



# Natural Legacy

A newsletter on how The Nature Trust works to conserve BC's natural beauty



## *Celebrating 35 Years of Conservation*

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is proud to be celebrating 35 years of conservation. Since 1971, The Nature Trust along with our partners has invested more than \$65 million to secure over 61,000 hectares (150,000 acres) of critical habitat.

Our conservation properties span the province from Cold Fish Lake in the Spatsizi in northern BC and McQueen Slough in the Peace River to key land along the Adams River with its world famous salmon run, the amazing Hoodoos property in the East Kootenay, the 20-year project on the Englishman River on Vancouver Island, and Francis Point on the Sunshine Coast.

Our volunteer board of directors features a who's who of renowned scientists—Dr. Bert Brink, Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, Dr. Geoff Scudder and Dr. Daryll Hebert—conservationists Rod Silver, Jim Walker, Carmen Purdy and Frances Vyse—as well as business leaders—Stewart Muir, Peter Speer, Daniel Nocente, Robin Wilson, Don Krogseth, Kip Woodward and John West.

Landowners, corporations, foundations, other conservation organizations, governments and individuals support our conservation of BC's natural beauty.

Continued on next page...

### **Canfor Donates Key Fraser River Property**

The Nature Trust was honoured to receive a 22-hectare (54-acre) property on Harrison Knob from Canfor on September 18 in support of the Heart of the Fraser River initiative.

"We are delighted to contribute this ecologically and culturally significant property and hope that this will encourage others to join in this very worthwhile initiative," said Ken Higginbotham, Vice President of Forestry and Environment at Canfor.

The Fraser River is the world's greatest salmon river. Yet, for the past 13 years it has been prominent on the annual list of endangered rivers in BC as designated by the Outdoor Recreation Council and one of the reasons for this pertains to a loss of riparian habitat. The Harrison

Knob, which remains in its natural state, is considered to be extremely important from both an environmental and cultural perspective.

"The protection of the Harrison Knob is a key step forward in protecting this part of the river, which is one of the most important conservation initiatives in Canada," said Mark Angelo, Rivers Day founder and head of British Columbia Institute of Technology's Fish and Wildlife Department.

"This land is located in the heart of Scowlitz Territory. It is an important burial site and cultural heritage resource of the Scowlitz people. We look forward to working with The Nature Trust to ensure the ongoing protection of this land," said Chief John Pennier.



Harrison Knob

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# The Nature Trust of British Columbia



Bert Hoffmeister, first Chair of The Nature Trust, and Ron Erickson, long serving Executive Director

*"If you spend part of your life alone out in the wild, you are changed."*

—Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, Director Emeritus

The Nature Trust was established as a non-profit land conservation organization in 1971 with a \$4.5 million grant from the federal government. This funding was in honour of British Columbia's centennial. Retired Major General Bert Hoffmeister, the most decorated Canadian soldier of the Second World War, a retired forestry executive and conservationist, chaired the organization for the first 20 years.

The Nature Trust is dedicated to conserving British Columbia's biological diversity through selective securement and effective management of areas of ecological significance and natural beauty for future generations.

## Highlights

- 1971 The National Second Century Fund of British Columbia was founded
- 1972 first acquisition was 122 hectares near Grand Forks for important deer winter range
- 1975 first piece of land donated to The Nature Trust was by Dr. Murdoch on Okanagan Lake
- 1976-1986 acquired six parcels (47 hectares) at Adams River which became Roderick Haig-Brown Provincial Park
- 1980 acquired 236.7 hectares known as RCMP Flats, an important marsh on the Pacific Flyway in the Columbia Wetlands
- 1981-1992 acquired 76.71 hectare Englishman River Estuary on Vancouver Island
- 1983 acquired 64.75 hectare Fort St. John Potholes in the Peace River parklands
- 1984 organization name changed to The Nature Trust of British Columbia
- 1987 Pacific Estuary Conservation Program created with conservation partners and provincial and federal government departments to acquire, reserve and enhance wetlands along BC's coastline
- 1988 Vancouver Island Wetlands Program established with conservation partners and government

# Celebrating 35 Years of Conservation

In addition to land securement, one of The Nature Trust's major responsibilities is caring for the land. After acquiring a property, we develop a long term management plan. The plan outlines the conservation values that need to be restored or enhanced. Overseeing these important tasks are land managers based in Nanaimo, Oliver and Cranbrook. Most of our on-the-ground habitat restoration activities are tackled by Conservation Youth Crews.

As we look towards the future, we are inspired by our first Chairman Bert Hoffmeister. His vision and cooperative approach laid the foundation for our organization to secure ecologically sensitive land throughout the province for the benefit of British Columbians for the past 35 years. Encouraged by your support, we proudly walk in his footsteps with a deep sense of commitment to conserve BC's natural beauty.



Vaseux Lake, South Okanagan

## 1990

- 1990 acquired 46.7 hectare Bella Coola Estuary
- 1991 Bert Hoffmeister Scholarship established for a graduate student in the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia
- 1993-2000 the Vaseux Lake-Okanagan Falls and White Lake Basin Biodiversity Ranches were acquired in the South Okanagan to integrate livestock management with protection of species at risk and habitat conservation
- 1994 acquired 229 hectare Worth Marsh in the Peace River region

## 2000

- 2000 South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program created with a number of partners to conserve grasslands, shrub-steppe, riparian and open pine forest habitats
- 2001 acquired 250 hectares of Garry oak woodland on Burgoyne Bay on Salt Spring Island
- 2001 East Kootenay Conservation Program created with over 25 conservation partners to coordinate habitat conservation efforts and generate support
- 2001 Brink/McLean Grassland Conservation Fund established in honour of two founding board members—Dr. Bert Brink and Dr. Alastair McLean—to promote research, habitat restoration and stewardship of grasslands in BC
- 2003 Ian McTaggart-Cowan Scholarship in Environmental Studies established at the University of Victoria in honour of Director Emeritus
- 2003 acquired 241.8 hectares on Englishman River on Vancouver Island
- 2003 acquired 4037 hectare Hoodoos Property in the East Kootenay
- 2004-2005 acquired 105.06 hectares of Antelope-brush in the South Okanagan
- 2005 sponsored the Robert Bateman Gettoknow Program to help young Canadians connect with plant and wildlife species in their communities
- 2005-2006 involved in the establishment of the HSBC Fraser River Sturgeon Education Program to educate school children and First Nations communities in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley
- 2006 first donation of land for Heart of the Fraser initiative—22 hectares at Harrison Knob



I am proud to be part of The Nature Trust of BC as we celebrate our 35th anniversary.

Land securement continues to be a key priority for The Nature Trust. I want to applaud Canfor's donation of land known as the Harrison Knob at the confluence of the Harrison and Fraser rivers. We are continuing to fundraise to acquire key properties along the Fraser from Mission to Hope valued at over a million dollars. We are working on acquiring property along 12 kilometres of the Stamp-Somass River. The Stamp-Somass is one of the most scenic, relatively undeveloped rivers in central Vancouver Island. It supports all five species of Pacific salmon.

Caring for the land is an integral part of our conservation process. We put the science of conservation to work on a daily basis. Along with our own properties, The Nature Trust is taking a leadership role in the conservation of land in BC. We are



Stamp-Somass River

dedicating resources to the development of a provincial conservation strategy through the BC Trust for Public Lands. In addition, we are spearheading a pilot project involving conservation groups, forest companies and the provincial government to develop a cooperative plan for a complex of lands in the Kootenays. Land management is the largest expense in our annual operating budget and it needs ongoing support.

I want to recognize some of our key conservation partners this year. EnCana Corporation has pledged \$750,000 over ten years to assist with land acquisition and management. In 2006 a fish count on the Englishman River on Vancouver

Island was made possible by EnCana as well as land acquisition province wide. Tree Island Industries has donated fencing wire. Managing access on conservation properties is important in order to maintain and enhance the critical habitat. HSBC Bank Canada is the title sponsor of our Conservation Youth Crews in 2006 and 2007 as well as sponsoring the HSBC Fraser River Sturgeon Education Program. Corporate support is vital and greatly appreciated.

And I want to close by thanking the individual donors who support us year after year. Your dedication inspires us to continue to work hard to conserve BC's natural beauty.

## A Rare Gem on the Sunshine Coast

By Patsy Baker, Park Facility Operator

Francis Point is located 57 kilometres from the Langdale ferry terminal on the Sunshine Coast. In 1792 Captain Vancouver anchored here, later naming the point after St. Francis. The Nature Trust purchased 72.8 hectares (180 acres) of this untouched waterfront wilderness in 2001 that is now part of Francis Point Provincial Park.

It is a day use public park where dogs are allowed only on a leash. Visitors are requested to stay on the two marked trails—one that goes up to the lookout bluff and the other that follows the shore to Francis Point, where there is a

navigational light beacon and a large stand of arbutus trees. This trail takes about 30 minutes from the parking lot. Middle Bay has a nice swimming and snorkeling beach.

As the caretaker I enjoy informing visitors of the biodiversity values of this undisturbed site. It is an excellent example of a Very Dry Maritime Subzone of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone.

The park is a little challenging to find as there are no signs until you get there. It is best to check with the travel information once you are on the Sunshine Coast.



Francis Point, Sunshine Coast

# Caring for the Land

In the summer of 2006 The Nature Trust operated conservation youth crews in the East Kootenay, Peace River, South Okanagan, Central Interior, Vancouver Island and Lower Mainland. We received generous support from HSBC Bank Canada as title sponsor of the province wide program. The crews were coordinated in partnership with the British Columbia Conservation Corps, a provincial Ministry of Environment student and recent graduate mentoring program designed to nurture a new generation of conservationists. BC Hydro is providing \$15,000 a year for three years for the youth crews.



Peace River crew preparing to repair fences



Vancouver Island crew member assessing heron colony success



South Okanagan crew member banding a bird



Central Interior crew member installing conservation sign

- Supporters in 2006 include:**
- BC Conservation Corps
  - BC Conservation Foundation
  - BC Hydro
  - BC Ministry of Environment
  - BC Ministry of Transportation
  - BC Trust for Public Lands
  - Canadian Wildlife Service
  - Ducks Unlimited Canada
  - Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program – Columbia Basin
  - Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
  - HSBC Bank Canada
  - Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
  - Lohn Foundation
  - Weyerhaeuser/Island Timberlands



2006 was the first year for a Lower Mainland crew at Boundary Bay

# Rain Gardens and The Nature Trust Rain Garden Fund

Imagine walking through Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island as a light rain begins to fall. At first, only a few droplets reach the forest floor while most are intercepted high in the forest canopy. As the rain continues, the canopy begins to release water. Soon, the understory plants are glistening with moisture, which they gradually release to the forest floor.

There seems no end to the water-holding capacity of the forest and its soils. At about 100,000 gallons per acre, the forest reservoir reaches its maximum capacity. Excess water collects in puddles, pools and wetlands, percolates into lakes and streams and groundwater tables, and gradually makes its way to the ocean. Each drop may take days or weeks or even months on its journey, and on the way, it provides the fish-bearing waters with a steady supply of cool, filtered water.

## Meanwhile, Back in Daily Reality...

While you were enjoying your walk in the forest, in communities across BC rain pelted directly onto rooftops, bounced off concrete sidewalks, sheeted across blacktop streets and parking lots, and poured into countless storm drains. From these storm drains, the unfiltered water, murky with road grit, tailpipe toxins, motor oil, car wash soapsuds, and excess pesticides flowed through pipes (culverts) and, in almost all cases, into the nearest creek or river.

What about the steady supply of cool, filtered water that fish in this creek or river need? The daily assault of storm water runoff—week after week, year after year, creek after creek—is damaging our creeks, rivers and fish as surely as any toxic spill or careless logging.



Home Rain Garden in Delta

## Enter the Rain Garden Fund

Most local governments and large-scale developers are aware of the deadly affects of storm water runoff, and we're beginning to see changes in how storm water is handled. With millions of storm drains in service, there is no way they can accomplish all the changes that are needed. Enter the "rain garden"—any small-scale use of landscaping to infiltrate rain water—whereby individuals, stratas, churches, schools, and businesses can do their part in protecting streams and fish habitat as well as replenishing groundwater tables.

We are pleased to announce that an anonymous donor has provided The Nature Trust with \$100,000 for the Spring 2007 launch of The Nature Trust Rain Garden Fund. In consultation with the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Pacific Streamkeepers Federation, The Nature Trust will be providing small grants to volunteer groups for low-tech, low-cost, demonstration rain garden projects. Our goal is education and involvement of the broader public in our efforts to protect British Columbia's precious riparian resources. Initially, in the start-up phase of this program, application will be by invitation from The Nature Trust to one or more selected streamkeeper organizations in Greater Vancouver.

Watch for more details in our Spring 2007 newsletter.



Polluted water flowing into drain

## Chehalis River Eagle Watching Tour

Join Jim Hope of The Nature Trust and Dan Buffett of Ducks Unlimited Canada for a walking tour on Sunday, November 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. as part of the Fraser Valley Bald Eagle Festival.

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

# THE NATURE TRUST

## *sponsored events*

### 35th Anniversary Celebration in Vancouver



Gloria Macarenko volunteered to MC the event



Patrick Oswald and his grandchildren helped to sponsor The Nature Trust anniversary book

### Eco-Tour



Jim and Mary Borrowman of Stubbs Island Whale Watching at Telegraph Cove donated the proceeds from an eco-tour to The Nature Trust

### South Okanagan



Beavers planting Antelope-brush on Nature Trust properties



A research field station was named in honour of Nature Trust Director Dr. Geoff Scudder

### 22nd Commodores' Cup Junior Race



Patrick Oswald, founder of the regatta, and Commodore Bruce Donaldson, Commander of the Canadian Pacific Fleet, are shown with winners of the Optmist Novice Fleet: Callum Carnie, Monet Chung and Brandon Lipinski

## THE NATURE TRUST

### staff news



We welcome Leanna Warman as the Eco-system Specialist. She has over 15 years of education and experience in ecology and conservation, and has developed expertise in wildlife habitat modeling and conservation planning. She received her Bachelor of Science in Ecology and Master of Science in Zoology from the University of British Columbia.



The Honourable  
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Lieutenant Governor of BC  
Honourary Patron

PETER J. SPEER, FCA  
Chair of the Board

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## THE NATURE TRUST

### donors



Vic and Min Carlson

*“Vic and Min Carlson loved the land and respected the wildlife, observing wildcats, cougars, bears, snowy owls, marmots, herons and deer on their 160 acre property near Hope, BC. During their tenure, Vic planted more than 1,000 conifers as well as walnut and oak. Once when it was remarked to Vic that he would not live long enough to see his trees mature, he answered, ‘The trees are for the future.’ The Nature Trust of BC is for our future, and our family is very pleased to support this endeavour.”*

—When her parents passed away this year, Gail Carlson Mackay and her family requested a donation to The Nature Trust in lieu of flowers.



Josephine Kovacs heads the Natural History and small group customized tours for Bestway Tours & Safari in Burnaby, BC, a tour operator in business for 28 years. Josephine thanks all her clients for making it possible for her to gladly donate money to The Nature Trust of BC. *“It is a win, win, win situation and it feels great to support Mother Nature—any time!”*



*“Invermere has been our home for over 40 years. Walks overlooking the Columbia Valley wetlands are something we have always enjoyed. After The Nature Trust acquired the Hoodoos Property we hiked to the kiosk many times with family and friends. Sitting on the bank we would take in the beauty of the meandering Columbia River, Lake Windermere and the Selkirk mountains. Using field glasses we would watch the activity of various shore birds and some wildlife. We thought what a nice place to have a bench. Many thanks to The Nature Trust for its help and for being guardian of this beautiful property.”*

Frank & Anne Keely



Nature Trust East Kootenay Land Manager Rob Neil at bench donated by Keely family