise nature as carbon—living carbon. As ecologists argue, chopping down a forest, draining a wetland or eliminating species releases the same carbon atoms as when you burn coal or gasoline—oil and gas are just ancient carbon. Once nature is characterised as living carbon, then looking after nature alternatively can be termed "carbon stewardship".

*"As climate change policy has taken precedence over other environmental policies and budgets, the protection of natural living ecosystems whether it is forests, grasslands or wetlands, has fallen by the wayside. At some point, we stopped talking about leaves, soil, fur and feathers and reduced everything to an element on the periodic table."*

*Continued on page 4*

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SPREADING THE NEWS ABOUT CONSERVING BC'S NATURAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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## LILY POINT: AN INTER-NATURAL TREASURE, PROTECTED FOREVER



“PEOPLE NEVER GO WRONG PROTECTING THE LAND”

*Article and photos by Rand Jack*

Ecosystems have a way of ignoring political boundaries. At the toe of greater Vancouver is a prime example. Boundary Bay is split down the middle. Part Canada, part USA. The millions of birds and salmon that visit Boundary Bay each year frankly do not care which flag is flying. They just want to be sure that no one is going to mess up the abundant food, clean water and vital biological and geological processes that have kept them coming back for millennia.

Who will stand guard? Canada? The USA? British Columbia? Washington State? As it turns out, a small nonprofit in Bellingham, Washington has now protected forever Lily Point, the cornerstone of Boundary Bay and the source of much of its life sustaining properties.

Supported by a remarkable coalition, Whatcom Land Trust purchased Lily Point for \$3,500,000. Appraised at \$4,350,000, this extraordinary 90-acre marine shoreline property, with 40 acres of tidelands, sits at the southeast corner of Point Roberts between Boundary Bay and the Straits of Georgia. Whatcom Land Trust has deeded the new Lily Point Marine Reserve to Whatcom County for use as an ecological reserve and public park, retaining a conservation easement “to protect the ecological functions, environmental attributes

and wildlife habitat of the Property.” Whatcom County now owns the four corners of Point Roberts – Monument Park, Lighthouse Park, Maple Beach (a gift from Whatcom Land Trust), and finally, Lily Point, by far the most ecologically important of the four corners.

Lily Point hosts a dynamic assembly of ecological processes. Nutrient-filled currents sweep by reefs and tidelands; riparian forests provide shade, bird perches, and insects to the coastal environment; and eroding cliffs supply sand and gravel for spawning fish and beach replenishment. These processes are essential to the health of Puget Sound - the Orca that patrol the Straits of Georgia, salmon that skirt Lily Point on their way to the Fraser and Nooksack Rivers, bald eagles that scour the beach, great blue herons that stalk the tidelands, and waterfowl and shore birds that flock to Boundary Bay - a U.N. Wetland of International Importance, RAMSAR Site and one of Birdlife International’s designated Important Bird Areas.

The history of Lily Point attests to its fecundity. Archeologists date human occupancy back at least 9,000 years. For centuries, the Coastal Salish Native Peoples maintained their primary reef net fishery and a summer village for as many as 500 people at Lily Point. Here the Lummi ancestors

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## Thanks to All Who Helped!

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each year performed their most important “first salmon” ceremony to ensure the annual return of the fish central to their culture. They called this place Chelhtenem - “hang salmon for drying.” An 1881 newspaper reported 10,000 salmon caught by 3 reef nets in 6 hours.

The money to purchase Lily Point came from an impressive array of sources. The fundraising tipping point came with a \$1,750,000 grant from the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, a part of the Puget Sound Partnership administered by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Out of 73 applications, Lily Point was awarded over 20 percent of available grant funds. “Whatcom Land Trust’s marathon effort to acquire Lily Point combines protection of vital ecosystem processes and diverse wildlife habitat, a vivid cultural history, and local community engagement. We were pleased to see it at the top of our technical ranking” observed Paul Cereghino, acting ESRP Program Manager.

With enthusiastic support from Whatcom County Executive Pete Kremen, the Whatcom County Council voted unanimously to appropriate \$600,000 from the Conservation Futures Fund to support the purchase. Reflecting on this accomplishment, Kremen commented: “Cultural and historical values will never be forgotten. The aesthetics will always remain. The environment and ecosystems will be protected, and people will have the opportunity to enjoy. I’m so proud to have been just a small part in this precious acquisition.”



*The Lummi Nation celebrates protection of Lily Point.*

The Washington Department of Ecology added \$500,000 from fines generated by the 1999 Whatcom Creek gasoline explosion and fire and another \$50,000 through a Coastal Protection Fund grant. “It’s probably one of the very few remaining properties in all of Puget Sound that possesses so many undisturbed environmental qualities” said Richard Grout, Ecology’s Bellingham Field Office manager. “We thought it was an exceptional opportunity to help them acquire an exceptional piece of property. That kind of thing

in Puget Sound is almost gone. This is a jewel.”

In addition to \$250,000 of its own funds, Whatcom Land Trust raised nearly \$400,000 in private donations from Canada and the U.S. Symbolic of the shared responsibility for protecting this incredible marine resource, the two largest private donations came one each from the U.S. and Canada.

On June 4th, over one hundred and fifty people gathered from the Lummi Nation, Canada and the U.S. to celebrate and give thanks that Lily Point is protected forever. It was a glorious day at Lily Point, 130 acres of forests, bluffs, beach and tidelands at the southern tip of Point Roberts. The rain stopped. The sun, moon and earth conspired to roll back the waters of Georgia Strait and Boundary Bay. One of the lowest tides in a hundred years revealed the splendor of Lily Point’s inter-tidal life and laid bare the rocks where dozens upon dozens of eagles stood sentry.

Samantha Scholefield, a Canadian resident with a cabin on Point Roberts, and her team of volunteers did a marvellous job of organizing the food and logistics of the day, just as they had done a marvellous job organizing fund raising on Point Roberts and in lower British Columbia. As she said, “We decided it was important to get involved, and for our community to get involved.”

This article cannot reproduce the richness of the tidelands, the majesty of the eagles or the joy of the people that day. Without being able to smell the salt air and hear the laughter of children touching a sea star, we will have to settle for the words of some who came to commemorate the protection of Lily Point.

Henry Cagey, Chairman Lummi Indian Business Council sent his thanks:

“On behalf of the Lummi Indian Business Council and the Lummi Nation, we’d like to extend a heartfelt thank you “Hy’sheq” to the Whatcom Land Trust for protecting one of the traditional territories of the Lummi people. Lily Point has been a refuge of abundance for the Coast Salish People...”

Washington’s Governor Christine Gregoire, an ardent supporter of refurbishing and conserving Puget Sound, commemorated the day in a letter read to those gathered at Lily Point: “Today, we celebrate the Whatcom Land Trust’s acquisition of Lily Point, a breathtaking 90-acre shoreline property, with 40 acres of tidelands, at Point Roberts, now deeded to Whatcom County as the new Lily Point Marine Reserve.... Washington is truly blessed with pristine landscapes and abundant natural resources, and, thanks to your generosity and stewardship, this gem and its biological and historical richness will be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Wearing a traditional cedar bark hat, James Hilliare (Tallawheuse), Director, Lummi Nation Cultural Department spoke with his drum in hand: “I am very honored to be invited to this gathering and to recognize the work that has been

done to preserve our homeland. We appreciate it very much, so much that we cannot put it into mere words, but only to gesture, to hold our hands up to all of those involved in the preservation of this area. We share with you the desire that this place not be disturbed. A lot of our ancestors are buried here. This is what we want to protect – their resting place....The only way to protect it [the land] is to buy it.... And once again from our hearts to your hearts, we thank you.”

Canadian author Anne Murray (*A Nature Guide to Boundary Bay* and *Tracing Our Past: A Heritage Guide to Boundary Bay*) reminded us that we preserve Lily Point for all living things. “I shall say thank

you to those who have protected this place for the birds and animals that live here. It’s not just the people who have benefited. It’s the warblers and the eagles and the otters and a whole bunch of interesting species that live here. They have lived here for thousands of years, and they are going to be able to continue to do so.”

After expressing his appreciation for the work done “protecting the land, protecting our ancestors,” Lummi Traditional Chief William James (Tsilixw) summed up the day in a few simple words: “People never go wrong protecting the land.”

These were some of the voices on the program for the June 4th Lily Point celebration. But equally important



were the unrecorded conversations and exclamations of all who came together that day from so many directions. As the sun, moon and earth aligned to lower the tide on June 4th, the preservation of Lily Point aligns cultures, countries, ecological and human, private and public, past and future, dreams and accomplishment. Thank you to everyone who joined together to make it happen. It could not have been done any other way.

And now we invite all of you to go to Lily Point and see for yourselves.



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### *Guest Editorial Continued from Inside Front Cover*

It is a strange concept, fraught with problems but part of our political reality. Many would argue that trying to quantify nature in terms of carbon is a slippery slope to nowhere. For example, shouldn't we be legislating for an end to the destruction of nature, not paying large companies to refrain from doing something they shouldn't be doing in the first place? Others argue that unless we ascribe value to the unpriced externalities like nature, air and soil, they will continue to be unvalued and exploited. Others say that the valuation (pricing) of living carbon is simply one tool with which we can protect nature in the short term and that it should be coupled with strict legislation, incentives and/or a shift in values.

LTABC has taken a lead role in bringing this last position to the attention of government with the commissioning of Richard Hebda's and Sarah Wilson's report entitled *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of Nature* (January 2008). Also in January, a joint submission was made to the BC Climate Action Team (see text box on page 5) by LTABC, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, David Suzuki Foundation, ForestEthics, Richard Hebda and ecologist Jim Pojar. The submission was called *Adopting a Carbon Stewardship Approach to Land Use Management* and it presented the concept of carbon stewardship as a greenhouse gas reduction measure. Eleven key implementation mechanisms were proposed in



the submission including bringing forestry under one of the regulated sectors of the Western Climate Initiative (WCI) (see text box on page 5) and the inclusion of credible forest carbon offsets within WCI. These offsets would be restricted to nature conservation projects, which would provide complementary benefits for biodiversity and ecological services.

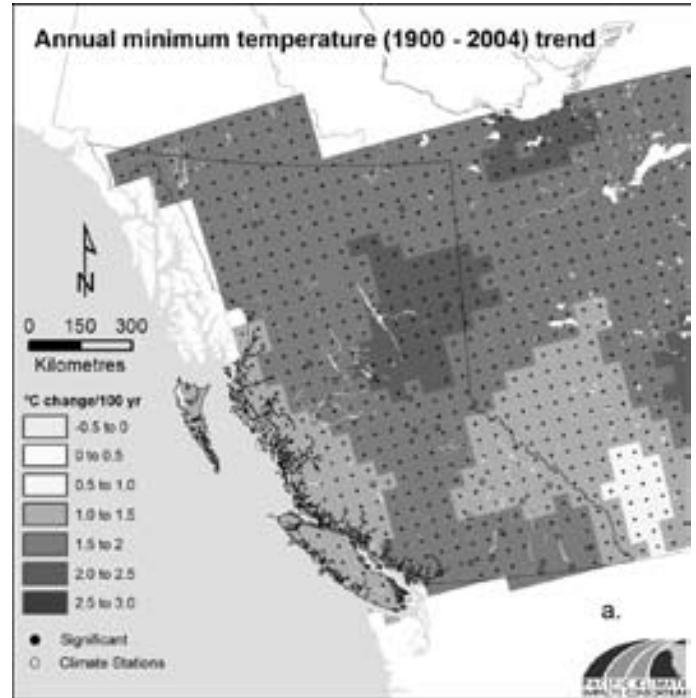
LTABC members also participated in the Biodiversity BC collaboration between the provincial government and other conservation organisations. The collaboration resulted in the release this July 9th of a 300-page report called *Taking Nature's Pulse* (see [www.biodiversitybc.org](http://www.biodiversitybc.org)). The status report indicates that of the 3,800 species reviewed by over 50 scientists, 43 percent are deemed to be at risk with reptiles, turtles, fish, amphibians and plants the hardest hit. Climate change is identified as the biggest threat to biodiversity. Protecting carbon sinks therefore is one of our best tools for protecting biodiversity.

The bad news is that the provincial government's response to the report – released the following day as the *Conservation Framework* (see <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/conservationframework/>) – has not delivered. According to Faisal Moola of the David Suzuki Foundation, the Framework does nothing but recycle existing policy regulations and actions. Besides there being no proposal for provincial endangered species legislation, there is no indication that the carbon stewardship approach proposed by LTABC and others will be adopted.

However, the good news is that as a measure to mitigate climate change, ecosystem protection is unlikely to go away. Last December, the World Bank launched a \$300 million dollar Forest Carbon Fund to provide a pricing incentive for industry to buy carbon credits and prevent deforestation. Big polluters will offset their carbon emissions by paying into a fund, which will pay developing countries not to deforest. Ensuring social equity is a major component of the debate, but there is a strong indication that in 2012, the next round of Kyoto will take a more active position on tackling deforestation and land use change worldwide.

This May, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that there will be a carbon trading registry—a first in Canada—to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 33 per cent of today's levels by 2020. Although in the initial concept of this registry there is only reference to tree planting (no substitute for protecting intact ecosystems) as an offset measure, once a registry is established carbon stewardship may well become an accepted means of offsetting emissions.

What is needed now is a strong lobby from land trusts and their membership to support carbon stewardship as an essential tool to assist with the work of land trusts—in protecting valuable carbon sinks such as forests and wetlands, developing land use models that reduce carbon emissions,



Source: Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium: <http://pacificclimate.org/>

such as ecoforestry and low carbon agriculture, and conserving biodiversity. Carbon stewardship is a tool that must be coupled with strong legislation to protect endangered species and ecosystems as well as local economies. We must send a very strong message that Canadians place high value on the protection of nature. The time has come to resurrect the full intent of Rio.

- **The BC Climate Action Team is a group of advisors appointed by the province in November 2007 to identify policies and actions for reducing greenhouse gas. Read more: BC Government News Release (November 20, 2007) “Province Announces Climate Action Team” [http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2005-2009/2007OTP0180-001488.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2007OTP0180-001488.htm).**
- **The Western Climate Initiative is “a collaboration which was launched in February 2007 by the Governors of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington to develop regional strategies to address climate change.” British Columbia participates as a partner to this initiative. Read more: Western Climate Initiative (2008) <http://www.westernclimateinitiative.org/>.**

## MOTHER NATURE'S ULTIMATE MAKE-OVER: NCC CELEBRATES THE RESTORATION OF THE CAMPBELL RIVER ESTUARY

*Article from the Nature Conservancy of Canada*

**T**he Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC) BC Region is celebrating the dramatic transformation of the world-famous Campbell River estuary from a degraded industrial wasteland to a vibrant, ecologically-rich natural area. NCC's commitment to stewardship in one of BC's most renowned and productive salmon spawning rivers is made even stronger with their recent purchase of another parcel of key waterfront land in the heart of this estuary on the east coast of Vancouver Island.

NCC - with the help of conservation partners - first purchased land at the mouth of the Campbell River in 1999. From 2003 to 2008 Tim Ennis, NCC's Director of Stewardship has been managing the transformation of Baikie Island and the damaged shoreline adjacent to it, back to inter-tidal salt marshes and streamside shrubby habitat.

"In the first phase of the restoration we removed more than 38,000 cubic metres of fill and regraded the shoreline to its natural contours," explains Ennis. "We dug two new back-channels, removed invasive exotic species and planted thousands of native sedges, rushes, shrubs and trees. The results are easy to see: Chinook fry feeding in the sedges on the flooding tide; well-established trees now over ten feet high; evidence of bears; and ever-present eagles perched above."



*Mill Pond Marsh - at Campbell River estuary - before restoration.  
Photo credits: Tim Ennis/NCC*

To date, NCC and its partners have invested over \$2 million in this ambitious and rewarding restoration program.

"Looking at the estuary today, you would never guess that five short years ago it was a barren mess of mud and timber debris," says Jan Garnet, NCC's Regional Vice President. "In the face of declining fish stocks, the restoration of this estuary is critical to the efforts to rehabilitate wild salmon."

Habitat loss is considered a top threat to salmon populations, and estuaries such as the Campbell provide critical habitat - not just for salmon, but for many threatened species of birds and endangered communities of plants. Fifteen years ago an astounding 76 percent of the estuary was leased for industrial purposes. Now less than 40 percent of the estuary is designated for industrial use and more the 50 percent of the estuary has some level of ecological protection, for the benefit of all five species of salmon (Coho, Chinook, Pink, Chum and Sockeye), Cutthroat and Steelhead trout, and threatened birds such as the Purple Martin, Double-crested Cormorant, Surf Scoter, California Gull and Trumpeter Swan. In particular the estuary provides critical nursery habitat for Chinook, which use the sheltered, nutrient-rich environment to gain size and strength before heading out into the ocean.

This year, thanks to a partnership with the City of Campbell River and the Tula Foundation, NCC secured another important piece of the estuary—the site of the former Ocean Blue cedar shake mill - which in its degraded state currently serves as a dramatic counterpoint to the already restored estuary lands. The two-acre (0.81 hectare) waterfront property offers excellent potential to restore additional riparian shrub habitats, inter-tidal salt marshes and salmon spawning habitat. A Coho-bearing creek runs through a culvert under the property, and NCC plans to reclaim this watercourse as a naturally functioning part of the estuary. Once restored, Ocean Blue will bring the total area of estuary land protected by the NCC to 52 acres. Restoration work is being funded by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

When the Ocean Blue property is added to the City of Campbell River's park system, it will join the Baikie Island Nature Preserve, an area that has been enjoyed for years now by visitors and local residents alike. The preserve boasts trails and viewing areas that wind through the developing forest and along the marshy shoreline allowing people the opportunity to experience first-hand a thriving, rich estuary and to reflect on the changes - both human and non-human induced - that have shaped this place.





*Above: Mill Pond Marsh - at Campbell River estuary - after restoration (2007). Lower right: once a paved lot.*

The announcement of NCC's securement of Ocean Blue is part of their seventh annual *Gifts to Canadians* celebration, for which NCC presents 10 gifts of newly protected natural areas—one from each province—that protect the habitat of rare and endangered species. These precious landscapes represent NCC's ongoing work to conserve biodiversity from coast to coast, and to leave a lasting natural legacy. This year's *Gifts to Canadians* total approximately 33.5 square kilometres (8,279 acres or 3,350 hectares). Once a property is secured, NCC develops detailed land stewardship plans to ensure that the site's natural integrity is maintained and protected for the long term. NCC's *Gifts to Canadians* are made possible by the support of thousands of concerned individuals, corporations, foundations and other conservation organizations across the country. Many of the properties have been conserved in partnership with other organizations, whose work NCC gratefully acknowledges.



## RESTORING THE CAMPBELL RIVER ESTUARY — A CLOSER LOOK

From 2003 to 2008, NCC's restoration project succeeded in rehabilitating Baikie Island, which sits in the centre of the estuary, as well as the extremely degraded shoreline. Restoration activities included:

- ★ re-creating inter-tidal mudflats and salt marshes
- ★ constructing a spawning channel
- ★ removing invasive exotic species
- ★ planting thousands of native sedges, rushes, shrubs and trees
- ★ removing pavement and fill from former industrial sites
- ★ re-establishing natural streamside (riparian) forests and inter-tidal march habitats
- ★ removing bark residue leftover from historical logbooming activities from spawning areas
- ★ restoring additional salmon spawning habitats

*The Nature Conservancy of Canada* is a national non-profit conservation organization that works with landowners to protect Canada's natural habitats. Its plan of action is to build partnerships and develop creative conservation solutions with individuals, corporations, community groups, conservation groups and government bodies. Since 1962, NCC and its supporters have helped to protect nearly 2 million acres (809,371 hectares) of ecologically significant land across Canada.

For more information visit [www.natureconservancy.ca](http://www.natureconservancy.ca)



## CROWN GRANT CREATES PROTECTED AREA NETWORK ON GAMBIER ISLAND

*Article from Islands Trust Fund*



*Mount Artaban, Gambier Island*

*Photo credit: Rick Gustavson*

Gambier Island's first protected area network was completed this spring with the transfer of 107 hectares (264 acres) from the Province of British Columbia to the Islands Trust Fund through the provincial Free Crown Grant program. The new Mount Artaban Nature Reserve, when combined with neighbouring local, regional and provincial parks, creates a continuous protected area of 525 hectares (1297 acres) – 25 percent larger than Vancouver's Stanley Park.

"Government is committed to helping support B.C. communities to preserve the environment and the beauty of our province," said Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services. "We are pleased to assist Islands Trust in protecting the natural legacy found in the Mount Artaban Nature Reserve with a crown grant sponsorship worth over \$1.1 million so that residents and visitors alike can continue to enjoy this area."

The Mount Artaban Nature Reserve protects old-growth trees, a wetland, and several at-risk plant communities. The water flowing from this pristine mountain provides clean drinking water for the surrounding community and feeds aquatic habitats below. Bald eagles fly in the skies above

the new reserve, and Rufous hummingbirds and blue grouse inhabit the forest.

The Reserve and adjoining protected areas offer an exhilarating hiking experience visible from the Sea-to-Sky Highway. Island residents and visitors can enjoy trails that extend from the Long Bay and Brigade Bay waterfronts to Mount Artaban's peak. The trail system also extends south through Halkett Bay Provincial Marine Park.

The protection of Mount Artaban was a success for the entire Gambier Island community. To satisfy the province's conditions for the transfer, the Islands Trust Fund worked in partnership with the Gambier Island Conservancy to fundraise over \$40,000 to cover the costs of the land survey and a management plan. The island-wide response to the joint fundraising campaign was truly inspiring with more than 80 contributions from private individuals, businesses, governments and community groups.

"The Gambier Island community has worked tirelessly to preserve one of Howe Sound's notable landmarks" said Kim Benson, Islands Trust Council Chair and Gambier Island trustee. "Thanks to their efforts this highly visible and environmentally important section of Gambier Island

Crown Land is protected for future generations. The Islands Trust and the Trust Fund Board appreciate the support of Gambier Islanders and others, including the Gambier Island Conservancy, the Sunshine Coast Regional District, the Squamish Nation, and the Ministry of Community Services.”

The Islands Trust Fund and the Gambier Island Conservancy will now work with the Gambier Island community to develop a management plan for the property. This plan will define short and long-term management goals for the new nature reserve, including conditions for public access.

- ***The Free Crown Grants Program*** was launched by the Province of British Columbia in 2004. It enables government to provide Crown land to local governments, public agencies and community organizations to promote economic and social development. This is the second parcel that the Islands Trust Fund Board has acquired and protected through this program.

- ***The Islands Trust Fund*** is a regional land trust established in 1990 to help preserve and protect the unique character and environment of the islands in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound. The Islands Trust Fund protects natural areas through voluntary land donations, conservation covenants, land purchase and stewardship education programs. With the generous support of island communities and landowners, the Islands Trust Fund has protected more than 984 hectares of natural and cultural values on 70 properties with a combined value of more than \$32 million.

- ***The Gambier Island Conservancy*** was founded in 1995 to address mounting concerns about changes in Gambier’s natural habitat. The Conservancy works to preserve and restore Gambier Island’s biological diversity by enhancing public awareness and increasing environmental knowledge.

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### DARKWOODS: THE LARGEST SINGLE PRIVATE CONSERVATION LAND ACQUISITION IN CANADIAN HISTORY!

On July 24th, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) announced their commitment to protect 550 square kilometres of remote valleys, mountains and lakes in south-central British Columbia. The acquisition of this exceptional property, known as Darkwoods, launches the largest single private conservation project ever undertaken by a Canadian non-profit organization.

Because of its great scale and topographical diversity, Darkwoods offers sensitive plants and animals a chance to adapt in the face of global climate change. Species will be able to migrate to different latitudes or elevations as temperatures fluctuate. The forests of Darkwoods represent an immense carbon sink. In excess of 2 million tonnes of carbon are stored in Darkwoods - equal to the annual carbon footprint of nearly half a million Canadians. Download the PDF version of this NCC news release from: [www.natureconservancy.ca/site/DocServer/News\\_Release\\_FINAL\\_Eng\\_July\\_23.pdf?docID=2441](http://www.natureconservancy.ca/site/DocServer/News_Release_FINAL_Eng_July_23.pdf?docID=2441).

### ONTARIO PROTECTS VAST AREA OF BOREAL FOREST

The Ontario government has agreed to protect 55 million acres of boreal forest, an area of forest that is almost the size of the United

Kingdom. The government media release states that “the forests and peat lands in the Far North store about 97 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide and absorb around 12.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year,” and that “Priority will be given to protect lands with key ecological features such as habitat for endangered species or important carbon sinks.” More information from the Government of Ontario: [www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/Product.asp?ProductID=2353&Lang=EN](http://www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/Product.asp?ProductID=2353&Lang=EN).

### PLUM CREEK: 320,000 ACRES OF TIMBER LAND TO BE PURCHASED BY CONSERVANCY, TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

In June, The Nature Conservancy (US) and The Trust for Public Land announced they have reached an agreement to purchase approximately 320,000 acres of western Montana forest land from Plum Creek Timber Company (NYSE:PCL) for \$510 million. The purchase is part of an effort to keep these forests in productive timber management and protect the area’s clean water and abundant fish and wildlife habitat, while promoting continued public access to these lands for fishing, hiking, hunting and other recreational pursuits. For more information about the Montana Legacy Project go to: [www.themontanalegacyproject.org](http://www.themontanalegacyproject.org), [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org).



## ECOMMUNITY PLACE: COMMUNITY & CULTURE, LANDS & LEARNING

*Article by Tracey Bonneau with notes from Ellen Simmons*



*Richard Armstrong holds a rare Tiger Salamander.*

*Photo courtesy of En'owkin Centre*

It's a moist April morning in the South Okanagan. From beneath a canopy of Black Cottonwoods is heard a chorus from bright coloured Yellow-Breasted Chats (*Icteria virens auricollis*). When their young fledge, from deep inside soft pink rose thickets, their strident chirps are comparable to the raucous sounds of a chaotic town meeting. Richard Armstrong, a Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) specialist, whistles softly and wades through a labyrinth of wetlands and natural oxbows. He knows his work will never be quite done. Richard grew up on the Penticton Indian Reserve and is hired by the En'owkin Centre to monitor endangered habitat and species in one of the last Black Cottonwood stands in the South Okanagan. This cottonwood riparian habitat is home to some of British Columbia's rarest and most endangered species in Canada. It is spring now, but until late November he will be monitoring a number of other species that depend on this special area known as Ecommunity Place.

Ecommunity Place has high ecological significance and provides habitat for a number of nationally listed species at risk, including: Yellow-Breasted Chat (*Icteria virens auricollis*), Western Screech Owl (*Otus kennicottii macfarlanei*), Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*), Great Basin Spadefoot Toad (*Spea intermontana*), Great Basin Gopher Snake (*Pituophis catenifer deserticola*) and the Behr's Hairstreak (*Satyrrium behrii Columbia*). Species like the Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) and the White Tail Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) also provide exciting and educational opportunities.

Sadly Ecommunity place is also part of the Okanagan water system which was recently voted as one of the top ten endangered rivers in Canada with less than seven percent of the natural Okanagan River channel remaining. Historically, the forested riparian area would cool, store and filter the water running through the Okanagan River system. This unique and intricate natural filtration system has been all but lost to

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## You Can Help Conserve These Sites

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modern channelization, urban and rural development. But there is hope and that hope lies in a special project called Ecommunity Place.

Ecommunity Place is a 100-acre cottonwood riparian forest found within the Penticton Indian Reserve # 1. Indian reserves are lands reserved by the Crown, and held in trust for the use and benefit of members of an Indian Band. The lands that comprise and surround Ecommunity Place are held by specific band members (locatees) under what are commonly known by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) as “certificates of possession”.

Ecommunity Place Project is a conservancy project in partnership with The Land Conservancy of British Columbia (TLC). The project envisions a hands-on, experience-based approach to education and conservation. Ecommunity Place is of natural interest to the Penticton-based En’owkin Centre, a post secondary educational institution established by the seven Bands of the Okanagan Nation in 1979. The rare forest provides invaluable educational opportunities. It is a ‘natural’ venue for programs, performances, tours, projects, workshops and outdoor classes. Here, individuals and groups can explore the natural and cultural qualities that define the uniqueness of the South Okanagan. One of those opportunities came about when a rare Tiger Salamander was identified on a spring morning. That morning Richard called staff from the En’owkin Centre and shared with them the oral history (legend) that was associated with that species. For many staff members the moment was a special gift as they can now recall the story that contains many levels of teachings and metaphor.

The En’owkin Centre is a registered federal charity offering Indigenous cultural and creative arts education, university/college transfer diplomas and certificate programs. The Centre is comprised of highly qualified educators who are also professional artists and writers, facilitators and Indigenous advocates, providing a culturally sensitive learning environment. The philosophy of the Centre is captured in the word En’owkin (pronounced en-OW-kin), which describes an Okanagan process: the collaborative pursuit of fresh solutions to challenges. En’owkin makes use of diversity and its ability to create new insight.

The Centre already plays an active role in the conservation of the South Okanagan by leading the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Team of the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP). The SOSCP is an umbrella conservation initiative dedicated to a mandate that echoes the En’owkin concept - cooperation and communication towards meeting shared conservation objectives.

Through the Ecommunity Place Project, the En’owkin Centre endeavours to develop interpretative and educational programs on the land. Ideas include a trail network for self-guided tours, and interactive programs designed to raise visitor and local awareness about our environment and Okanagan



*Chat banding and monitoring at Ecommunity Place.*

*Photo courtesy of En’owkin Centre*

Nation culture. Restoration and enhancement projects are planned for the Locatee Lands. Monitoring of Yellow-Breasted Chat, Tiger Salamander, Great Basin Spadefoot Toad and Western Screech Owl populations is ongoing.

This unique project offers a continuing opportunity for members of the Okanagan nation and the non-native community to work together, share knowledge and experiences, build on past successes, and develop a strong base of cultural and traditional scientific methodologies. As the success of this project hinges on the protective control over the project lands, financial support is required. This invaluable educational opportunity may be lost - along with some of the rarest habitats in the Okanagan - if efforts to secure these lands are unsuccessful.

Adjusting his straw hat, Richard carefully examines a mauve coloured Mariposa Lily and breathes in the crisp spring air. He makes his way to the exit which is a maze of rose thickets. Ecommunity place has become a natural stage. During his monitoring season the species often come out and perform for him. Richard witnesses the distinguished strut of the Great Blue Heron, the gentle stride of a White Tail Deer and hears the distinctive sound of the Western Screech Owl. Richard mentions that these species have been his lifelong friends and are loved in this special place called Ecommunity.

For more information, contact Tracey Kim Bonneau (Ecommunity Manager Public Relations, En’owkin Center) or Ellen Simmons (IRF Project Manager, Locatee Lands/Ecommunity Place Species Recovery).

En’owkin Centre RR#2, Site 50, Comp, Lot 45, Green Mountain Road, Penticton, BC V2A 6J7. Phone: 250-493-7181. Email: enowkin@vip.net.

## WHO WILL GROW YOUR FOOD? COMMUNITY AND TLC IN PARTNERSHIP TO SECURE FARMLAND FOR FOOD PRODUCTION

*Article by Ramona Scott, Manager, TLC Agricultural Programs*



*Photo credit: David Chambers*

Everyone knows that being a farmer is hard work. The long hours, back-breaking tasks and reliance on the weather are perhaps outside of most people's comfort zones. As if these obstacles were not enough, the sky-rocketing price of farmland means that those hardy and noble souls who choose the farming path can often no longer afford to get into the game. For one pair of farmers and their customers, staying in the game has meant changing the rules.

In 1952, Lawrence and Ruth Chambers with their three sons, bought Madrona Farm in the Capital Regional District's Blenkinsop Valley. For thirty years, Lawrence raised animals and produced vegetables and hay. After Lawrence's death in 1982, the farm was leased out for hay production, until seventeen years later when David Chambers moved to the farm to take care of his grandmother. David decided to dedicate himself to restoring his family's farmland.

After Ruth passed away in 2002, ownership of the farm was transferred to her sons – David's father and two uncles. They, in turn leased the property to David and his wife Nathalie to farm, and under their management it has flourished. Farming on Madrona is guided by a commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability that honours the memory of Lawrence, and of Ruth who was a noted Victoria naturalist. Nathalie explains that "the farm operates as close as possible to a natural ecosystem" and that everything on the farm respects the memory of Ruth and

Lawrence and the values that guided their agricultural practice and appreciation for nature.

Agriculture, restoration and conservation are integrated on this third-generation family farm on a diverse 27 acres in Saanich. Here, energy, enthusiasm and hard work produce over 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables. Last year, Dave and Nathalie produced over 128,000 pounds of food on this land, feeding hundreds of loyal customers at their roadside stand for 11 months of the year - with virtually no waste, no artificial inputs, and using less than 700 litres of diesel. For both farmers and customers there is something phenomenally satisfying about making a salad from local greens, grown sustainably... in January.

Nathalie and David are true eco-farmers, maintaining a mix of cultivated fields, open fields, wooded areas – namely Douglas fir and Garry oak ecosystems – and four natural ponds. Over 130 fruit trees have been planted to stabilize the farm's expansive, southwest facing slope. Madrona Farm is the happy home of many species of birds, including great horned and screech owls, eagles and herons. Nathalie and David have created a wildlife corridor to connect the farm to municipally-owned Mount Douglas Park. The retention of forest, particularly on the north edge of farmlands has been recognized as an important asset to farming and biodiversity. As farmer Joel Salatin is quoted in *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, "There's not a spreadsheet in the world that can measure the value of maintaining forest on the northern slopes of a farm".





*Farm Holiday at Madrona Farm, July 2008*

*Photo credit: Karen Platt*

David's work at Madrona includes training and inspiring people with an interest in growing our food themselves someday. The question is whether the land needed to fulfil their dreams will be available to these future farmers.

Recently, the Chambers brothers have decided to sell. Although it is zoned Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), this designation does not require the land to remain in food production. Without further protection, Madrona could be purchased for use

***Karen Platt, Communications Coordinator, FoMFS, says:***

*"About 90% of my family's food comes from local sources, and, like most of us, I've been concerned about the pressures on farmers and on the land. It isn't enough to want local food, as more and more of us do. Someone has to grow it. Protecting Madrona Farm as a working farm may only be one small piece of a very big puzzle. But placing Madrona Farm in trust with TLC would set a precedent. It would be one important step in safeguarding our local food supply, making it affordable for farmers to farm and ensuring that farmland is used for farming - forever."*

as a "hobby farm" or "gentleman's estate," and never again be used to grow food for the community.

Fortunately, Madrona Farm has thousands of loyal friends and customers. To protect the Farm, the newly formed Friends of Madrona Farm Society (FoMFS) has entered into an agreement with TLC The Land Conservancy of BC to purchase the property. Fo-

MFS has initiated a campaign to raise over \$2.5 million dollars with significant donations coming from the Chambers and their extended family. Once purchased, TLC will hold title to the farm and, together with FoMFS, will ensure its use for local, sustainable food production and conservation of biodiversity, in perpetuity.

Community purchase of this farm is a test of our collective desire to protect farmland for farming. As David Chambers, aptly

puts it: "we want to set the precedent to show that the public is willing to put up the money to protect what precious little arable land there is near the city - for their food supply - so that governments will take notice and pony up, too."

The campaign to protect Madrona Farm is a true community effort as well as a testament to an increasing desire and demand for organic, locally grown food. For TLC, it is a perfect example of what it truly means to protect farmland for farming.

***David Scoones, President, FoMFS, says:***

*"Madrona Farm has many potential uses: farming, housing, wildlife habitat, and just plain 'green space' to the benefit of surrounding neighbours and passers-by. The farm's value depends on the totality of uses, both current and future... [yet] The farm's price depends on which of these uses are of most value to potential buyers. On the edge of the city, the price today is driven by its value as a home site... [and] Though it is indeed a beautiful house site, this use sacrifices many of the other values inherent in the farm. It is the other values which accrue to the larger community who buys the food, walks the park, or lives in the region. It is this community that can act to preserve the farm and all of its values. Once in the hands of TLC, the farm will be leased by farmers willing to farm the land and protect its natural biodiversity. The farmers will pay the market price to lease farmland, not the [market] price of residential land."*

Please make your donation now! Online at: [www.conservancy.bc.ca/donatetomadrona](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca/donatetomadrona) or for more information, go to [www.madronafarm.com](http://www.madronafarm.com).

Madrona Farm is a shining example of TLC's mandate to "protect farmland for farming".

It demonstrates:

- 🍓 a financially successful farm business,
- 🍓 young farmers making a career of farming,
- 🍓 farm apprenticeships and other educational events on the farm,
- 🍓 organic, sustainable farming practices,
- 🍓 diversity in crop production for local consumption,
- 🍓 enhancement and protection of natural biodiversity, and,
- 🍓 opportunity for farmers to hold long term tenure without the burden of high land costs.

## OTHER COMMUNITY FARM PROJECTS - SUPPORTED BY TLC

### HORSE LAKE COMMUNITY FARM COOPERATIVE

HLCFC was brought into existence for the purchase and management of a 133 acre, ALR-zoned farm located on the northeast end of Horse Lake, east of 100 Mile House. A cooperative is a legal business entity regulated by the BC Cooperative Association Act. Unlike a limited company, a member of a cooperative has only one vote regardless of the number of shares the member holds. Sales of \$5,000 member-shares will comprise the bulk of the funds required to purchase the \$400,000 property. For those who don't wish to become members but do want to donate to the farm for charitable purposes, TLC accepts funds and will issue tax receipts. In turn, TLC uses those funds to purchase an undivided interest in the land as a means to facilitate purchase of the property.

In order to ensure that the cultural, ecological, and agricultural values of the farm are protected forever, it is the aim of the HLCFC to transfer ownership of the property to the TLC in 2009. The TLC will then lease the property back to the co-op for a term of 100 plus years. This strategy will provide the most security regarding the long term protection of the land. HLCFC will lease the property in its entirety from the TLC thus enabling the co-op to pursue its initiatives.

### GABRIOLA COMMONS

The agricultural capacity of this 26-acre, ALR-zoned property on Gabriola Island is of central importance to the vision of a community commons. Woven together with the land's agricultural values are a number of significant natural and heritage amenities including wetland and forest habitat and solidly constructed farm buildings that are ideal gathering places for community celebrations and events. The ALC has approved an application by the non-profit Gabriola

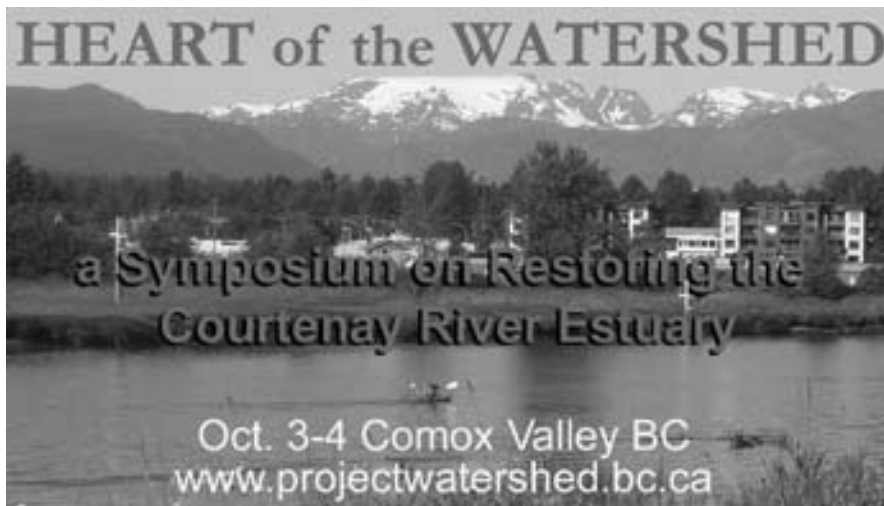
Commons Society (GCS) for multiple uses of the property including housing for Gabriola community elders. Key to the success of this approval has been the commitment by the GCS to maintain agricultural use of the land.

The current owner of the subject property wants to see ownership transferred to the GCS in order for the Society to manage the land and implement their vision for a community commons. To further this goal they have made a sizable donation to the GCS as down-payment. Once they become owners, the GCS will be responsible for the next phase of mortgage payments, planning, and covenanting with TLC. Both the current owner and GCS have entered into an agreement with TLC to manage the charitable donations and purchase the conservation covenant.

### WOODWYN COMMUNITY FARM

The mission of The Farmlands Trust (FLT), a registered non-profit society, is to facilitate the purchase, management, and rental of farmland in the Mt. Newton Valley of Central Saanich, Capital Regional District. FLT is launching this mission with its efforts to purchase the 192 acre, ALR-zoned Woodwyn Farm, enhance its farming capability, provide education and mentorship programs for new farmers, rehabilitate the stream ecology, and create a trail system. Six million dollars must be raised by the society to purchase Woodwyn Farm.

To assist the FLT, TLC has agreed to purchase a conservation covenant to ensure the integrity of the farm by preventing subdivision and protecting Hagan Creek and riparian area. Through the fundraising efforts of the FLT, donations are made to TLC (which issues charitable tax receipts to donors) and those monies are returned to the society in payment for the covenant.



*For info about  
TLC's Farm Holidays,  
see page 28 or visit  
[www.conservancy.bc.ca/  
conservationholidays](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca/conservationholidays).*

## MAPPING A RARE LANDSCAPE: BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PRIORITY GRASSLANDS

*Article and photos by Richard Doucette, Conservation Planner for the  
Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia*



*Sagebrush - Bluebunch Wheatgrass grassland ecosystem north of Kamloops.*

The University of British Columbia's (UBC) Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning recently released results of a public opinion survey focusing on the management, protection, and recovery of species at risk. While reading the report, I could not help but wonder how many of the respondents knew that grasslands support a disproportionate number of species at risk in this province. In fact, over 30 percent British Columbia's terrestrial species of conservation concern occur in our grasslands, but grasslands occupy less than one percent of the province.

British Columbia's grasslands are the most northern extent of the Palouse Prairie that extends downward into Oregon and Idaho. Sometimes referred to as the Sagebrush-grass Region, this area is characterized by sagebrush cover – as you might have guessed – but also with numerous types of bunchgrasses. British Columbia's grasslands are mostly found in the Fraser, Thompson, Nicola, and Okanagan valleys and occur primarily due to the rain shadow effect of the Coast and Cascades mountains. Grasslands also occur in the Peace Region in the northeast of the province.



*Source: Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia*



Urban expansion and development, agricultural conversion, abusive recreation, invasive plants and forest encroachment are threatening grasslands through degradation, destruction and fragmentation of associated habitats and ecosystems. The Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia (GCC) recognized that planners, decision makers and resource managers lacked the information and the appropriate tools to effectively manage for the conservation of British Columbia grasslands and the species that use them. Therefore, building upon the mapping of provincial grasslands completed in 2004, the GCC began a project called the Priority Grasslands Initiative to identify and delineate high-value priority grassland areas in each of the major grassland regions of British Columbia. The priority mapping process is comprised of collaborative consultations with experts (e.g., ecologists, agrologists, biologists, etc.) and Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis. Value criteria that will be evaluated include rare grassland ecosystems, species-at-risk locations and habitat, ungulate wintering range, livestock forage values and other socio-economic values, as well as threats from fragmentation and development.

More than half of the respondents (56.7 percent) of the UBC public opinion survey agreed that it is *'more useful to protect and recover the places that plants and animals depend upon to live than it is to protect and recover individual species'* (Harshaw 2008). This view is echoed in the priority mapping process. Although predictive habitat models for seven focal species at risk and species sightings information are used in the analysis, many of the priority areas will be derived from a GIS-based representation model that will be used as a surrogate to on-the-ground ecosystem mapping.

Over the next two years, the GCC, through the priority mapping process, will produce priority grassland portfolios, status reporting and strategic recommendations, including proposed actions for each major grassland region of the province. The strategic recommendations will be supported by data, maps and appropriately designed land-use planning tools. This integrated package will be extended to local, regional, provincial, federal and First Nations governments via another of the GCC's initiatives, called *Planning for Change*. Although the results will be predominantly extended towards local governments, much of the documentation will be publicly available for use by non-government organizations, such as land trusts. The GCC will soon be releasing its first set of grassland portfolios for the Thompson–Nicola and North Okanagan Regions.



*Urban development is one of the many threats to BC's grasslands.*

For some grasslands, this information will not be available soon enough. For instance, the once extensive meadow-steppe grassland of the North Okanagan, considered by some ecologists to be the only valley bottom occurrence of this community in Canada, has been reduced to a fraction of its historic range. Agricultural conversion and urban expansion alone have eliminated over 50 percent of this rare and unique grassland community. Throughout the province, thousands more hectares of grasslands are being lost to development and encroachment every year. Planners in the North Okanagan have been concerned about the state of these grasslands but have been unable to act on their concerns, as detailed information for this grasslands community, including its location and extent, does not exist or is not easily accessible.

Without tools for the planners to do their job, they may face negative public perception. Another result from the UBC public opinion survey indicated that slightly more than a third (37.8 percent) of respondents felt that current natural resource planning and management does not do a good job of *'protecting and recovering species at risk and the places that they depend upon to live'* (Harshaw 2008). With the Priority Grassland Initiative and other GCC initiatives, we hope that the public will soon have reasons to have a better perception of the work of planners and of the health of species at risk.

***The Grasslands Conservation Council of British Columbia*** is a non-profit organization that is a strategic alliance of organizations and individuals, including the ranching community, environmental organizations, government agencies and First Nations. Contact us for more information about the Priority Grasslands Initiative: [www.bcgrasslands.org](http://www.bcgrasslands.org).

## REBURIAL CEREMONY AT POETS COVE — A SHORT ODYSSEY INTO ANOTHER CULTURE

*Original article written by: Eileen Wittewaall and Hannah Brown  
with information from the March 19, 2008 Times Colonist report of this event.*

South Pender Island, Wednesday March 18, 2008: It was still dark as we caught the 6:20 am ferry from Fulford Harbour on Salt Spring Island. We then took the 8:35 ferry from Swartz Bay to Otter Bay on the Pender Islands where we were advised by Tsawout folks to “follow the yellow bus” carrying school children, teachers and parents. Many other First Nations people arrived in vans and cars to travel to Poet’s Cove which is almost at the south end of South Pender Island.

Poet’s Cove is the site of an ancient village and midden of the Sencoten [SENĆOŦEN] peoples. Bedwell Harbour Hotel Limited revealed this sacred site in 2003 when their bulldozers uncovered human bones while excavating the foundation for their resort development. Instead of halting their work, they continued until stopped by a temporary work order. By that time the area had been badly desecrated. Recovery of the bones was ordered and carried out by a team of First Nations’ archaeological assistants and I.R. Wilson archaeologists. It took them three years to collect the delicate bones which had been fragmented by the impact of machines. The \$42 million resort development was opened in 2004.

On arriving at Poet’s Cove about 150 of us gathered in the parking lot of the resort development, for a reburial of the recovered bones of 45 ancestors of the Sencoten peoples. Hannah Brown and I attended as witnesses, on behalf of Salt Spring Islanders for Justice & Reconciliation (SSI-JAR). Under an over-cast sky which threatened

rain, pulling blankets and jackets close against the cool breeze from Bedwell Harbour the crowd was warmed by the welcome delivered by Irvine Jimmy, official Speaker for the event, and Chief Vern Jacks of the Tseycom Nation. Unfortunately Allan Claxton, Chief of the Tsawout Nation, was unable to attend as his brother was very ill.

Several of the speakers addressed the assembled crowd in both their Sencoten language and in English. We were given the first of many thanks for coming together as witnesses to this historic event. The children were especially welcomed but cautioned to listen and learn well, and to respect the seriousness of the burial ceremony.

We walked a short distance down a paved road towards the beach. A wide path led toward where the reburial site had been prepared at a beautiful spot near the cliff face. This spot was chosen by the Sencoten people because it overlooks the water – revered as the source of food and life – and because it is next to the ancient village site where the resort is now situated. One could easily see why the Sencoten had made the area’s protected bay and small valley their home for up to 4,000 years.

The elders walked to the graveside performing ancient ceremonies along with more recent religious traditions, in preparation for receiving the blanket-covered cedar box filled with the remains of their ancestors. Traditional beliefs honour the sacred nature of people’s graves, and the age of the burial is of no consequence. The elders told the crowd that there will be no forgetting the dead and no further dishonouring of grave sites, such as happened in this development.

As a ‘settler’ to this place, I thought of how angry and disrespected I would feel if developers were to dig up the burial place of my grandparents and the relatives from generations before, with big machines regarding it as ‘refuse’ for backfill or for road building.

Ruby Peter, an elder of the Cowichan Tribes, affectionately known as “Auntie Ruby”, spoke several times. She had helped to organize and encourage the long, painstaking, and often emotional, work of recovering the

*“The elders told the crowd that there will be no forgetting the dead and no further dishonouring of grave sites, such as happened in this development”*



bones. She had cautioned the team, each day, to do the water ceremony to wash away the spirits who might inflict harm because of this desecration of their original burial places. This team of archaeologists and assistants involved in recovering the bones were warmly recognized and thanked by the speakers.

A number of references were made to the death of about 50 elders in the past year. The prayers, spoken and unspoken, were for the decline of illness and death, and to lift the heavy sadness surrounding the ceremony, now that the ancestors were being properly cared for and respectfully laid to rest.

To the slow beat of drums, the cedar box was carried past the witnesses and placed in the grave. Then all the men were invited to move the large pile of soil into the grave, with the final work done by several traditional gravediggers. Women were not allowed to shovel dirt into the grave, as the traditional role of the women was to wipe the tears of the mourners.

The reburial was followed by several speeches, including a gracious welcome and apology by the business manager of the Poets Cove Resort, Peter Parmar. He said he hoped the change - toward cooperation with First Nations peoples affected by what has occurred at Poets Cove - would be a model for other developments.

The conclusion of the ceremony was a dance by ten young people, led by Elder Fred Charlie, from the Saanich Indian Shaker Church. The Fern Dance was performed by most of them in their bare feet. They shook their deer hoof rattles and used bundles of fresh sword ferns to brush away negative spirits and refresh the positive ones around the gravesite.

Then the sun came out and its warm brightness helped to raise our spirits above the sadness. We were warmly welcomed into the ballroom of the Resort to which we had all been invited for lunch. There were baskets of bannock and drinks. Then the staff brought us cedar plank plates with tasty salmon, rice, salad and a lemon tart.

Many speeches were made giving specific thanks to all who had helped to make this happen. Recognition was especially given to the Underwood family who are the direct descendents of the most recent First Nation inhabitants of the Cove. The Underwoods were joined by their direct relations, the Claxton, Thomas and Pelkey families.


Eric Pelkey gave a short history of the Sencoten – the Salt Water People. He told how, in 1956 the government separated the peoples who speak the Sencoten language. The Sencoten historically inhabited the area from Vancouver Island to the Fraser River including the southern Gulf and San Juan Islands, but they were relocated to reserves along with the Tsawout, Tseycum, Tsartlip and others. He emphasized that this has led to the loss of so much of the Sencoten language and culture and he spoke of the crucial importance of the children who are now learning what is known of the language and through this, regaining their traditions.

The final gifts of candied salmon from the Resort and fruit

and blankets from the First Nation organizers, were tokens of appreciation, and the thankfulness helped in lifting deep sorrow. There was a feeling of relief, that this might indeed be a turning point; for elders, parents and children in the honouring of their ancestors, and for improving relations between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples and between aboriginal groups.

Gwen Underwood was given a colourful blanket in recognition of her careful organization of the event, which reflected an honouring of their traditional ceremonial past. On the ferry back to Swartz Bay, Gwen thanked Hannah and me for being there, as witnesses and in support of justice for First Nations.

Last year, the company, Bedwell Harbour Hotel Ltd., was fined \$50,000 after pleading guilty to violating the B.C. Heritage Conservation Act.

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## THIS FOREST IS NOT DEAD: THE “GOODS” ABOUT BEETLE ALTERED FORESTS

*Article and photo by David Neads*



**C**ontrary to what you may have heard, beetle altered forests are not dead: in fact they provide good, long lasting habitat, carbon storage and even economic opportunity.

The phrase “beetle killed” actually refers to the individual trees that the Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) has overwhelmed, killing them by cutting off the supply of sap from the roots to the needles. Some forest stands have experienced up to 90 percent mortality of all trees over 40 years of age.

Even in these extreme situations, the forest still has smaller trees in the understory which are two to three decades old and are already well on their way to replacing the dead trees around them. This combination of young understory, decaying older trees and structural change in the forest provides rich new habitat for many species, including insects and microorganisms.

Animals which used the forest prior to MPB attacks often continue to use these forests in spite of the alteration. The Woodland Caribou that inhabit the north end of Tweedsmuir Park are one such example. Recent study shows that winter use patterns are unchanged, even in the hugely altered forests where mortality of old trees is very high.

The lichens that Caribou rely on for about 80 percent of their winter diet need shaded conditions in which to grow. The trunks and branches of the standing dead trees in a MPB forest are able to provide the shading needed for terrestrial lichens in the short term and, as the younger trees grow they will take over the shading role. Based on these observations, the thinking is that the food supply will move through the MPB epidemic, still providing the nutrients needed by these animals. Research shows that a MPB forest is still a thriving living ecosystem, providing many of the old functions in spite of the epidemic.

In terms of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, it is true that the dead trees will release this green house gas (GHG) as they decay, however the release is slower and much less than if the trees are removed by logging for ei-

ther processing or burning. Beetle killed trees generally remain standing for up to 10 years before they fall over, usually because the roots have rotted; however, the unprecedented scale of the attack in Western Canada has resulted in so many trees dying in some places that the water normally released into the air through photosynthesis is staying in the ground. This is causing water tables to rise, rotting the roots and causing the trees to fall over sooner than noted in previous epidemics.

Even so, after the tree falls, decay rates are still rather slow, and the CO<sub>2</sub> release is timed out over 30 or more years. In addition, carbon is sequestered by soil and other organisms by chemical and biological means.

The net result is that, for CO<sub>2</sub> emission, the best thing you can do with a beetle altered forest is to leave it alone. Forest harvesting activities increase CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and, worst of all, burning these trees for electricity releases far more CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere than logging.

From the perspective of the wilderness tourism community, leaving the forest intact is the only way to preserve their source of livelihood. Roads, clear cutting, forest removal, all these things destroy the wilderness product that these operators sell. So, as with the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions problem, the best thing to do with a beetle altered forest is to leave it alone. Once the red needles drop, and the gray emerges, it melds with the new understory, still giving a good flightsee experience, and when you land your floatplane on a lake (the destination of many of these wilderness tours) the remoteness, the view of unroaded wilderness is still intact.

There are many more things that can be said about the viability, the carbon sequestration and the economics of beetle altered forest, but the short of it is that these ecosystems are valuable, energetic forests that need to be left alone where possible. So, if a chance comes along for conservation-minded groups and individuals to buy, protect or slow down the removal of these forests by industrial logging, that opportunity needs to be taken.



## STEWARDSHIP, ENTREPRENEURIALISM AND THE NEW “BOTTOM LINE”

Article by Hans Peter Meyer

◀ *The BC Grasslands Conservation Council - a member of the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program - holds a wealth of knowledge and expertise that some grasslands communities are beginning to access as they confront the challenges of development. Source: the Real Estate Foundation of BC.*

*Photo source: the Real Estate Foundation of BC.*

The current political and media cachet of doing the “green” thing should be an occasion for celebration on the part of the stewardship and conservation (S&C) sector. Especially because these sectors can now add to the momentum of other sectors, where there is rapidly growing appreciation of the value of the ecological systems that underwrite our existence on the planet - what economist Nancy Olewiler has called our “natural capital”. Rather than building short term solutions to waste and stormwater issues, engineers, planners, biologists, among others, are seeing long term value in working with natural ecosystems. The problem, as Olewiler points out, is that we have been poor accountants of this natural capital. Consequently, we have squandered much of our inherited wealth.

While the rest of us have been doing “business as usual,” the S&C sector has been honing its skills at inventorying and preserving natural capital. These folk have generally maintained healthy skepticism about traditional land use and real estate practices. Now, some environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) are on the look-out for opportunities to influence planning and the marketplace, in support of a new approach to the use and conservation of land. This “new business as usual” represents a more holistic approach to the relationship between ecology and human settlement.

The Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia (REF) has been a consistent funder of the S&C sector in this province, in large part because it believes that these ENGOS provide critical expertise for our communities. “Communities seeking to move to the ‘new business as usual’ need the S&C sector’s services,” says Tim Pringle, REF Executive Director. Pringle sees this emerging demand as an opportunity for S&C sector organizations to become more self-sufficient -- and effective.

In BC there are several examples of S&C organizations taking an entrepreneurial approach to the work they do. A partial list includes the Fraser Valley Conservancy (FVC), the Comox Valley Land Trust (CVLT) on Vancouver Island, and the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP). All of these organizations are providing services for local and senior levels of government and/or the private sector. In some

cases these services are generating revenue. In others, they are generating partnership funding arrangements. Either way, the enhanced profile and credibility for S&C sector work is helping organizations become more effective in their own missions and in some cases a little more independent of outside funders.

Several years ago the Comox Valley Land Trust (CVLT) took a leadership role in a rapidly growing but politically divided region. This initiative has evolved into the Comox Valley Conservation Strategy (CVCS), now led by a Steering Committee of dedicated community group representatives including the CVLT. The Steering Committee is well-positioned to significantly assist Comox Valley governments to produce a provincial government mandated regional growth strategy that puts conservation first.

Marvin Kamenz, planner for the Town of Comox, sees CVLT playing an important role in the region. “The Land Trust provides the spark and the coordination with regard to public motivation on a regional approach to conservation planning.” Local government is limited in what it can do, especially in a politically divided region, he says. “Everybody in local government already has responsibilities tied to their jurisdiction.” No body is filling the gap between local bodies. “So CVLT [through the CVCS Steering Committee] is taking on the coordinating role.”

Jillian Tamblyn, Environmental Coordinator with the Regional District of South Okanagan describes the principal service provided by the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program as one of “collaboration.” Program Manager Bryn White agrees. “SOSCP is not actually an ‘organization,’” she says. “It’s a table for collaboration with a number of partners.” Member organizations include local ENGOS, provincial ministries, as well as federal departments. Recently the Regional District of South Okanagan became a full member. Like the CVCS Steering Committee on the Island, SOSCP addresses a region rather than a specific legal jurisdiction, allowing for a more ecologically holistic approach. As a cross-jurisdictional partnership, it functions to reduce duplication, encourage collaboration, and leverage greater resources than if partner organizations were working alone.

As the value of intact ecosystems increases, eco-regional capacity will become more important and this capacity is being fostered by the collaborative approach of organizations like CVLT and SOSCP. “The S&C sector, at least selected organizations, increasingly is collaborative,” observes Pringle. “This is a natural dynamic when the purposes infer commitment to holistic values about healthy ecology and healthy communities.” It is also part of an increasingly sale-able skill set as developers, and local and senior levels of governments seek to respond effectively to issues that straddle property lines, town borders and even provincial and international boundaries.

In the Comox Valley, under the CVLT’s leadership, the Comox Valley Conservation Strategy is helping to bridge differences amongst ENGOs as well. David Stapley is a private consultant who works with developers as well as ENGOs. He has been engaged by CVLT to manage and facilitate the CVCS program and Steering Committee. His observation is that working through a collaborative, partnership approach is helping local ENGOs to “articulate a common voice to local government, in terms of how to change policy and have an impact on development.” This is having a ripple effect, says Stapley. “Developers are starting to notice this.” Seeing that local government is beginning to appreciate projects with “green” and/or “sustainable” qualities, some developers are turning to CVLT and other Comox Valley ENGOs for their guidance and expertise.

“If the developer is interested in applying sustainable or ‘green’ principles, then an ENGO gives them a resource because the developer is usually only just learning how to do this,” Stapley explains. “The other advantage is that local governments in the Comox Valley have recently adopted sustainability goals, and are interested in and looking for developments with sustainability principles. The developer who involves local ENGOs is likely to have a competitive advantage over one who doesn’t.”

In her six years with Fraser Valley Conservancy (FVC), Executive Director Lisa Fox has been part of a change within the organization that has taken it from a bystander in the development process, to being a small but important participant. FVC has developed a fee-for-service program for the development industry, built around the City of Abbotsford’s requirement for reporting on wildlife habitat. “We are a bridge between City and developers,” says Fox. “We’re helping the City get consistent information... and [we’re] informing development plans so that, hopefully, important wildlife habitat is not paved over but protected.” Developers benefit with access to competitively-priced information services; they also receive guidance about land donations and/or covenants that may make developments more attractive to the City and may provide significant tax benefits.

At CVLT, the interest shown by some developers is en-

couraging Executive Director Jack Minard and his Board to actively target the private sector with a set of potential for-profit services. Possibilities include a “sustainability checklist” that developers, consultants, and CVLT could use to preview proposals before they go before municipal staff. “Potentially, it lightens the load for local government, and it helps streamline the process of approval for the developer,” says Minard. It also helps bring the values of sustainability and conservation to the table.

Recent research by REF on “green values” development on Vancouver Island suggests that the business case is emerging for a thriving entrepreneurial, service-for-sale oriented ENGO sector. But the “business case,” as Peter Andzans, Manager of Community Sustainability for the City of Abbotsford says, is not the only reason ENGOs should be marketing services to local government and the private sector. “Community building is a triple-bottom-line assessment,” he says. “And community building is becoming more important. In this context, when faced with the choice of a local ENGO versus an out of town consultant, it’s a no-brainer.” The capacities of local organizations to contribute to community quality of life is enhanced through this support. Local knowledge is given credibility. Local government funds are invested into local businesses and/or economies. Community pride is nurtured.

The challenge for ENGOs, as Tamblyn, Andzans, and Kamenz agree, is one of meeting local government requirements for credibility and reliability -- and of being flexible enough to provide the kinds of services local government may need. Kamenz says that the Town of Comox is quite willing to engage ENGOs for contract services, but a number of questions need to be asked, as of any private consultant responding to a request for proposals: What are the qualifications? What is the history of service delivery? “Typically... we need professional accreditation, something we can go back on in terms of qualifications and liability.”

Minard, echoing Pringle’s assessment, argues that local ENGOs “have a unique knowledge of local expertise and can put a professional in place who is armed not only with a particular set of credentials, but who also knows the Valley and has an historical perspective of what has changed over the

*“If the developer is interested in applying sustainable or ‘green’ principles, then an ENGO gives them a resource because the developer is usually only just learning how to do this.”*



years.” Typically, Minard says, developers “tend to hire expertise from their locale. We have one local project where the developer is bringing in expertise from California. ... This just doesn’t work. Eventually, he’ll be drawing on local resources to get the information and context he needs.” Andzans agrees. “Consultants will often solicit the services of local naturalists because... they are often the best positioned in the community to do this work.”

CVLT is proposing to “short circuit” the process, says Minard. “We can put together a team that’s going to have some local knowledge, historical knowledge, specific knowledge of the eco-region.” As well as offering a fee-for-service to help developers find knowledgeable, credible local resources and contractors, CVLT is also considering offering a “full package, where we hire the expertise and manage the project.”

Tamblyn says that while the RDOS hasn’t yet hired SOSCP members to do fee-for-service work, departments within the regional district do work closely with SOSCP and its members, particularly on public education and process types of initiatives. She points to recent professional work done by SOSCP member BC Grasslands Council in the Kamloops area as an example of where ENGOs are providing valuable -- and attractive -- contract services.

These groups are demonstrating a shift that is taking place - driven by a number of factors, including climate change - as local government

moves towards greater emphasis on “sustainability.” In

the marketplace there is a shift towards “green” buildings and developments, with some developers pushing the edge of policy - by making proposals that

are far ahead of what local or senior levels of government are able to understand. The extent to which these policies measure and protect what matters - natural capital - is key to how effective they will be in making our communities sustainable, high quality places to call home. As shown above, the S&C

sector - for years preparing for its role as accountant to “green values,” - is, in some places,

stepping into a leadership role, and an entrepreneurial role.

As environmental services have been cut from senior levels of government, it is, as Pringle has said, “Specific S&C organizations [who] are the experts about regional landscapes, arranging conservation covenants, mapping sensitive environmental areas, etc.” Increasingly, “Local government has similar needs as the developers,” says Stapley. “They both need the kind of knowledge that ENGOs embody if they want to achieve their sustainability goals.” For organizations that are prepared to be flexible, to engage other land use interests in dialogue towards common ends and goals, and who successfully parley their historical and local strengths as collaborative and credible science-based organizations, there is significant opportunity to become decisive forces in the shaping of positive settlement choices. Increasingly, in business, local government, and ENGOs, the bottom line is one of building communities that honour and sustain the natural systems on which our lives depend.



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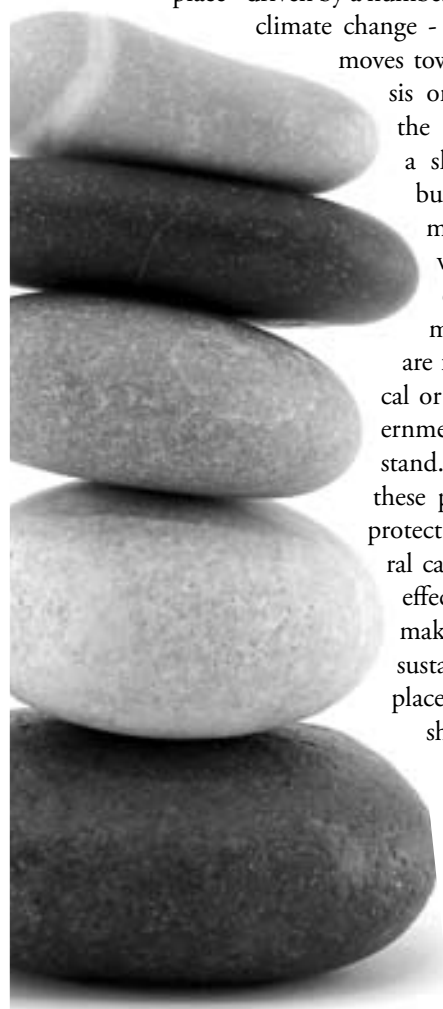


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## PLANNING FOR CONSISTENCY TO PROTECT ECOSYSTEMS AND THE OKANAGAN LIFESTYLE

*Article by Simone Runyan, Program Coordinator of the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program*



*Wes Miles of the Regional District of the Central Okanagan and Erica Jenkins of the BC Conservation Core collect Foreshore Inventory and Mapping data on Okanagan Lake for a project coordinated by the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program to provide mapped ecological data to local land use planners.*

With the Okanagan Valley undergoing rapid urbanization and development, a movement is afoot to bring consistency to environmental planning in the Valley so that mapped ecological data is reliably incorporated into land use decision-making. The players in this movement include the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP) and its governmental and non-governmental partners. These groups are helping to facilitate the exchange of information and tools that support sustainable planning and land management.

The Regional Districts of the North and Central Okanagan each may grow by as much as 50 percent in the next 25 years, with annual growth rates of almost 2 percent and a combined influx of 125,000 people. Awareness is growing about the effects that development is having on the area's quality of life and environmental integrity. Will our lovely valley be surrounded by rolling grasslands and forest-covered hills, or will we choose to sit in a bowl of subdivisions, indistinguishable from the urban sprawl of the Lower Mainland?

The Okanagan Valley contains an exceptional diversity of vulnerable, rare and endangered wildlife species and plant communities. The beauty of the natural environment, including the clean lakes, rolling hillsides and productive agricultural areas, is a major attraction for both tourists and residents alike. Many environmentally sensitive areas, such as the foreshores of Okanagan and Kalamalka Lakes, riparian areas surrounding streams and wetlands, grasslands and dry

forests, all of which support species at risk, may be severely influenced by development unless we protect the resources that are critical to the health, vitality and economy of the local communities.

The need to safeguard the Valley's environmental assets has been perceived independently by many individuals and organizations, but increasingly communication is occurring across municipalities with the hopes of finding common solutions. The OCCP was formed in May 2007 to respond to the need for efficient sharing of conservation and land use information in the North and Central Okanagan and to address knowledge gaps. The need to fulfil this mandate is especially acute on low-elevation lands which are often privately owned. The 25 signed partners of the OCCP include all levels of government (Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), BC Ministry of Environment (MOE), regional districts and municipalities), as well as land trusts, businesses, and stewardship and outreach organizations. The OCCP is currently funded by grants from MOE, DFO and others with a three year commitment from the Real Estate Foundation of BC (REF).

The sections below outline some of the new approaches to conservation planning being implemented by OCCP partners within the Valley. As described below, the OCCP is building on the momentum of past initiatives by many different groups, and helping to share the successes of each region in particular aspects of environmental planning.



### PROVIDING EDUCATION AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Vernon is currently breaking ahead with their new Official Community Plan (OCP), as well as the supporting Environmental Management Area (EMA) Strategy document. Never before has so much consultation gone into the writing of an OCP for Vernon, with approximately 100 public consultation opportunities over the course of the last two years. Incorporating the values expressed by citizens resulted in a radically different OCP which is especially progressive in the comprehensive way it addresses the “triple bottom line” of social, economic and environmental values to set the stage for the protection of environmental assets and ecosystem services. With the OCP completed as a guiding document for the City, the critical next step, after November’s municipal elections, is to write bylaws that support the concepts of environmental protection and responsible development recommended by citizens during the consultation process. Other jurisdictions such as the Regional District of the North Okanagan (RDNO) and District of Coldstream are watching these examples and plan to adopt components which will work for them.

To support this goal, the OCCP is bringing planners from the North and Central Okanagan areas together to share ideas and work toward regional consistency in the development and environmental protection process. Workshops facilitated by the OCCP and funded by Ducks Unlimited Canada were held in Vernon and Kelowna in mid-April. The workshops focussed on Environmental Development Permit Areas and the Regional Growth Strategy in the north Okanagan, and OCP policy options in the central Okanagan. Deborah Curran, a law instructor with the Environmental Law Centre at the University of Victoria, discussed the *Green Bylaws Toolkit* (GBT) which gives examples of a wide variety of land use policies, bylaws and other tools that have been used by local government decision-makers and planners to help conserve environmental values in BC. One of the most exciting aspects of the workshop was to see planners from different jurisdictions sharing their successes (and frustrations), and determining how to implement new ideas.

Recently Vernon’s Environmental Advisory Committee and the RDCO’s Environmental Advisory Council also requested GBT presentations, which were delivered by Rob Hawes, an outreach consultant with Ducks Unlimited Canada.

### IMPROVING AND SHARING SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS DATA

The Regional District of the Central Okanagan (RDCO) has long been a leader in utilizing Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) data in land use and subdivision planning. For example, the RDCO

provides support and guidelines for consultants to ensure that both SEI data and field assessment are incorporated into designating Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) at the site level. RDCO environmental planner Brent Magnan recently organized a meeting with biologists and planners from throughout the Valley to further refine and clarify the guidelines, providing an important opportunity for inter-organizational communication in the process.

In order to protect sensitive ecosystems, planners need to know where they are! For example, hillside ecosystem protection efforts are not possible without basic knowledge of ecosystems such as that provided by the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventories (SEI). SEIs involve mapping by biologists of plant communities based on their rarity and fragility, as well as assessing the suitability of the habitat for about ten species at risk. The recent completion of the Coldstream – Vernon Hill and Kelowna SEIs now provides coverage for most of the low-elevation areas in the Okanagan Valley.

Because SEI data is complicated, a number of OCCP partners (led by the Allan Brooks Nature Centre and Grasslands Conservation Council, and funded in part by the Habitat Stewardship Program and REF) have worked together to condense the data into a simpler Sensitive Ecosystem Ranking (SER) map which shows areas with High, Medium and Low SER, as well as ecological corridors between High SER areas. The City of Vernon has now adopted the Greater Vernon SER map in its EMA Strategy. The

maps allow easy assessment of the conservation value of an area by planners or developers, and can be used to plan natural parks and protected areas. SER mapping is planned for the RDCO over the coming year with funding from the Habitat Stewardship Program.

Besides the SEI and SER, other mapped data such as Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping (SHIM) of the creeks of the Greater Vernon area, and Foreshore Inventory and Mapping (FIM) of north Okanagan Lake will be included in local government planning processes and in the North Okanagan Resource and Habitat Atlas (NORHA; [www.shim.bc.ca/atlas/nord/index.cfm](http://www.shim.bc.ca/atlas/nord/index.cfm)) - an online interactive map which already hosts some SEI and SHIM data. Private citizens, developers and even the smaller municipalities may not have access to expensive mapping software, but NORHA allows anyone with internet access to determine which sensitive habitats of concern may exist in a given area.

The OCCP benefits from its cooperative working relation-

*“The OCCP is bringing planners from the North and Central Okanagan areas together to share ideas and work toward the long term goal of progress and regional consistency in the development and environmental protection process.”*



ship with the South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP). In addition to inspiring the concept of the OCCP, the SOSCP is working with its partners to increase the quality of the mapped ecological data in the South Okanagan. Coordinator Bryn White has found ingenious ways to assist smaller municipalities in using mapped data. Because some small communities lack computer mapping software and technicians, the SOCSP has partnered with these communities and is working towards funding a roving planner who can provide the needed computer mapping capabilities on a part time basis.

### **SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEM INFORMATION: AT WORK IN THE CITY OF VERNON OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN**

The City of Vernon provides an example of how mapped ecological data, such as the SEI, SER, FIM and SHIM, can be used by municipalities when citizens and politicians are motivated. Many citizens have been concerned about and even outraged by the way in which large-scale developments have scarred the rolling hillsides that form the typical Okanagan backdrop. Their concern has led to support for measures to protect remaining viewsapes and habitats as reflected in the new OCP. Vernon Councillor and biologist Buffy Baumbrough, who has supported the new SEI mapping and the work of the OCCP as a steering committee member, remarked at how the mapped information presented during the OCP process "caught the imagination of the community," prompting an unprecedented level of engagement and support.

The result was a mandate from the community, to remove hillside lands (with the exception of previously-approved Neighbourhood Plan areas) from future residential growth areas in the new Vernon OCP. The down-zoning of hillside lands was based on environmental, social and economic considerations: the Sensitive Ecosystem Ranking mapping that has been done using SEI data showed that much of the hillside lands surrounding Vernon are Highly or Moderately Sensitive and that the long term economic costs of extending and maintaining sewer and road networks in these remote areas is significantly higher than accommodating populations in existing neighbourhoods. The new OCP stipulates that most growth will be directed to clustered, higher-density neighbourhoods - according to Smart Growth principles - which will allow for more greenspace. Outside of the core downtown and residential areas, the new OCP provides the policy framework for

the permits and field-based assessments that will be required to ensure that sensitive habitats and viewsapes are protected.

Vernon's current more progressive and environmentally aware council - possibly elected in response to development that many residents saw as "out of control" - has enabled these changes, which go a long way toward protecting the recreation potential, views, clean air and water that citizens value so highly. The City's new Director of Planning, Kim Flick has led the progressive OCP process, while the new Environmental Planner, Brooke Marshall, has brought essential planning experience, problem solving ability and knowledge of the importance of protecting ecosystem integrity in preserving local quality of life. Vernon provides an excellent example of green planning to share with other local governments. With support from OCCP partners and the public, other jurisdictions will be able to develop parallel policies so that they also are positioned to protect their valuable environmental resources.

In conclusion, over the past few years, communities in the Okanagan have been

moving toward greater inclusion of mapped ecological data in their planning processes and partner organizations have been working to fill in the gaps. Through networks such as the OCCP, local governments have been sharing ideas about planning tools that can be used to create the kind of communities their citizens say they want: liveable communities nestled in the matrix of functioning ecosystems, with clean air and water, sensitive habitats and viewsapes protected. Ongoing communications facilitated through multi-agency partnerships will also help developers - by providing clear, regionally-consistent bylaws and guidelines.

*"Through networks such as the OCCP, local governments have been sharing ideas about planning tools that can be used to create the kind of communities their citizens say they want: liveable communities nestled in the matrix of functioning ecosystems, with clean air and water, sensitive habitats and viewsapes protected."*



## THE MAY FESTIVAL: A “GREEN” CELEBRATION ON MAYNE ISLAND

*Article by Lael Whitehead, member of the Mayne Island Conservancy*



*Around the May Pole, May 2007.*

*Photo credit: Tom Hobely*

For the past three years the Mayne Island Conservancy has sponsored a wonderful event on Mayne Island, the annual ‘May Celebration’. The event grew out of a desire to create a public event that would both foster community and raise awareness about our connection to the earth and its cycles. The event had to be inclusive, life-affirming, and above all, fun! Looking back for inspiration to ancient times, the Conservancy decided to revive a custom common throughout northern Europe until the last century: the festival of the May Pole.

Festivals on May Day, or Beltane, have since time immemorial, marked the advent of summer. By the month of May the earth has fully reawakened from its winter sleep, is ready to bear life once more and crops have been planted. Villagers in ancient times would have danced and feasted in the fields at Beltane, chanting “summer is a comin’ in!” And, they would have participated in special rites to honor the land, asking the Earth Spirits to bless their harvest.

On Mayne Island, we have devised our own unique May celebration, using themes and motifs from past traditions and inventing a few of our own. The ritual begins on the grounds of the Agricultural Hall at the close of the first Farmer’s market of the year on the May long weekend. At the heart of the celebration is the May Pole.

The May Pole is an ancient symbol of fertility. The planted pole symbolizes the male sky/sun energy impregnating the female earth energy in order to yield bountiful crops and a healthy

community. Our pole is made of a slender alder trunk, about twenty feet high, and perhaps eight inches in diameter. The pole is bedecked with 16 ribbons, all very brightly coloured. At the appointed hour, the ‘town crier’ loudly calls the crowds to gather and then ‘inducts’ the ‘pole bearers’. These are a group of about twelve or so men, all wearing big, gaudy hats and colourful costumes, who will carry the pole in the procession to the park. The men must swear a comical oath of allegiance to the pole and to the May Queen before they lift the pole with great pomp and ceremony and lead the parade to the park.

The Parade is one of the highlights of the celebration. Led by the Green Man, everyone is invited to walk behind the pole, making as much noise as possible. Most people have come dressed in colourful, festive clothing, and are wearing ‘crowns’ of vines, scotch broom and flowers sold by the Conservancy as a fundraiser during the market. The sight of 300 bedecked revelers grinning from ear to ear as they parade down the main street is one you can never forget! This past year we were fortunate to have the Quicksbottom Morris dancers perform at the farmers’ market before the swearing in of the pole bearers, and they also marched and danced in the procession.

Two other symbols of the female and male energies who bring about the fertility of the earth are the May Queen and the Green Man. Each year the past May Queen crowns a new May Queen in the presence of the Green Man dressed in moss and leaves. He is a kind of “Pan” figure, representing the fecundity of the land. A number of small children, dressed as fairies



Photo credit: Tom Hobely

and sprites, accompany the past Queen, the new Queen and the Green Man into a grass labyrinth where the crowning takes place.

The drums fall silent. The Green Man gives a blessing, invoking the spirits of the earth, reminding all present of the great Web of Life that supports us. The past Queen crowns the new May Queen who, this year, led her vocal ensemble of women in a traditional African chant honouring the abundance of the earth.

Following this, the 'pole bearers' then shoulder the pole once more and carry it to a pre-dug hole where it is planted. The May Pole dancers, sixteen women wearing long colourful scarves and flowery crowns, take a ribbon, and begin the interweaving 'ribbon dance' to the accompaniment of a penny whistle and an Irish drum. The crowd is then invited to gather around the pole for some easy circle dances. What a sight it is to see over a hundred laughing people of all ages dancing hand in hand in a great circle!

After the dancing, lemonade is served along with delicious homemade cake offered up on Big Leaf maple leaves. For the still energetic young and old there are three legged races, sack races and egg-in-spoon races.

Throughout the event, ticket sellers in zany costumes have worked the crowd, selling raffle tickets in "lengths". You can buy a 'nose' worth of tickets, or have the seller unroll a length "as long as your arm," or "as generous as your waist." The raffle draw of green themed prizes brings closure to the festivities. Besides having a great deal of fun this year the Conservancy raised close to \$1,000.



The May Festival is only one of the many activities organized and sponsored by the Mayne Island Conservancy. Other Conservancy activities include:

- ✦ a speakers series related to issues of conservation;
- ✦ interpretive nature walks;
- ✦ community events in recognition of Earth Day, Oceans Day and Canada Parks Day;
- ✦ resource materials such as the *Tread Lightly* booklet for property owners and the *Tread Lightly Tips* booklet for visitors to the Island;
- ✦ publications such as the *Mayne Island Bird Checklist* and the *Invasive Species on Mayne Island* brochure;
- ✦ walkabouts for landowners interested in learning more about the species and ecosystems on their property and to promote our non-binding Stewardship Pledge;
- ✦ the Broom Action Team (BAT) - Scotch broom removal in both public and private areas (with permission);
- ✦ a restoration project in Henderson Park; and
- ✦ management of the Horton Bayviary Nature Reserve.

Though sharing important information about ecology and conservation is a key role of the Conservancy, the May Festival provides an opportunity to foster a different kind of sustainability: the ongoing health and vitality of community. For, after all, the survival of our environment relies to a great extent on the strength of our bonds to one another. When we come together to celebrate and reaffirm both our connection to the earth and to each other, we become better stewards of the land. We remember that the world is a joyful, wondrous place after all; and well worth preserving.



Photo credit: Tom Hobely



## FARM HOLIDAYS: ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES AND BECOME A FARMER FOR A FEW DAYS

*Article by Paula Hesje, Agricultural Liaison, TLC The Land Conservancy*



*Photo credit: Paula Hesje*



*Photo credit: Nichole Haddad*

Working holidays are a new concept to many Canadians but they are quickly gaining popularity as an inspirational and affordable way to vacation. Gone are the days of lounging on the beach, twirling a cocktail umbrella. Paying money to work seems odd to some – but this is a popular concept in the UK and Australia. The National Trust in England has been running a Working Holiday Program now for 40 years – offering a different way for people to experience their properties.

TLC The Land Conservancy has been running Conservation Holidays for almost 10 years, with a focus on conservation and restoration projects. The summer of 2007 saw our first farm-focused holidays on a TLC-owned farm – Keating Farm – and at Glenairley, a TLC Conservation Partner farm.

TLC Conservation Partners ([www.conservancy.bc.ca/conservationpartners](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca/conservationpartners)) are exemplary farmers, ranchers and vintners who use their land not only to produce food, but also to protect natural habitat and biodiversity. Our partners' products are distinguished by our butterfly label, which symbolizes their contribution to the long-term viability of food production and ecosystem health in B.C. We are always looking for ways we can support our partners as well as opportunities for people to connect with B.C.'s farm land. Farm Holidays seem to be the perfect formula as the work completed helps the farmer and the exchange of knowledge about farming practices is of great value to the participant.

This year we offered four Farm Holidays in the Vancouver Island area to help urban dwellers connect with their food. The first holiday in June was at Michael Ableman and Jeanne-

Marie Herman's Foxglove Farm. Halfway up Mt. Maxwell on Salt Spring Island, this diverse and historic 120-acre farm produces an abundance of organic fruit and vegetables. The twelve people that joined us had their hands in a variety of activities – we stacked hay bales high on a trailer, placed irrigation piping through the orchards and then mulched around the young trees. These mulch 'ostrich nests' will help to retain moisture, minimize weed growth and increase the biological activity and organic matter.

We learned about the conservation covenants on site that protect the water quality and supply, did some bird watching and finished one day with an oyster mushroom harvest for our dinner. We were fortunate to share our feast with Pat Reichert from Island Natural Growers, who spoke about her Flour Mill and the latest news about the Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan. The group also spent time at Kim Hanson and Ron Puhky's Grandview Farm in the Fulford Valley where we learned about their grass fed beef, helped with fencing their free range chickens and went home with bags full of rhubarb.

TLC staff organize these holidays and a volunteer co-leader helps with the pre-holiday planning and the activities on the farm. Logistics, menu planning, safety, education, recreational and social activities are all aspects to consider when preparing for a Farm Holiday. Each farmer provides unique knowledge and expertise for the different holidays. If this type of holiday sounds like your bucket of apples, check out [www.conservantholidays.ca](http://www.conservantholidays.ca) or call 1-888-738-0533 for more information.

## MEDICINE BEACH WATERSHED AWARENESS INITIATIVE: NATURE SANCTUARY NEIGHBOURS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE

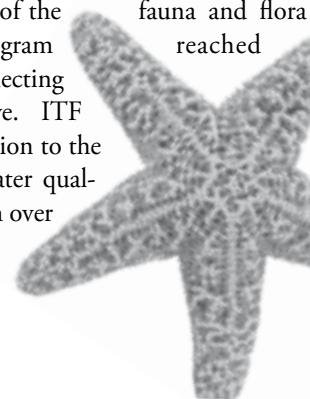
*Article and photos from Islands Trust Fund*



**T**he Medicine Beach Nature Sanctuary, protected in 1995 by the Islands Trust Fund and the Pender Island Conservancy Association, is an 8.4-hectare natural haven and community treasure located opposite Bedwell Harbour on North Pender Island. As human activities in the upper reaches of the Medicine Beach Watershed are having a direct impact on the health of the marsh, the Islands Trust Fund and the Pender Islands Conservancy Association launched the Medicine Beach Watershed Awareness Initiative.

The program provided information about the processes occurring in the fragile salt-water marsh, and offered interested landowners on-site consultations to guide them on steps they can take to protect the natural features on their property and

reduce their impact on the watershed. To wrap-up the initiative, the conservancy hosted a family celebration of the Medicine Beach Nature Sanctuary. Naturalists were on hand, enthusiastic to share their knowledge of the fauna and flora of the nature sanctuary. The program reached more than 85 landowners connecting them to the place that they live. ITF hopes this sense of local connection to the land will result in improved water quality in the Medicine Beach Marsh over the long term.



## PLANNING FOR GIVING: LESSONS FROM THE CAGP ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND THE GALIANO CONSERVANCY LEGACY COMMITTEE

*Article by Cheryl Bastedo*

With much thanks to Frank Arnold of The Pinch Group, a BC-based socially responsible investment company, I was able to attend the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP) Annual National Conference held April 23 to 25. It was much larger than I was expecting with close to 500 delegates, most of whom were paid professional fundraisers from large organizations, churches, cancer agencies, etc. and a few people from different levels of government. The only disappointment was that only five people that I was aware of were representing environmental organizations.

It was interesting and inspiring to hear guest speaker Robert Bateman - artist, naturalist and spokesman for many environmental issues - address the crowd. The most valuable two sessions for me were entitled *Aging Donors: Ethical Issues* and *What's Your Responsibility in Dealing with a Planned Giving Disaster?* Both sessions presented cases where bequests were challenged in the courts. The moral of both stories was to avoid a legal battle. In the instance that the charity did not fight for the bequest the family ended up donating the same amount to the charity as was the value of the bequest. In the case where the charity made a fuss over a very strange situation all they got was a lot of very bad press.

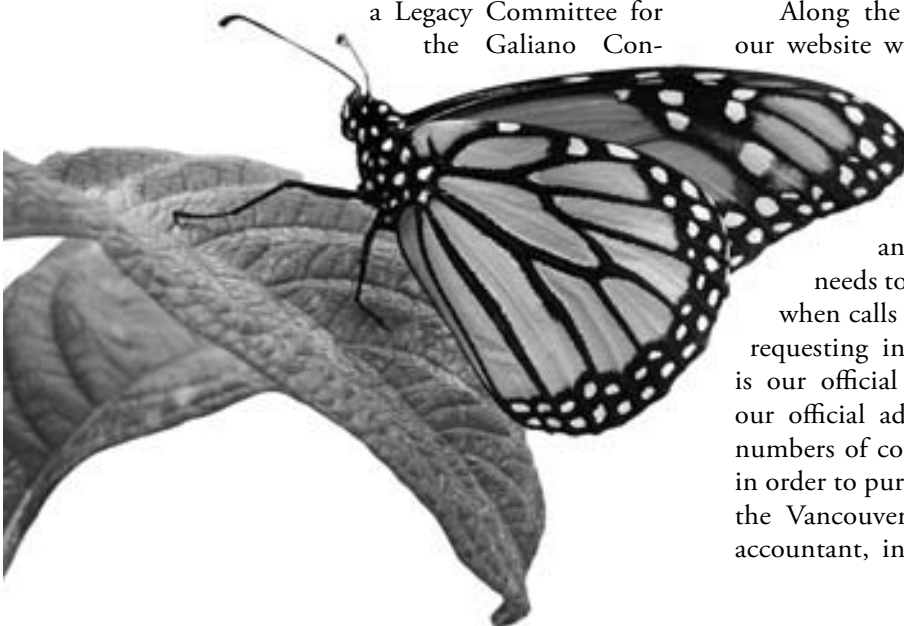
For a year before attending the conference I was on a Legacy Committee for the Galiano Con-

servancy Association. We hired Nora Layard of the Green Legacies Project to work with us as a consultant. This was all made possible by a Sustainability Grant from Vancity. The goals of our committee were to learn fundraising techniques, set policies, and establish an endowment fund to ensure the future sustainability of the Conservancy and its many projects.

Nora guided us through the long process. We had monthly committee meetings with a long list of things that needed to be established, one of the first being to determine how large the endowment fund needed to be to cover all operating costs including our personnel (executive director, bookkeeper, librarian), insurance, accounting, rent and utilities. Committee member Carolyn Canfield researched various foundations that are currently managing endowment funds and invited them to meet with us. They were all very helpful. One of these foundations - the Vancouver Foundation - graciously sent Kim McPhee (Teleske) to Galiano to meet with us, answer our questions and address concerns. Many follow-up conversations took place with Kim, seeking out answers to questions other organizations hadn't asked before. The Vancouver Foundation is one organization currently considering a policy for disposition of ecologically valuable property that is bequested to them.

Along the road we realized that improvements to our website were needed, in order to complement the promotion of our fund. Board member Peter Reiner researched and oversaw this work.

A 'State of Readiness' binder was begun by myself shortly into our mission and finalized by Nora towards the end. This needs to be available in the office for staff reference when calls come in from individuals or estate lawyers requesting information, the most necessary of which is our official name, charity registration number, and our official address. Also included are lists of contact numbers of consultants that a donor could choose from in order to pursue advice on the subject. The list includes the Vancouver Foundation, wills/estate lawyers, a tax accountant, insurance specialist, stockbroker, appraiser,





and a surveyor. We must be careful never to give advice to a donor ourselves.

Several policies needed to be worked out, debated back and forth among the committee, then forwarded to the Conservancy's Board for approval, questions, or requested changes. **Below is a comprehensive list of the policies and procedures we have developed in order to run a successful endowment fund program.**

'General Policies' include: code of ethics, donors bill of rights, investment policy, conflict of interest, confidentiality, legal/financial counsel.

Who pays for legal opinions, appraisals, investment advice, and what is our position on acting as Trustee or Executor? 'Gift Appraisal and Acceptance Policies' were needed to provide details and direction. They include: gift eligibility, donor recognition and stewardship, information required prior to consideration of a proposed gift, acceptable gifts and unacceptable gifts, and disposition policy.

'Gift Acceptance Guidelines' were developed to describe policies pertaining to individual types of gifts as follows: securities, bequests, life insurance, commemorative gifts, real estate (non conservation land), Ecological Gifts and conservation land, and other more complex gifts.

'Administrative Procedures' include: solicitation and cultivation of donors, gift release procedures, tracking of donor information and gifting patterns, donor information security, and procedures for recognizing donors.

It was a long road but we did get to our destination in the end. As a committee, we have now reached our goal of establishing the endowment fund with the minimum \$10,000 which was donated by Galiano Conservancy Board members. The finale was a folder to give potential donors, which includes several brochures that give a good sense of the history, purpose, projects and goals of the Conservancy. New membership forms were designed and



printed as well as a brochure about ways to contribute to the endowment fund and thereby join the Conservancy's Legacy Circle of Donors.

I would like to thank LTABC once again for enabling me to attend the conference which was very informative and confirmed for us that Nora Layard had more than fulfilled her role in enabling us to achieve our daunting goal. The Galiano Conservancy would also like to thank VanCity for providing the funding that allowed us to hire Nora.

*"It was a long road but we did get to our destination in the end. As a committee, we have now reached our goal of establishing the endowment fund with the minimum \$10,000 which was donated by Galiano Conservancy Board members."*



***We are pleased to announce that next year will be the 20th Anniversary of the Galiano Conservancy!***

## CONSERVATION-MINDED LANDOWNERS BENEFIT FROM PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM

The Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) is a property tax incentive program for landowner conservation initiatives. NAPTEP provides landowners who permanently protect natural features of their land with a 65 percent property tax exemption on the protected portion of their land. NAPTEP is available to Gulf Island landowners in the Capital and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts. The Islands Trust Fund and the Islands Trust currently protect over 45 hectares of private land through the program. Current participants report savings of between \$1,300 and \$3,700 annually on their property taxes.

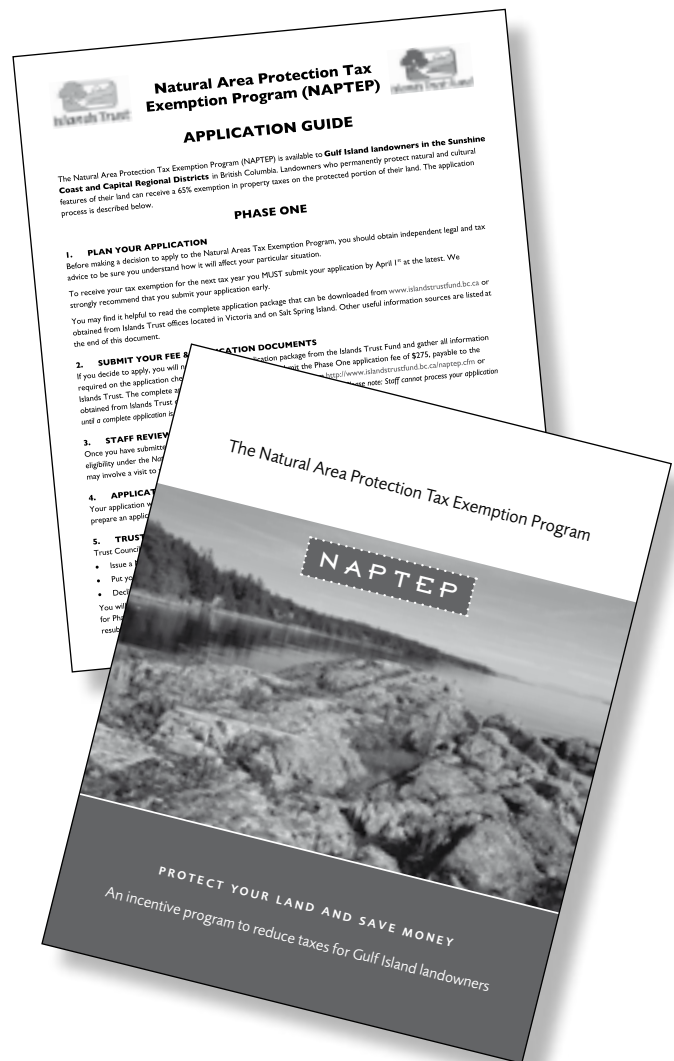
The Islands Trust and the Islands Trust Fund revised NAPTEP in early 2008 to streamline the application process and provide more flexibility for participating applicants.

Changes to the program include:

- \$** A simplified fee structure;
- \$** Annual monitoring provided by the Islands Trust Fund at no additional cost to the landowner;
- \$** Improved flexibility in the application of the standard NAPTEP covenant to allow applicants to tailor the conservation covenant to the needs of their land.

NAPTEP can provide significant property tax savings; however, the program also has costs such as legal and tax fees, and baseline report and survey costs. Landowners can find it complex to determine if the financial benefits outweigh the costs associated with the program. To assist landowners in determining if NAPTEP is financially beneficial for them, the Islands Trust Fund has released the *Applicant's Guide to Calculating NAPTEP Costs and Benefits*. The new guide is simple and easy to use, providing a step-by-step comparison of NAPTEP costs to property tax savings. The guide includes fictional scenarios to help interested landowners determine how NAPTEP could benefit them.

If your land trust works in the Southern Gulf Islands or Howe Sound areas, we encourage you to explore the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program with landowners considering covenants. We also encourage all landowners interested in lowering their property tax burden to look at the new Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program and the *Applicant's Guide to Calculating NAPTEP Costs and Benefits* online at: [www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/naptep.cfm](http://www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/naptep.cfm).



# MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS: A GLOBAL GUIDE

*Edited by Michael Lockwood, Graeme Worboys and Ashish Kothari*

- **The most authoritative guide ever compiled to the principles and practice of park (or 'protected area') management – essential for all professionals and students in all countries and contexts**

This authoritative handbook, produced by IUCN [the International Union for Conservation of Nature], spans the full terrain of protected area management and is the international benchmark for all professionals, students and academics worldwide. The book employs dozens of detailed international cases studies, hundreds of concise topical snapshots, maps, tables, illustrations and a colour plate section, as well as evaluation tools, checklists and numerous appendices to cover all aspects of park management from biodiversity to natural heritage to financial management.

- **There are over 108,000 parks/protected areas on Earth, covering 13.5 million square kilometres – an area the size of China and India combined**

The book establishes a conceptual underpinning for protected area management, presents guiding principles for the 21st century, reflects recent work on international best practice and provides an assessment of skills required by professionals. The publication is relevant to the full range of management systems worldwide, balancing more traditional, developed country approaches with developing country systems including participatory, integrated, multi-sectoral and value-driven approaches.

- **Produced by renowned experts from IUCN, the world's largest and most important conservation network, whose membership includes 82 States, 111 government agencies, 800 NGOs, and 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries**

*Published with IUCN.*

**Michael Lockwood** is Senior Lecturer, Environmental Planning, School of Geography & Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, Australia. **Graeme L. Worboys** is Vice-Chair, Mountains Biome, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). **Ashish Kothari** is Vice-Chair, People and Equity, IUCN WCPA.

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## Bibliographic details

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Hardback ISBN 1844073025 / 9781844073023



### HELPING TO BUILD THE PROGRAM FOR A SUCCESSFUL SUMMIT

- Since last report, LTABC's contributions to the Steering and Program Committees for the May 2009 BC Land Summit include making the selected recommendation for the main plenary speaker: Robert Kennedy Junior. In addition, our recommendation was accepted to establish a Green Conference Committee. We have been working to distribute the Call for Proposals, which closed on July 25th; we hope some of our conservancy members answered the call and will be presenting at the BC Land Summit!

### SPREADING THE WORD: CONSERVING NATURE MITIGATES CLIMATE CHANGE

- Since its release in February, we have been widely disseminating our report, Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through the Conservation of Nature. The report is serving as a great resource to promote the conservation of nature in the face of climate change. It has been delivered to the Premier of BC, the Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and other key contacts in government including the government appointed Climate Action Team. Copies have been sent to the committee members on the BC Trust for Public Lands, Biodiversity BC, and other provincial conservation organizations. We have received tremendous support for this work, including congratulations from the Premier, were nominated for a Community Stewardship Award with the Islands Trust Fund, and our report has been cited numerous times.
- This February, a group of organizations (the LTABC, David Suzuki Foundation - DSF, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - CPAWS, Living Oceans Society, as well as key individuals) put forward a submission to the Climate Action Team (CAT) entitled: Adopting a Carbon Stewardship Approach to Land Use Management and Forestry. The submission encourages the government to support a Carbon Stewardship approach which maintains the current carbon storage capacity of our terrestrial and marine ecosystems through the conservation of nature. The submission provided to the CAT a set of policies and initiatives that could be used to implement the Carbon Stewardship approach. LTABC is undertaking further research (with Richard Hebda and Brinkman and Associates) to determine how to measure the carbon values of protected ecosystems. This final research will be presented at the BC Land Summit in May 2009.
- In June 2008 we presented "Planning Mitigates Change" to the Planning Institute of BC's Planning for Change

conference in Prince George. Deborah Curran joined us, presenting information from the *Green Bylaws Toolkit*. Our presentation focused on key elements from our report: *Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change through Conservation*. We highlighted several examples provided by our members, of conservancies partnering with local governments to protect water, wildlife habitats and ecosystem services for the long term through purchase, donation or covenants.

### PROMOTING LAND TRUSTS IN THE MEDIA: MY BC LEGACY CAMPAIGN

- In order to raise awareness of, and support for land trusts in BC, the LTABC has been promoting its public service announcements for commercial television, radio, print and advertisement online. This campaign is designed to lead folks to mybclegacy.ca, a website that links directly to the LTABC website and from there to our BC Land Trust Member information page. The ultimate goal is to increase support to BC land trusts via membership, volunteer involvement, stewardship agreements, covenants or donations of cash and ecologically significant land. Now Karen Hudson has put the two LTA My BC Legacy videos on YouTube. View them at the following web addresses:

My BC Legacy:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKKdGQd\\_81o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKKdGQd_81o)

My BC Legacy (2):  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkvtOjzAFM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkvtOjzAFM)

Like most information online, this video will be spread by people watching it and sharing it with friends via email, or using MySpace or Facebook. If you want to add a rating, video response, or text comment you can do this by signing in to YouTube, or you can sign in with your Google account if you use Gmail. Thanks for spreading the word!

### RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE ALLIANCE AND OUR MEMBERS

- LTA outreach staff Michael Dunn is working to increase awareness of the Alliance amongst provincial government agencies, and to increase our involvement in the BC Conservation Land Forum. To date, he has had very successful meetings with both high level staff and ministers in the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Community Services, and the Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB). Michael successfully brought Minister Barry

Penner to speak at our April Seminar Series. With the support of at least three government ministries, he is currently working on the development of a Capacity Raising Fund program – whereby these ministries would fund payments to our members, via LTABC, to go toward organizational capacity building.

- The ILMB is working with the LTABC on the development of an outreach program to raise awareness about the ecological importance of the Coastal Douglas Fir Zone.

### PROVIDING ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING – TO HELP LAND TRUSTS INCREASE CAPACITY

LTABC is excited to announce its Conservation Lands Assistance Fund - now available to our land trust members. Applicants are eligible to be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the cost of professional fees related to the registration of conservation lands - up to \$3,000.00 per application. See the full application and procedures available on our website.

- Our Seminar Series 2008 in Manning Park (April) focused on climate change and fundraising, as requested by our members in a recent survey. There were many excellent sessions and fabulous evening presentations by Ian McAllistair (*Last of the Wild Wolves*), Hugh Westhauser (on polar bears), and Chris Harris (on BC's endangered grassland ecosystems).
- We awarded a small grant for Strategic Planning to the Salt Spring Island Conservancy which covered their costs to hire a facilitator. Other Strategic Planning inquiries from land trusts which we will follow up on next year include: Savary Island Land Trust, Gabriola Lands and Trails Trust, Cowichan Community Land Trust, Bowen Island Conservancy and the Friends of Cortes Island.
- In June 2008, the LTABC presented a workshop to HAT, Galiano, SSIC and the Islands Trust Fund – to help these mid-sized organizations (with more than one staff member) raise capacity. Our agenda included Organizational Development, Financial and Operational procedures, and Planned Giving and Investment Options. Fifteen people attended, and our guest speakers included: Christine Torgrimson, who has worked for 35 years as a

facilitator and contractor to land trusts in the US, Marion H Markus, the LTABC's bookkeeper, Carla Funk, TLC's Gift Planning Specialist and Frank Arnold, Director of the Pinch Group Investment company.

### PROVIDING UP-TO-DATE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- Our report Water Licences and Conservation, Future Directions for Land Trusts in British Columbia, authored by Deborah Curran and Oliver Brandes, was released in May and is now available on our website ([www.landtrustalliance.bc.ca/index.html](http://www.landtrustalliance.bc.ca/index.html)). The report suggests several strategies for land trusts to work with water councils, water boards, and the provincial government to improve the water licensing regime in BC. The report has been sent to our members and funders, BC's water boards and councils, and a couple of key government staff working on the BC Water Act review. The Alliance will continue to outreach with key government and water council representatives to determine the best steps forward to improve options to protect water in British Columbia.
- The updated version of our 2005 Best Practices and Template Documents Collection is now available on-line for our members. This latest version has improved search function and resources that are organized to correspond with the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices. The new format will enable land trusts and others to review the Standards and Practices and then easily find sample template policies and documents to fit the required practices. To access, please contact LTABC for the online passcode: (phone) 250.538.0112 (email) [info@landtrustalliance.bc.ca](mailto:info@landtrustalliance.bc.ca).

### WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO COLLECT AND DISPLAY BC CONSERVATION INFORMATION

- The process to redesign the LTA Protected Lands Catalogue database - to integrate with the BC Trust for Public Land's NGO conservation database program - is still underway. When this is done, our system will communicate with theirs, adding information to the GIS-based, cadastral-level conservation atlas that is being created and will be available online on the Community Mapping Network ([www.shim.bc.ca/](http://www.shim.bc.ca/)). The LTA has contracted Jeff Skillen to work with The Nature Trust of BC and Ducks Unlimited Canada to help carry out this ambitious project.

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*LTABC would like to thank our generous funders for supporting this year's programs: Mountain Equipment Co-op, VanCity, the Bullitt Foundation, Real Estate Foundation, Vancouver Foundation, BC Trusts for Public Lands and the Notary Foundation.*



## PROVINCIAL



### **COLLABORATIVE WORK BRINGS NEW APPROACH TO CONSERVATION**

On July 9th Biodiversity BC released Taking Nature's Pulse: The Status of Biodiversity in British Columbia a report on the state of BC's natural environment. Biodiversity BC is a partnership of government and non-government organizations established to support improved biodiversity conservation and planning. Taking Nature's Pulse is the result of a collective effort by more than 50 science experts both provincial and international; the report validates the importance of this province's natural biological diversity.

Taking Nature's Pulse covers ecosystem, species and genetic diversity, key and special elements of biodiversity, threats, and knowledge and capacity. The report's 23 major findings show that, compared to the rest of the world, biodiversity in BC is in relatively good shape, but could still be vulnerable to rapid deterioration.

The BC government concurrently launched its science-based Conservation Framework to address the report's findings and conserve species at risk. The Conservation Framework is a scientific method that takes into account climate change and existing conservation work to select the right actions for species and ecosystems at risk. The government of BC will use the Conservation Framework to address key conservation challenges on a priority basis.

To view Taking Nature's Pulse and the major findings please go to [www.biodiversitybc.org/](http://www.biodiversitybc.org/).

The Conservation Framework can be found at [www.env.gov.bc.ca/conservationframework](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/conservationframework).



### **NEW RECOVERY STRATEGIES FOR REVIEW**

Draft recovery strategies for two Garry oak species, an endangered butterfly – the Greenish Blue, and an endangered moss - the rigid apple moss, are now available for viewing at the new BC Environment Recovery Planning website: [www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/recoveryplans/rcvry1.htm](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/recoveryplans/rcvry1.htm).



### **ISLANDS TRUST WORKING TO BRING A LAND CONSERVATION TAX EXEMPTION TO THE REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

Pending approval from the RDN board, the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program will allow landowners on Gabriola, Mudge and DeCourcy islands to protect their property from development while receiving up to a 65 percent reduction in property taxes.

To qualify, a property must have one or more of the eligible features, such as special geological features or areas relatively undisturbed by human activity that are examples of important ecosystems. Based on the Capital Region, Islands Trust expects to see about two or three applications a year, meaning there will be no measurable tax shift to other taxpayers. The Islands Trust has plans to expand the program to Cowichan area, Powell River and the Comox district to have full Island coverage. For more information on the NAPTEP program, please visit [www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/naptep.cfm](http://www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca/naptep.cfm) or call 250-405-5151.





### **NEW WEBSITE - OKANAGAN WATER ON WATERBUCKET**

You can find it at [www.waterbucket.ca/okw](http://www.waterbucket.ca/okw). The *Okanagan Water* site is intended to complement the Okanagan Basin Water Board website ([www.obwb.ca](http://www.obwb.ca)), as a user-driven “community of interest” for all types of water information relevant to projects and programs in the Okanagan. This partnership project of the Okanagan Water Stewardship Council and the Waterbucket links us to other water-interested groups throughout BC. One of the most exciting features of this site is that the 1974 *Okanagan Basin Study* is available digitally online! Let them know if you have suggestions for other website features, widgets, or tools that would also be of general interest to our water community.



### **FOREST LAND RESERVE URGENTLY NEEDED TO COUNTER UNSUSTAINABLE LOGGING RATES AND MASSIVE SELL-OFF OF VANCOUVER ISLAND FORESTLANDS**

Logging rates and forestland sales by the three largest private forestland owners on southern Vancouver Island pose grave risks to globally rare Douglas fir forests and to the region’s liveability, says a study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The study finds that in key cases logging rates and land sales spiked following provincial government decisions favouring the companies.

*Restoring the Public Good on Private Forestlands* looks specifically at logging rates, wood waste levels, log exports and proposed land sales on private forestlands owned by WFP, TimberWest and Island Timberlands.

The study also calls for tougher provincial and federal regulations to make exporting raw logs from private forestlands more difficult, and for parity between public and private lands as far as forest practices and environmental regulations are concerned. *Restoring the Public Good on Private Forestlands* may be downloaded at: [www.policyalternatives.ca/](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/).



### **TARGETED INVASIVE PLANT SOLUTIONS (T.I.P.S.)**

The Invasive Plant Council of BC (IPCBC) has partnered with the Ministry of Transportation to develop seven new species-specific T.I.P.S. (Canada thistle, giant hogweed, Himalayan blackberry, hoary alyssum, knotweed, scentless chamomile, and tansy ragwort) as well as activity-based T.I.P.S. for Highway Operations. In addition, with funding from Environment Canada’s Invasive Alien Species Partnership Program, the Council is currently developing Seed Mixture T.I.P.S. Download your copy of T.I.P.S. from the Council’s website: [www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca](http://www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca).



### **CURRENT STATUS OF INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT IN BC**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the IPCBC recently partnered to determine the current status of invasive plant management in BC - including the level of resources and person hours, types of programs being delivered, and perceived level of progress. The results of this baseline study: *The Economic Impacts Report* is now available on the IPC website: [www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca/publications/ipcbc-reports/index.htm](http://www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca/publications/ipcbc-reports/index.htm).





## NATIONAL

### **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY U.S. RESIDENTS MAY MAKE CASH DONATIONS TO THE AFoCLT TO SUPPORT CANADIAN LAND TRUSTS**

A new organization, the American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts, has been created to support land trusts and their conservation efforts across Canada through cross-border conservation. It was formed by a collaboration of conservationists on both sides of the border to facilitate preservation of these high priority natural areas. AFoCLT is a U.S.- based non-profit that will partner with Canadian land trusts in their efforts to secure the future of some of Canada's signature landscapes.

The major results are two-fold: An excellent resource package for cross-border conservation gifts—The Cross-Border Conservation Tool-Kit (available at [www.nsnt.ca](http://www.nsnt.ca)); and the establishment of a new cross-border conservation charity and program. Contact Bonnie Sutherland (902) 425-5263 or Dave Walker (613) 284-4646, or visit [www.nsnt.ca](http://www.nsnt.ca) for further information.

### **RECENT COSEWIC DETAILED SPECIES ASSESSMENTS**

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) met in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories from April 20 to 25, 2008. Updated COSEWIC Detailed Species Assessments are available online at [www.cosewic.gc.ca/rpts/Detailed\\_Species\\_Assessments\\_e.html](http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/rpts/Detailed_Species_Assessments_e.html).

### **POLAR BEAR FUTURE UNCERTAIN**

COSEWIC has reassessed the Polar Bear as a species of Special Concern. "The Polar Bear was one of the most challenging species ever assessed by COSEWIC" said Dr. Jeff Hutchings, Chair. Extensive inventory and research, a wealth of Aboriginal traditional and community knowledge, and the emerging threats posed by climate change and northern development were considered. In some areas, the bear appears to be increasing; in others it is declining. The reduction of sea ice, a consequence of increasing temperatures, is a particular threat to the species, especially in the southern part of its range. More information at: [www.cosewic.gc.ca/eng/sct7/sct7\\_3\\_11\\_e.cfm](http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/eng/sct7/sct7_3_11_e.cfm).

### **CANADA'S FIRST URBAN FOREST SOFTWARE**

Tree Canada officially announced the launch of CITYgreen Canada, the country's first urban forest software, at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference. The software can demonstrate the monetary value of green spaces and how ignoring our urban forests can have ecological and financial consequences for our communities. The GIS based software, designed by Tree Canada's sister organization American Forests, calculates the value of forest landscapes in urban areas. Copies of CITYgreen Canada can be purchased through Tree Canada. Please contact them at [tcf@treecanada.ca](mailto:tcf@treecanada.ca) for more information.

## **NEW CONSERVATION TOOL PROPOSED IN ALBERTA'S OIL SANDS**

In an effort to prevent irreversible decline of species and biodiversity in Alberta's Boreal Forest, industry can take important steps to offset their environmental impacts by setting aside or restoring areas of equal or greater value to the lands disturbed. So says a report, *Catching Up: Conservation and Biodiversity Offsets in Alberta's Boreal Forest*, released June 10th.

The report, commissioned by the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI) and authored by the Pembina Institute and Alberta Research Council, brings together experiences from the application of offset policies in other jurisdictions with perspectives from industry, First Nations, government, academics and environmental groups in Alberta. It concludes that biodiversity offsets should be considered to address the growing impacts on biodiversity from resource development in the Boreal, including in Alberta's oil sands region. The *Catching Up* report was supported by Canadian-based energy company Nexen Inc., who are actively looking for ways to reduce the industrial footprint from their oil sands operations. The full report is available at: [www.borealcanda.ca](http://www.borealcanda.ca) (PDF-3MB).

## **INSPIRING DOCUMENTARY FILM - *BE THE CHANGE***

A documentary about people living lightly and loving it. Produced by David Chernushenko and the Living Lightly Project, *Be the Change* explores the motivations for, and the challenges and rewards of, trying to live more lightly. A "100-kilometre" film made entirely in the Ottawa region, *Be the Change* celebrates the human spirit by telling the stories of ordinary people who are making a real difference by 'living lightly' through their day-to-day actions. The Living Lightly Project is a unique, open initiative that encourages participants to share their vision of a better way of living with each other and with the world at large. For more information about the film and the Living Lightly Project, please visit [www.livinglightly.ca](http://www.livinglightly.ca).



## **ACT FOR SONGBIRDS - SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION OF NEOTROP ACT!**

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) of 2000, established a matching grants program that supports bird conservation in the US, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean. These projects promote and foster the long-term conservation of neotropical migratory birds and their habitats.

Representatives Ron Kind (D-WI) and Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD) introduced Bill H.R. 5756 to reauthorize the NMBCA, increasing funding to \$20 million by 2015. American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has therefore initiated a coalition of Bird Conservation Alliance (BCA) member organizations including National Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife and Joint Venture Management Boards that will work together for the reauthorization of the NMBCA under the campaign, Act for Songbirds! Visit [www.birdconservationalliance.org/](http://www.birdconservationalliance.org/) to pledge your organizations support today!







## FEDERAL PROTECTION ON THE WAY FOR OREGON'S OLD GROWTH FORESTS?

Conservation groups are welcoming Senator Ron Wyden's (D-OR) June announcement of a new proposal to protect some of Oregon's last remaining mature and old-growth forests. The proposal, aimed at preserving mature and old-growth forests on federal lands while directing the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to instead pursue conservation-based thinning projects, comes at a time when the Bush administration is seeking to dramatically increase logging of ancient trees. Legislation is needed to ensure these mature and old-growth forests continue to provide their many benefits to future generations of Oregonians. In Oregon alone, forest growth, primarily on federal land, sequesters nearly 50 percent of the state's annual greenhouse gas emissions. The region's old-growth forests store more carbon per acre than any other ecosystem on earth. More information available at: [www.oregonwild.org/about/press-room/press-releases](http://www.oregonwild.org/about/press-room/press-releases).



PRESENTS:

## A BETTER FUTURE: ADAPTING TO CHANGE



May 20th-22nd, 2009

Whistler, British Columbia  
Telus Whistler Conference Centre  
[www.bclandsummit.com](http://www.bclandsummit.com)

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See you in Whistler!

The 2009 BC Land Summit will be an interdisciplinary conference organized by six professional organizations, all of whom share ties to land use in British Columbia and who will combine their 2009 annual conferences into this exciting joint venture. The 2009 BC Land Summit will build on the success of the 2004 BC Land Summit in Vancouver, and will provide opportunities to learn, share ideas, collaborate and network with others working in diverse land-related fields. Mark your calendars, and be sure not to miss this exciting conference opportunity!

### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

**Robert F. Kennedy Jr.**  
**Thomas R. Berger, OC, QC, OBC**

**Sherry Kafka Wagner**  
**Dr. Richard Hebda**

"Nothing endures but change." – HERACLITUS



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**The Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia thanks our many financial and in-kind supporters who have generously provided support to achieve our mission over the past 10 years. We look forward to providing education, networking, research, resources, communication and financial services to our member land trusts, associated organizations and agencies and individual supporters in the years to come.**

The Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia	Opus Framing
Communities in Transition Initiative	Ducks Unlimited Canada
The Bullitt Foundation	TLC The Land Conservancy of Canada
The Vancouver Foundation	Islands Trust and Islands Trust Fund
Tides Canada, Endswell Foundation	Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
The Mountaineers Foundation	Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
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